

FINAL REPORT OF FOCUSED MONITORING OF  
EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN

# MIAMI-DADE COUNTY

September 23 - 27, 2002



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
BUREAU OF INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

# FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



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May 30, 2003

Mr. Merrett Stierheim, Superintendent  
Miami-Dade County School District  
1450 N.E. 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, #912  
Miami, Florida 33132-1308

Dear Superintendent Stierheim:

We are pleased to provide you with the Final Report of Focused Monitoring of Exceptional Student Education Programs in Miami-Dade County. The report from our visit on September 23-27, 2002, includes the system improvement plan proposed by your staff.

An update of outcomes achieved and/or a summary of related activities, as identified in your district's system improvement plan, must be submitted by June 30 and December 30 of each school year for the next two years, unless otherwise noted on the improvement plan.

If my staff can be of any assistance as you continue to implement the system improvement plan, please contact Eileen L. Amy, ESE Program Administration and Quality Assurance Administrator. Mrs. Amy may be reached at 850/245-0476, or via electronic mail at [Eileen.Amy@fldoe.org](mailto:Eileen.Amy@fldoe.org).

Thank you for your continuing commitment to improve services for exceptional education students in Miami-Dade County.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Shan Goff".

Shan Goff, Chief  
Bureau of Instructional Support and Community Services

Enclosure

cc: Perla Tabares Hantman, School Board Chairman  
Members of the School Board  
Johnny Brown, School Board Attorney  
School Principals  
Bruce Ball, ESE Director  
Jim Warford, Chancellor

SHAN GOFF

*Chief*

*Bureau of Instructional Support and Community Services*

Miami-Dade County Final Monitoring Report  
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**Miami-Dade County School District**  
**Focused Monitoring Visit**  
**September 23-27, 2002**

**Executive Summary**

During the week of September 23-27, 2002, the Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Instructional Support and Community Services, conducted an on-site review of the exceptional student education programs in Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS). In its continuing efforts to focus the monitoring process on student educational outcomes, the Bureau identified four key data indicators. Miami-Dade County was selected for monitoring on the basis of its low percentage of students with disabilities who spend 80% or more of their day with nondisabled peers. The results of the monitoring process are reported under five categories or related areas that are considered to impact or contribute to the key data indicator.

**Summary of Findings**

**Focus Groups, Individual Interviews, Case Studies, and Classroom Visits**

**Staff Training and Knowledge**

M-DCPS provides extensive opportunities for district and school level administrators and teachers to participate in staff development opportunities. Many of the training activities are designed to foster placement in less restrictive and more inclusive environments for students with disabilities. Despite this extensive training effort, many respondents felt that general education teachers are unprepared to address the needs of exceptional student education (ESE) students in their classes.

**Placement**

The district should be commended for making great strides in making a full continuum of placements available to students with disabilities in general education schools. Access to the general curriculum appears to be a strength in this district, although the use of ESE-only courses limits the time ESE students spend with nondisabled peers. In addition, it should be noted that the categorical manner in which staff refer to student placements may result in students being enrolled in ESE courses to a greater extent than is necessary. Further, it must be noted that a large percentage of students with emotional and/or cognitive disabilities who are in separate class placements have little, if any, interaction with nondisabled peers.

**Curriculum and Instruction**

Students with disabilities follow the Sunshine State Standards and use a competency-based curriculum when not following the general education curriculum, and are provided a wide variety of curricular materials and instructional strategies in both ESE and general education classrooms. Teachers use a variety of instructional techniques to promote learning for all students. However, contrary to district policy, some teachers interviewed indicated that general education teachers are inconsistently provided the accommodations page of the IEP (insert D),

which describes the accommodations required for individual students in their classrooms. In addition, in some schools the accommodations reported on the IEPs and described by teachers were generally the same across all students with disabilities. Finally, it should also be noted that many students with disabilities are enrolled in general education courses taught by ESE teachers. In many cases, there was no significant difference, reported by the teachers interviewed, in the content of the general education and the ESE sections. The justification provided for ESE students not taking these classes with regular education teachers or with nondisabled peers was that class size is often prohibitive.

### **Behavior/Discipline**

Schools in all regions use the Code of Student Conduct as the foundation for school discipline plans. Students with disabilities in full-time programs usually have specially designed behavior management plans most frequently involving a point system. Most programs for students with emotional disabilities use a level system. On-site visits indicated that while training on functional assessments of behavior (FABs) and behavior intervention plans (BIPs) was heavily emphasized at the district level, there were virtually no examples of FABs or BIPs found during the site visit through interviews or case studies. Discipline at each of the schools visited appeared to be quite good and not a factor related to this key data indicator.

### **Stakeholder Opinions Related to the Trigger**

Stakeholders were fairly consistent in their perceptions regarding the issue of the low rate of participation in the general education classroom for students with disabilities. Overwhelmingly, respondents felt that the district has committed significant time and resources to addressing this problem. Despite this, it was reported that lack of funding, lack of classroom space and qualified staff, and fear of the unknown on the part of general education teachers as well as parents and students may continue to affect placement decisions for students with disabilities.

### **Record and Forms Reviews**

The review of 108 records from across the nine regions revealed generally well developed plans that genuinely reflect the individualized needs of students with disabilities in M-DCPS. Funding adjustments were made for specific items of noncompliance for the records of 24 students, and 32 IEP teams were required to reconvene.

During the forms review, findings were noted on the *informed Notice of IEP Team Recommendation and Parental Consent for Educational Placement in ESE* and the *Informed Notice of Initial Eligibility or Ineligibility* forms. In addition, comments were made on the *Individualized Educational Plan* and the *Informed Notice of Proposal or Refusal to Change Evaluation, Identification, Educational Placement, or Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)*.

## **System Improvement Plan**

In response to these findings, the district is required to develop a system improvement plan for submission to the Bureau. Plans must include activities and strategies intended to address specific findings, as well as measurable indicators of change. In developing the system improvement plan, every effort should be made to link the system improvement activities resulting from this focused monitoring report to the district's continuous improvement monitoring plan. The format for the system improvement plan, including a listing of the critical issues identified by the Bureau as most significantly in need of improvement, is provided at the end of this report.

# Monitoring Process

## Authority

The Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Instructional Support and Community Services, in carrying out its roles of leadership, resource allocation, technical assistance, monitoring, and evaluation is required to: examine and evaluate procedures, records, and programs of exceptional student education programs; provide information and assistance to school districts; and, otherwise assist school districts in operating effectively and efficiently (Section 229.565, Florida Statutes). In accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Department is responsible for ensuring that the requirements of IDEA are carried out, and that each educational program for children with disabilities administered in the state, meets the educational requirements of the state (Section 300.600(a)(1) and (2) of Title 34, Code of Federal Regulations).

The monitoring system established to oversee exceptional student education (ESE) programs reflects the Department's commitment to provide assistance and service to school districts. The system is designed to emphasize improved outcomes and educational benefits for students while continuing to conduct those activities necessary to ensure compliance with applicable federal and state laws, rules, and regulations. The system provides consistency with other state efforts, including the State Improvement Plan required by the IDEA.

## Method

With guidance from a work group charged with the responsibility of recommending revisions to the Bureau's monitoring system, substantial revisions to the Bureau's monitoring practices were initiated during the 2000-01 school year. Three types of monitoring processes were established as part of the system of monitoring and oversight. Those monitoring processes are identified as follows:

- focused monitoring
- continuous improvement/self assessment monitoring
- random monitoring

During the 2000-01 school year, the Bureau developed and piloted activities for focused monitoring in four districts, examining programs and services for students with disabilities and students identified as gifted. Based on staff and peer monitor feedback, along with further suggestions from the work group, the focused monitoring procedures were further developed and/or revised. It was also determined that the focused monitoring activities will examine only programs and services for students with disabilities.

### **Focused Monitoring**

The purpose of the focused monitoring process is to implement a methodology that targets the Bureau's monitoring intervention on key data indicators that were identified as significant for educational outcomes for students. Through this process, the Bureau will use such data to inform

the monitoring process, thereby, implementing a strategic approach to intervention and commitment of resources that will improve student outcomes.

### **Key Data Indicators**

Beginning in the 2000-01 school year, the following key data indicators were recommended by the monitoring restructuring work group and were adopted for implementation by the Bureau. The indicators and their sources of data are

- percentage of students with disabilities participating in regular classes (i.e., spending at least 80% of the school day with their nondisabled peers) [Data source: Survey 9]
- dropout rate for students with disabilities [Data source: Survey 5]
- percentage of students with disabilities exiting with a standard diploma [Data source: Survey 5]
- participation in statewide assessments by students with disabilities [Data sources: performance data from the assessment files and Survey 3 enrollment data].

It is anticipated that these indicators will continue to inform the Bureau's focused monitoring process over a period of several years.

### **District Selection**

Miami-Dade County Public School District (M-DCPS) was selected to be monitored based on a review of data from the 2000-01 school year that was submitted electronically to the Department of Education (DOE) Information Database for Surveys 2, 3, 5, 9, and from the assessment files. The district was selected due to its having the lowest percentage (20.7%) of students with disabilities spending 80% or more of their day with nondisabled peers when all the districts in the state were rank ordered from highest to lowest.

### **On-Site Monitoring Activities**

On-site monitoring activities occurred over the course of two visits. On August 14-15, 2002, five DOE and one contracted staff interviewed selected district and regional level administrators and staff. A more extensive visit occurred during the week of September 23-27, 2002, during which 24 schools from the district's six regions were visited. These on-site activities were conducted by a team composed of ten DOE staff, two individuals under contract, nine University of Miami research staff, and fifteen peer monitors. Peer monitors are exceptional student education personnel from other districts who were trained to assist with the DOE's monitoring activities. On-site monitoring activities consisted of

- interviews with district-level representatives, region-level representatives, school-based administrators, ESE teachers, and general education teachers, designed to gather information about the regular class placement indicator from multiple sources offering different points of view
- focus groups with parents, students, and teachers to provide a more in-depth perspective about the regular class placement indicator
- student case studies involving classroom visits to investigate classroom practices and interventions that might contribute to the amount of time an individual student spends in a setting with nondisabled peers



Prior to the on-site visit, Bureau staff notified district staff of the selection of the following schools to be visited based on data related to the percentage of students with disabilities in regular class placement:

- Barbara Goleman Senior High School
- Jose Marti Middle School
- Ernest Graham Elementary School
- Carol City Middle School
- John F. Kennedy Middle School
- Greynolds Park Elementary School
- Parkway Middle School
- North Miami Beach Senior High School
- Brownsville Middle School
- Ruben Dario Middle School
- Banyan Elementary School
- Miami Coral Park Senior High School
- Shenandoah Elementary School
- Shenandoah Middle School
- Allapattah Middle School
- Miami Senior High School
- Miami Southridge Senior High School
- Riviera Middle School
- William Turner Technical Arts High School
- Olympia Heights Elementary School
- Southwest Miami Senior High School
- Whispering Pines Elementary School
- Centennial Middle School
- Redland Elementary School

The on-site selection of students for the case studies was based on criteria that have been identified as being characteristic of students who may be expected to receive instruction in the regular classroom for the majority of the day. Schools were asked to provide a listing of students in the school, including the following information:

- area of eligibility
- placement
- participation in statewide assessment

### **Off-Site Monitoring Activities**

Surveys were designed by the University of Miami research staff in order to provide maximum opportunity for input from parents of students with disabilities, ESE and regular education teachers, and students with disabilities in grades 9-12. Results of the surveys will be discussed in the body of this report. Data from each of the surveys are included as appendix A.

### ***Parent Surveys***

Surveys were mailed to parents of the 41,036 students with disabilities for whom complete addresses were provided by the district. A total of 6,170 parents (PK, n=427; K-5, n=2,680; 6-8, n=1,632; 9-12, n=1,431) representing 15% of the sample, returned the survey. Nine percent of the surveys (3,622) were returned as undeliverable. The survey that was sent to parents was printed in English, Spanish, and Haitian-Creole, and included a cover letter and postage paid reply envelope.

### ***Teacher Surveys***

Surveys were received from 8,244 teachers, representing 41% of the sample. Data are from 248 (58%) of the district's 429 schools.

### ***Student Surveys***

A sufficient number of surveys were provided to allow all students with disabilities, grades 9-12, to respond. For each class or group of students, a teacher conducted the student survey following a written script. Surveys were received from 3,226 students, representing 29% of high school students with disabilities in the district. Data are from 35 (52%) of the district's 67 high schools. Since participation in this survey was not appropriate for some students whose disabilities might impair their understanding of the survey, professional judgement was used to determine appropriate participants.

### ***Reviews of Student Records and District Forms***

At the DOE, Bureau staff members conducted a compliance review of student records that were randomly selected from the population of students with disabilities prior to the on-site monitoring visit. In addition, Bureau staff reviewed selected district forms and notices to determine if the required components were included. The results of the review of student records and forms will be described in this report.

### **Reporting Process**

#### ***Exit Conference***

Regular debriefings were held with the district ESE administrator and district staff throughout the visit. Preliminary findings and concerns were provided by phone conference within ten days of the visit.

#### ***Preliminary Report***

Subsequent to the on-site visit, Bureau staff prepares a preliminary written report. The preliminary report is sent to the district, and Bureau program specialists are assigned to assist the district in developing appropriate system improvements for necessary areas. Data for the report are compiled from sources that have been previously discussed in this document, including the following:

- LEA profile
- parent, teacher, and student surveys
- reviews of student records
- reviews of forms

- parent, teacher, and student focus groups
- case studies
- classroom visits
- interview with district and school staff

The report is developed to include the following elements: a description of the monitoring process, background information specific to the district, reported information from monitoring activities, and a summary. Appropriate appendices with data specific to the district accompany each report.

### ***Final Report***

In completing the system improvement section of the report, every effort should be made to link the system improvement activities for random monitoring to the district's continuous improvement monitoring plan. In collaboration with Bureau staff, the district is encouraged to develop methods that correlate activities in order to utilize resources, staff, and time in an efficient manner in order to improve outcomes for students with disabilities.

Within 30 days of the district's receipt of the preliminary report, the district's system improvement plan, including strategies and activities targeting specific findings, will be submitted to the Bureau for review. A final report including the system improvement strategies will be released and posted on the Bureau's website.

## **Background**

### **Demographic Information**

The data contained in this section of the report is a summary of the data presented in the annual data profile provided to each district. Each element is reported over a period of three years and is presented with comparison data from the state and enrollment group for the district. Profiles are available from the Bureau and from individual districts upon request.

M-DCPS has a total school population (PK-12) of 374,806 with 41,036 (11%) being identified as students with disabilities and 22,488 (6%) as gifted. The district is considered to be a “very large” district and is one of seven districts in this enrollment group. Of the total Miami-Dade County School District population, 11% are White, 30% are Black, 57% are Hispanic, and 15% are Asian/Pacific Islander. Of the students with disabilities, 10% are White, 36% are Black, 53% are Hispanic, and <1% are Asian/Pacific Islander. Fifty-nine percent of the district’s population is eligible for free/reduced lunch.

M-DCPS is comprised of: nine regions including Regions I-VI, a DJJ region, an alternative education region and an ESE region; 202 elementary schools; 53 middle schools; 39 high schools; 18 charter schools; 23 alternative centers; and 25 adult education centers.

According to the 2000-01 data, 7% of Miami-Dade County’s students with disabilities were reported as dropping out of school as compared to 6% for districts of similar enrollment and 5% for the State’s average. Data indicated a decrease (1999-00 to 2000-01) in the dropout rate for students with disabilities as well as for the student population as a whole. In addition, the retention rate in Miami-Dade County is lower than its enrollment group and statewide for both student populations.

The data also indicate that the proportion of students with disabilities in M-DCPS who graduate with a standard diploma is somewhat lower than the proportion in other districts of similar size or in the state as a whole. Forty-four percent of students with disabilities in Miami-Dade County graduate with a standard diploma, compared to 52% and 51% in similar enrollment districts and the state, respectively.

M-DCPS reports that 20% of its students with disabilities (ages 6-21) spend 80% or more of their school week with their nondisabled peers. This rate is lower than both the State rate of 48% and the similar enrollment group rate of 49%. For students identified as educable mentally handicapped, the rate of separate class placement (82%) is significantly higher than the rate of both the enrollment group (64%) and the state (62%). In contrast, for prekindergarten children ages three through five, the district has a higher rate (11%) of placement in a natural environment than either the enrollment group (6%) or the state (7%). Through the Continuous Improvement Monitoring Plan procedures, M-DCPS identified placement as its area of focus for students with disabilities.

The data also indicate a higher in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension rate for students with disabilities than their nondisabled peers for the 2000-01 school year. Miami-Dade

County's in-school suspension rate for students with disabilities (15%) is slightly higher than that of its enrollment group (12%) and the state rate (13%), although the out-of-school suspension rates are similar across the groups (15%, 14%, and 15%, respectively).

A review of the data related to the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) indicates that the participation rate for students with disabilities has increased steadily from the 1998-99 school year through the 2000-01 school year, in both reading and math across all grade levels reported. At the elementary level, participation rates for Miami-Dade County (math, 84%; reading, 85%) are commensurate with both the enrollment group and the state. At the eighth grade level, the Miami-Dade County participation rate in both reading and math (80%) is higher than the comparison groups (enrollment group, 75%; state, 76%). This pattern continues at the tenth grade level, with 64% participation in Miami-Dade County compared to 58% in the enrollment group and 59% at the state.

In addition, the percentage of students with disabilities who scored at level three or above on the FCAT increased between the 1999-00 and 2000-01 school years. This increase was evident in both reading and math at all grades reported, with the exception of grade four reading, which remained at 11%.

#### **District Practices Related to the Key Data Indicator: Inclusive Practices in M-DCPS**

The information contained in this section of the report was provided by the district and is a summary of recent district initiatives related to least restrictive environment and the regular class placement of students with disabilities.

It is the mission of the Office of Exceptional Student Education (ESE) to provide students with disabilities with the support and services necessary to learn in classrooms alongside their non-disabled peers to the maximum extent possible. This office has made extensive efforts over the previous five years to build the capacity of the district/region/school community to effectively and responsibly implement inclusionary practices throughout our district.

Historically, this effort began in 1998 with the implementation of the Quality Designs of Instruction Initiative. During this initial implementation phase, six schools were selected to participate in school-wide restructuring which focused on expanding the models of support for students with disabilities, with emphasis on moving students with disabilities back to the general education classrooms. The following two years, twelve additional schools participated. Emphasis was placed on building capacity in inclusive practices within the schools with school-wide team training, follow-up, and technical assistance. All training in the district was aligned to reflect the district's mission statement. Awareness training was provided to the District Superintendent, School Board members, and district, regional and school administrators. In May of 2000, the Office of ESE in collaboration with the Florida Inclusion Network: Miami-Dade, a special project funded by the Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Instructional Support and Community Services, developed the district initiative, "ALL Students ALL Schools" (ASAS). This initiative, which is focused on expanded models of support, effective instructional practices, and increased student achievement, began with fourteen participating schools. Schools are asked

to commit to a three to five year change process. These ASAS schools have made tremendous efforts in developing inclusive practices. Now in its third year of implementation, the ASAS initiative has over seventy-five participating schools. The challenge of restructuring these schools has been supported by administrators, teachers, parents, and support personnel. We are proud of schools that are working diligently to become model school sites for our district.

# Reporting of Information

## Sources of Information

Data for this report are compiled from a variety of sources accessed before and during the on-site visit. This data includes

- compliance review of 108 student records
- review of district forms
- surveys returned by 6,170 parents
- surveys returned by 8,244 teachers representing 248 schools
- surveys completed by 3,226 students from 35 schools
- five focus groups (two in Spanish, three in English) with 32 parents representing 30 students with disabilities from elementary to high school level
- three focus groups with 27 school personnel representing elementary, middle, and high school levels (13 ESE teachers, 7 general education teachers, 2 counselors, and 5 other staff members)
- twelve student focus groups with six groups of students preparing for a special diploma (12 students at Barbara Goleman H.S., 10 students at North Miami Beach H.S., 8 students at Miami Coral Park H.S., 8 students at Miami Senior H.S., 13 students at Miami Southridge H.S., and 7 students at Southwest Miami Senior H.S.) and six groups of students preparing for a standard diploma (8 students at Barbara Goleman H.S., 13 students at North Miami Beach H.S., 10 students at Miami Coral Park H.S., 13 students at Miami Senior H.S., 12 students at Southwest Miami H.S., and 11 students at Miami Southridge Senior H.S.)
- nine interviews with district-level representatives
- 21 interviews with region-level representatives
- 195 individual district and building level staff interviews
- 108 classroom visits, including 66 case studies

The data generated through the surveys, focus groups, individual interviews, case studies, and classroom visits are summarized in this report beginning on page 13, while the results from the review of student records and district forms are presented beginning on page 21 of the report. This report provides conclusions with regard to the dropout trigger and specifically addresses related areas that may contribute to or impact the trigger. These areas include

- staff knowledge and training
- placement
- curriculum and instruction
- behavior/discipline
- stakeholder opinions related to the trigger

To the extent possible, this report focuses on systemic issues rather than on isolated instances of noncompliance or need for improvement. Systemic issues are those that occur at a sufficient enough frequency that the monitoring team could reasonably infer a system-wide issue. Findings are presented in a preliminary report, and the district has the opportunity to clarify items of

concern. In a collaborative effort between the district and Bureau staff, system improvement areas are identified. Findings are addressed through the development of strategies for improvement, and evidence of change will be identified as a joint effort between the district and the Bureau.

## **Surveys, Focus Groups, Individual Interviews, Case Studies, and Classroom Visits**

### **Staff Knowledge and Training**

District, regional, and school-level interviewees all reported the availability of extensive staff development opportunities for administrators and staff. While much of the training originates at the district or regional level, school-based administrators are encouraged to request assistance in providing training to address the specific needs of their own teachers or students. Despite the extensive staff development opportunities listed below, several respondents indicated that a lack of training for general education teachers with regard to ESE student characteristics and appropriate interventions and accommodations contributes to the reluctance of some teachers to work with ESE students. This same concern was reflected in comments made by general education teachers, ESE teachers, and parents during the focus groups.

Staff development activities for administrators and teachers reported by district-level representative included the following:

- prereferral training for Student Support Team (SST) involving academic and behavioral difficulties, cultural differences and identification issues for students
- assistive technology training and consultation for teachers of students with disabilities
- bi-annual meetings held with program/staffing specialists, general education and ESE teachers related to targeted topics including inclusion and least restrictive environment
- High Scope training for principals, teachers, and paraprofessionals
- Project RIDE (remedial instruction in discipline) for schools with at least 10 EH/SED teachers
- monthly trainings to program directors and chairpersons of students with disabilities concerning academics, behavior, and cultural differences
- training for principals and assistant principals on academic differences
- training in inclusion, cooperative consultation, differentiated instruction, and targeted curricula
- training provided by the Florida Inclusion Network (FIN) focusing on inclusion, initially directed at Administrators and then teachers
- training on Functional Assessments of Behavior (FAB) and Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs), including for non-ESE students
- training on the articulation process
- training related to LEP/ESOL issues, including assessment and instructional strategies for diverse learners
- informational sessions related to the availability of vocational education options
- workshops for all teachers and administrators on accommodations, inclusion and strategies for diverse learners
- Pre-K training regarding behavior, assistive technology, and communicative devices
- training provided to teachers on what resources are available for students with disabilities



- inclusion training for specific school sites, including opportunities for ESE and Regular Education teachers to work together
- Superintendent's Council for Inclusion includes Regional Directors
- transition paraprofessionals provided to assist the transitions from pre-K to elementary to middle to high school
- training on IEP process, adaptations and modifications, behavior management,

The staff development activities listed above also were reported during interviews with school-level staff, with the addition of site-based training on the following topics and methods:

- 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning center (Fine Arts)
- 5000 Role Models seminars for young men
- CRISS Training (read and writing strategies)
- Reciprocal Teaching Training (read and writing strategies) – diverse learners
- River Deep (computer program for math)
- Force and Motion Inquiry Method (Science)
- Alliance Plus (mentoring training program)
- FCAT Science
- Ventures Training (critical thinking and problem solving)
- co-operative learning strategies
- technology training, including use of computers with ESE students
- classroom management strategies, including assertive discipline
- learning styles
- SED/EH Strategies
- career portfolios
- Edutest (reading strategies and testing)
- Read 180
- Learning 100 (reading)
- Accelerated Reading
- crisis prevention intervention (CPI) for paraprofessionals
- ESE and sexuality
- restraint training

In summary, M-DCPS provides extensive opportunities for district and school level administrators and teachers to participate in staff development opportunities. Many of the training activities are designed to foster placement in less restrictive and more inclusive environments for students with disabilities. Despite this extensive training effort, many respondents felt that general education teachers are unprepared to address the needs of ESE students in their classes.

### **Placement**

According to District personnel, it is the mission of the M-DCPS Office of Exceptional Student Education (ESE) to provide students with disabilities with the support and services necessary to learn in classrooms alongside their non-disabled peers to the maximum extent possible. This office has made extensive efforts over the previous five years to build the capacity of the

district/region/school community to effectively and responsibly implement inclusionary practices throughout the district.

Historically, this effort began in 1998 with the implementation of the Quality Designs of Instruction Initiative. During this initial implementation phase, six schools were selected to participate in school-wide restructuring which focused on expanding the models of support for students with disabilities, with emphasis on moving students with disabilities back to the general education classrooms. The following two years, twelve additional schools participated. Emphasis was placed on building capacity in inclusive practices within the schools with school-wide team training, follow-up, and technical assistance. All training in the district was aligned to reflect the district's mission statement. Awareness training was provided to the District Superintendent, School Board members, and district, region and school administrators. In May of 2000, The Office of ESE in collaboration with the Florida Inclusion Network: Miami-Dade, a special project funded by the Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Instructional Support and Community Services, developed the district initiative, *ALL Students ALL Schools (ASAS)*. This Initiative, which is focused on expanded models of support, effective instructional practices, and increased student achievement, began with fourteen participating schools. Schools are asked to commit to a three to five year change process. These *ASAS* schools have made tremendous efforts in developing inclusive practices. Now in its third year of implementation, the Initiative has over seventy-five participating schools. The challenge of restructuring these schools has been supported by administrators, teachers, parents, and support personnel.

During interviews with district representatives, it was reported that ESE students are offered both academic and elective classes based on their needs. They have access to the general education curriculum and are provided with accommodations and/or modifications based on individual needs. District representatives uniformly indicated that the IEP drives the ESE student's curriculum and placement, and is used as the basis for mainstreaming.

The district reported using a variety of supports to encourage inclusive placements, such as pairing an ESE student in need of support with a regular education peer. There is a trend toward more inclusive settings for ESE students at the prekindergarten level, although a lack of regular programs for three-year-olds within the community has made finding natural settings with nondisabled peers more difficult. The district reported using reverse mainstreaming in several ESE prekindergarten classes to provide peer models.

During the interview process, it was noted that the district has learned a lot from working with parents in determining what is most effective for ESE students in terms of placement and service delivery. M-DCPS has recently begun to move some classrooms from separate ESE center schools to regular public school buildings, most particularly classes for autistic students. Extensive training on both inclusion and the characteristics of autistic students is being provided to support this move.

With regard to charter schools, the district reported that the charter schools do not offer a wide range of educational placements, and that they do not always follow the pupil progression plan in its entirety, although they do follow the "FCAT rules." The district also reported that ensuring compliance with regulations regarding students with disabilities in the charter schools often is difficult.

At the regional level, all representatives reported providing a full continuum of placements within the region, ranging from inclusion in general education classes to student placement in center schools. It was reported that the students' individual needs as identified on the IEP drive placement, and placement is designed to provide maximum contact with nondisabled peers. Input for all placement decisions comes from a variety of people and sources, including the parents and the child study team and/or student support team. All decisions are based on the consideration of the least restrictive environment requirements. However, it should be noted that in every region staff often described placement options by categorical or programmatic titles and location (e.g., SLD students are served in the SLD class) rather than by level of placement (i.e., regular, resource, or separate class defined as amount of time with non-disabled). This could cause confusion when explaining placement options to parents and students, and may subtly influence decisions regarding placement.

On-site visits verified that students were afforded a full array of educational placements in most schools. The schools visited included regular class placement (special education outside the regular class <21% of the day), resource level placement (special education outside the regular class 21-60% of the day), and separate class placement (special education outside the regular class >60% of the day). For the most part, ESE students were afforded opportunities to interact with nondisabled peers in core and elective classes, as well as extra-curricular activities. However, it was observed that the majority of students in these schools were served at the resource or separate level, with very few at the regular class level. Block scheduling at the middle and high school appears to prohibit students from participating in a wider variety of classes, while at the elementary school level, language arts blocks of 120-150 minutes automatically place ESE students at the resource level. It also was noted that scheduling practices often limited ESE students' interactions with their nondisabled peers during electives, lunch, and other non-academic settings. This was especially true for students with emotional and cognitive disabilities.

These findings were supported by comments of focus group participants. Students in the student focus groups reported that they had many opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities with general education students. In contrast, some parents in the parent focus group felt that many ESE students do not have adequate opportunities to socialize with nondisabled peers, and that ESE classes are "isolated."

Through the case study process, it was revealed that a large percentage of students with disabilities are enrolled in general education classes taught by ESE teachers. Particularly at the high school level, ESE sections of general education courses are used for almost all courses. These classes cover the Sunshine State Standards for the course and provide credit towards a standard diploma. In many cases there was no significant difference reported in the content of the general education and the ESE sections, although some teachers reported compressing the curriculum to spend more time on fundamentals.

It appeared that generalized use of these ESE sections of standard curriculum courses was responsible for the relatively low percentage of time ESE students in this district spend with nondisabled peers. Teacher certification requirements were cited as the reason that nondisabled students could not enroll in these sections, although Centennial Middle School reported that two

ESE teachers are pursuing math certification so that they can teach combined classes. In view of the similarities between many of the ESE and non-ESE sections, teachers were asked why ESE students were not provided the opportunity to take these classes with a general education teacher. Virtually all respondents replied that the significant class size problem across the district made this option unreasonable. They reported that class size impacts both instruction and physical logistics, and that large general education classes call into question the value of mainstreaming ESE students eligible for the high incidence categories such as EMH, EH, and SLD, simply to provide time with nondisabled peers. Teacher, parent, and student focus group participants echoed the concern that large class sizes may contribute to general education classes not meeting the needs of many ESE students.

In addition to the class size factor, many school-level staff reported that there are limited supports for ESE students in general education classes. Few respondents at the school level indicated that IEP teams considered whether a student would be successful in the general education setting with supports; rather, most indicated that ESE students must “earn” their way into mainstreamed settings and be able to succeed on their own. Staff in some regions also noted that there continues to be a lack of training of regular education teachers with regard to ESE student characteristics and appropriate interventions and accommodations; consequently teachers were reluctant to work with ESE students in their classrooms. Participants in the teacher focus group reported that ESE teachers are not available to provide support to mainstreamed students, as they have their own classes to serve.

A final issue related to placement that was noted by some staff was the impression that many parents prefer to keep their children in a smaller and more protected ESE environment, rather than placing them in the regular education classroom. It was also reported that school staff on IEP teams at times try to protect ESE students from larger classes.

In summary, the district should be commended for making great strides in making a full continuum of placements available to students with disabilities in general education schools. Access to the general curriculum appears to be a strength in this district, although the use of ESE-only courses limits the time ESE students spend with nondisabled peers. In addition, it should be noted that the categorical manner in which staff refers to student placements may result in students being enrolled in ESE courses to a greater extent than is necessary. Further, it must be noted that a large percentage of students with emotional and/or cognitive disabilities who are in separate class placements have little if any interaction with nondisabled peers.

### **Curriculum and Instruction**

With regard to curriculum and instruction, district level representatives reported that the Child Study Teams and the Student Services Teams are the link between the teachers of students with disabilities and the regular education teachers. Through these teams the IEPs are discussed and shared. All of the ESE students’ teachers are reported to get copies of the student’s IEP. In addition, it was reported that ESE teachers attend general education content area meetings in an effort to ensure that they are knowledgeable about the general curriculum requirements of the students they teach.

Curricular decisions are made at the school level. Each school determines their choice of texts, with supporting material. High Scope is the curriculum of choice for Pre-K students. There is a heavy emphasis placed on reading and math for all students. Students with disabilities follow the Sunshine State Standards and use a competency based curriculum when not following the general education curriculum, and are provided a wide variety of curricular materials and instructional strategies in both ESE and general education classrooms.

With regard to accommodations for ESE students in the regular education classroom, district level staff reported that all regular education teachers receive a copy of the accommodations listed on the student's IEP. The ESE Department Chair, program specialist, principals, assistant principals, counselors, and the Student Support Team provide supports to the teachers.

However, interviews, case studies, and classroom observations conducted at the school sites revealed that regular education teachers are not uniformly made aware of the accommodation needs of their students with disabilities, and that in some schools accommodations are generally the same for all students with disabilities, rather than individualized based on specific need. It was reported in at least some schools in all regions that, contrary to district policy, regular education teachers are inconsistently provided with the accommodations insert attached to the students' IEPs. Many teachers reported that they were not aware of students' accommodations or that they did not receive the accommodations insert until long after a student had been enrolled in their class.

It was reported that Charter schools "follow their own procedures" regarding informing regular education teachers of accommodations and that Charter schools may not be providing adequate support to teachers/students.

Representatives from each of the regions reported that all students follow the Sunshine State Standards and use a district-developed competency based curriculum, and that decisions regarding specific curricular materials are made at the school level. Echoing the district level responses, regional administrators reported that copies of the IEP accommodations and modifications insert are provided to all of a student's teachers, and that the staffing specialists provide support to ESE and basic education teachers as well as students. All regions use the Child Study Teams and Student Support Teams to make curricular decisions and develop academic and behavioral interventions for problematic students. Most regions make a concerted effort to use data to make decisions regarding curricula, student-grouping placements, and access to student support services.

On-site visits revealed that students with disabilities are taking general education classes with ESE teachers. In many cases, there was no significant difference reported in the content of the general education and the ESE sections. Consequently, there was little justification for the student not taking the class with the regular education teacher or with nondisabled peers.

On-site visits revealed the students with disabilities enrolled in both ESE and general education classes were provided with a wide variety of curricular materials and instructional strategies. In each region, students were afforded a wide variety of course offerings, however it was noted that in some schools vocational courses were limited. Teachers used a variety of instructional

techniques including co-operative learning, video presentations, and peer tutoring in their efforts to promote student achievement.

In summary, students with disabilities follow the Sunshine State Standards and use a competency-based curriculum when not following the general education curriculum, and are provided a wide variety of curricular materials and instructional strategies in both ESE and general education classrooms. Teachers use a variety of instructional techniques to promote learning for all students. However, contrary to district policy, it appears that general education teachers are inconsistently provided with the accommodations mandated on students' IEPs, and in some schools the accommodations reported on the IEPs and described by teachers were generally the same across all students with disabilities. Finally, it should also be noted that many students with disabilities are enrolled in general education courses taught by ESE teachers. In many cases, there was no significant difference reported in the content of the general education and the ESE sections. The justification provided for ESE students not taking these classes with regular education teachers or with nondisabled peers was that class size is often prohibitive.

### **Behavior/Discipline**

When asked to describe the behavior management system in Miami-Dade County, the district staff consistently referred to the district Code of Student Conduct. A review of the Code of Student Conduct indicates that it describes a set of policies, procedures, rules and consequences, but does not contain interventions or strategies for addressing behavior

The district reported that they do extensive numbers of Functional Assessments of Behavior (FAB) and Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPS). The date and purpose of initiation appeared to be a regional decision. It was reported that there is a FAB/BIP team at each school. The Student Support Team provides assistance to all teachers regarding discipline issues. The Bertha Abyss Foundation provides fiscal support for psychiatrists and other mental health clinicians to support students with disabilities with behavioral and mental health needs.

It was reported that programs for students with emotional disabilities or who are severely emotionally disturbed follow a district-wide behavioral level system.

All regions cited the Code of Student Conduct as the basic discipline plan used by schools for all students, including students with disabilities. All regions use Functional Assessments of Behavior (FABs) and Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs) for students with disabilities. Some regions use FABs and BIPs for nondisabled students. All regions use the Child Study Teams and the Student Support Teams to address the needs of problematic students. All regions reported that the staffing specialists assist the ESE and regular education teachers with students who are having behavioral difficulties.

On-site visits indicated that while FAB/BIP training was heavily emphasized at the district level there were virtually no examples of FABs or BIPs found during the site visit through interviews or case studies. Interviews with school staff reveal that for the most part there are no clear universal criteria for FAB/BIPs. Each region sets their own policy and each school implements them individually. In 57 case studies and 87 classroom visits in 24 schools there were no examples of FABs and only two BIPS.

On-site visits confirmed that schools in all regions use the Code of Student Conduct as the foundation for school discipline plans. Students with disabilities in full-time programs usually have specially designed behavior management plans most frequently involving a point system. Most programs for students with emotional disabilities use a level system. In two schools visited, students with disabilities did not receive In-School-Suspension. Many schools were noted for their extensive intervention systems that were proactive in nature, making extensive use of a team concept and using out-of-class/school interventions as a last resort. Only one school (Miami Sr. High) seemed to be unclear about the manifestation determination process.

In summary, schools in all regions use the Code of Student Conduct as the foundation for school discipline plans. Students with disabilities in full-time programs usually have specially designed behavior management plans most frequently involving a point system. Most programs for students with emotional disabilities use a level system. On-site visits indicated that while FAB/BIP training was heavily emphasized at the district level, there were virtually no examples of FABs and only two BIPs found during the site visit through interviews or case studies. However, discipline at each of the schools visited appeared to be quite good and not a factor related to the indicator, LRE.

### **Stakeholder Opinions Related to the Trigger**

Through interviews and the focus group process, the members of the monitoring team asked respondents for their opinions related to the reasons that students with disabilities in this district have a low rate of participation with their nondisabled peers. They were asked about their perceptions regarding obstacles to inclusion as well as for potential solutions. The individuals interviewed through this monitoring process presented opinions based on their own experiences and unique perspectives. The monitoring team substantiated some of the opinions. The following is a summary of the comments.

The majority of opinions expressed indicated that the district is making significant strides in addressing the issue of inclusion, and that this movement began with the change in administration “two administrations ago.” Respondents in virtually all schools praised Ron Felton, Assistant Superintendent, Office of Exceptional Student Education and Student/Career Services, for his leadership and commitment in this area. In addition, it was noted that the mandate by Superintendent Merrett Stierheim that all schools will be inclusive schools has made a tremendous difference. District, regional, and school staff all expressed that extensive resources have been devoted to staff training and ensuring that schools have sufficient instructional materials, although classroom space and class size remains a problem. Parents and students also reported large class-size to be a barrier to inclusion. In addition, several respondents reported that a lack of qualified teachers and paraprofessionals has a negative impact on opportunities for inclusion. Teachers, parents and students all reported that more ESE teachers need to be available to support ESE students in the general education setting.

Despite this progress, stakeholders expressed concerns that there continues to be a need for a general change in perception and philosophy regarding students with disabilities as part of the basic education school population. It was reported that basic education teacher still have a “fear” of ESE students and feel that they require a disproportionate amount of time and resources. It

was suggested that teachers would be more receptive to the prospect of teaching in inclusionary settings if they had exposure to good models and research on effective practices, and that having more “inclusion specialists” on staff would be a benefit. In addition, some parents and students reported a need for increased opportunities for social or extracurricular interaction between ESE children and their nondisabled peers. Adding to the complexity of the problem, some teachers, parents and students also reported that ESE classrooms may provide a safer or more nurturing environment, and thus may be relied upon too heavily to “protect” ESE students from the rigors of general education classes.

It was reported by both ESE and general education teachers that there is pressure related to FCAT performance and the effects of large class size on student, resulting in an unwillingness to work with students with disabilities. Many teachers also reported that they were not familiar enough with the accommodations requirements of their own students, or with the general use of accommodations for diverse learners.

Another concern centered on the manner in which the district allocated resources. They cited the method for calculating FTE as being problematic. All students in co-teaching situations are assigned to ESE teachers; thus, they appear in the data as self-contained students. It was also the perception of some that the district was chosen for monitoring due to a data reporting error.

In summary, stakeholders were fairly consistent in their perceptions regarding the issue of the low rate of participation in the general education classroom for students with disabilities. Overwhelmingly, respondents felt that the district has committed significant time and resources to addressing this problem. Despite this, it was reported that lack of funding, lack of classroom space and qualified staff, and fear of the unknown on the part of general education teachers as well as parents and students may continue to affect placement decisions for students with disabilities.

## **Student Records and District Forms Reviews**

### **Student Record Reviews**

A total of 108 student records were selected to be reviewed for compliance with federal and state regulations. These records were randomly selected from the population of students with disabilities, and included separate samplings of students identified with low incidence disabilities and students identified as receiving only speech therapy. Thirteen records were reviewed from each of Regions I-VI, eleven from the Adult Education (AE) and Exceptional Student Education (ESE) regions, and eight from the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) region. The records were sent to the DOE for review by Bureau staff prior to the on-site visit. The sample group included 25 elementary school students, 21 middle school students, and 34 high school students.

During the course of the record review, the content of the IEPs is evaluated for compliance with the requirements 34 CFR §300.347. While the district is provided feedback on all areas of concern, specific items were predetermined by the DOE to be subject to funding adjustments, and were described in the *Focused Monitoring Workpapers and Sourcebook*. These incidents of noncompliance that required a funding adjustment include the following:



- the IEP was not current on the day of the review
- the IEP was not current during the last FTE survey
- the IEP was not current during the last count for federal funding
- the student did not have a current IEP at the beginning of the school year
- the parent did not attend the IEP meeting and there is not evidence that the parent was invited to the meeting
- the parent was not provided with prior written notice of a change of placement
- the parent did not provide informed consent prior to the district conducting additional testing for reevaluation
- there was no transition plan for a student who is age 16 or older

The record review for M-DCPS resulted in 24 findings of noncompliance that resulted in adjustments of funds. While some records were cited on more than one item, funding adjustments were limited to one per record. There was one from Region I, none from Region II, two from Region III, one from Region IV, two from Region V, five from Region VI, four from the AE region, seven from the DJJ region, and one from the ESE region. The majority of the funding adjustments (11) were for lack of prior written notice of a change of placement.

In addition to the funding adjustments described above, specific incidents of noncompliance were predetermined by the DOE to require the reconvening of the IEP team. These include the following:

- the IEP was not current on the day of the review
- the parent did not attend the IEP meeting and there is no evidence that the parent was invited to the meeting
- there was no transition plan for a student who is 16 or older
- the majority of the annual goals were not measurable

The record review for M-DCPS resulted in 32 findings of noncompliance that require reconvening of the IEP team. There was one from Region I, two from Region II, four from Region III, four from Region IV, three from Region V, five from Region VI, two from the AE region, five from the DJJ region, and six from the ESE region. While some records were cited on more than one item, the majority of the findings (30) were for a lack of measurable goals.

Overall, the record review process revealed IEPs that reflected individualization and attention to detail, especially in the information provided in the present level statements, annual goals, and benchmarks and short-term objectives. In addition, it should be noted that the records from Region II had the fewest number of specific items cited for noncompliance.

In summary, the review of 108 records from across the nine regions revealed generally well developed plans that genuinely reflect the individualized needs of students with disabilities in M-DCPS. Funding adjustments were made for specific items of noncompliance for the records of 24 students, and 32 IEP teams were required to reconvene.

### **District Forms Review**

Forms representing the thirteen areas identified below were submitted to Bureau staff for a review to determine compliance with federal and state laws. Findings were noted on two of the forms. In addition, changes are suggested on two forms at the next printing. The district was notified of the specific findings via a separate letter dated August 1, 2002, and the required changes have been made. An explanation of the specific findings may be found in appendix D.

- *Parent Notification of Individual Educational Plan (IEP) Meeting*
- *IEP Forms~*
- *Notice and Consent for Initial Placement\**
- *Informed Notice and Consent for Evaluation*
- *Informed Notice of Reevaluation*
- *Notification of Change of Placement*
- *Notification of Change of FAPE*
- *Informed Notice of Refusal*
- *Documentation of Staffing/Eligibility Determination\**
- *Informed Notice of Dismissal~*
- *Notice: Not Eligible for Exceptional Student Placement*
- *Summary of Procedural Safeguards*
- *Annual Notice of Confidentiality*

\*indicates findings that require immediate attention

~indicates recommendation for change upon the next printing of the form

## **Summary**

Based on the findings stated in this report, the district is expected to develop system improvement strategies in collaboration with Bureau staff. These strategies should specify activities and strategies to address identified findings in the following areas:

- Staff Training and Knowledge
- Placement
- Curriculum and Instruction
- Behavior/Discipline
- Stakeholder Opinions Related to the Trigger
- Student Records Review
- District Forms Review

Following is a summary of the findings in each of the identified areas that requires an improvement plan, as well as a format for completion of the system improvement plan.

## Miami-Dade County School District Focused Monitoring System Improvement Plan

This section includes the issues identified by the Bureau as most significantly in need of improvement. The district is required to provide a system improvement plan to address identified findings, which may include an explanation of specific activities the district has committed to implementing, or it may consist of a boarder statement describing planned strategies. For each issue, the plan also must define the measurable evidence of whether or nor the desired outcome has been achieved. Target dates that extend for more than one year should include benchmarks in order to track interim progress. Findings identified as “ESE” are those findings that reflect issues specific to ESE students. Findings identified as “All” are those findings that reflect issues related to the student population as a whole, including ESE students.

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| Category                     | Findings   | ESE | All | System Improvement Strategy   | Evidence of Change (Including Target Date)   |
|------------------------------|--|-----|-----|---|--|
| Staff Knowledge and Training | 1. There is a need to continue to provide training to teachers and school administrators on the use of inclusionary practices, effective instructional strategies for diverse learners, and instructional accommodations for students with disabilities. | X   |     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Continue to provide the following training opportunities (including resources and on-going support) to school administrators and teachers through the Florida Inclusion Network (FIN), Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD), Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources Systems-South (FDLRS-S) and district staff.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All Students All Schools Initiative (Quality Designs of Instruction)</li> <li>• Differentiated Instruction</li> <li>• Cooperative Learning</li> <li>• Accommodations and Modifications</li> <li>• Improving Access to the General Education Curriculum</li> <li>• Universal Designs of Learning</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | <p>Report the number of schools participating in the All Students All Schools Initiative (baseline).<br/>June, 2003</p> <p>District self report reveals that the number of schools participating in the All Students All Schools Initiative for systematic school-based change will increase 50% above the previous year.<br/>June, 2004</p> |

| Category                                | Findings  | ESE | All | System Improvement Strategy  | Evidence of Change<br>(Including Target Date) |
|---|---|-----|-----|--|---|
| Staff Knowledge and Training<br>(cont.) |   |     |     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Continue to disseminate information on responsible inclusive practices through:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A district-wide newsletter (All Students All Schools)</li> <li>• M-DCPS website</li> <li>• Professional networking opportunities</li> <li>• Online courses</li> <li>• Teacher’s Choice instructional video</li> <li>• National Inclusive Schools Week</li> <li>• ESE Discussion Board</li> </ul> </li> <li>❑ Extend peer mentoring/buddy programs such as “Yes I Can” and School-wide Peer Tutoring</li> <li>❑ Provide training to school administrators and teachers of students with emotional and cognitive disabilities in the area of inclusive practices.</li> </ul> |   |
| Placement                               | 2. Some students with emotional and/or cognitive disabilities have little or no interaction with nondisabled peers. |     | X   | Addressed in #1 above.   |   |

| Category             | Findings  | ESE | All | System Improvement Strategy  | Evidence of Change<br>(Including Target Date)  |
|----------------------|---|-----|-----|--|--|
| Placement<br>(cont.) | 3. Many middle and high school students enrolled in ESE-only sections of general curriculum courses are served at the separate level of service, yet their instruction appears to mirror that of general education classes. |     | X   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Enroll an increased number of middle and high school students with disabilities in general education classes in schools participating in the All Students All Schools Initiative using the appropriate model of support by:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing training to develop and implement a systematic process for IEP teams in determining the types of supports and services for non-label driven placements that would be needed to maintain students with disabilities in general education academic and non-academic settings.</li> <li>• Increase the use of effective instructional practices in the general education classroom to enable access to the general education curriculum for all learners by providing training in:                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cooperative Learning</li> <li>• Differentiated Instruction</li> <li>• Accommodations and Modifications</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>❑ Improvement strategies implemented through the Continuous Improvement Monitoring Plan (CIMP) addresses the supports available to students with disabilities in general education settings.</li> </ul> | <p>Report the number of middle and high school students with disabilities enrolled in ESE sections of general curriculum courses at targeted schools during the 2002-03 school year (baseline).<br/>June, 2003</p> <p>District self report reveals that the number of middle and high school students with disabilities participating in general education classes in the targeted All Students All Schools Initiative will increase by 30% above the previous year.<br/>June, 2004</p> <p>Results of CIMP reported to the Bureau as required in the plan.</p> |

| <b>Category</b>            | <b>Findings</b>  | <b>ESE</b> | <b>All</b> | <b>System Improvement Strategy</b>  | <b>Evidence of Change<br/>(Including Target Date)</b>  |
|----------------------------|--|------------|------------|---|--|
| Curriculum and Instruction | 4. Information regarding the instructional accommodations indicated on the IEP is not consistently provided to the general education teachers of students with disabilities. | X          |            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Disseminate an administrative memorandum that mandates a systematic method for ESE teachers or designated persons to share information with general education teachers regarding instructional adaptations identified on the IEPs.</li> </ul>  | <p>District self-report reveals that teachers at targeted schools are provided with IEP and noted accommodations.</p> <p>80%; June, 2003<br/>90%; June, 2004</p> |
|                            | 5. Accommodations appear to be applied categorically or across all ESE students rather than individualized.  |            | X          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Provide training in Dealing with Differences and Improving Access to the General Education Curriculum and/or accommodations and modifications resources.</li> </ul>  | <p>District self report reveals that teachers at targeted schools are providing individualized accommodations.</p> <p>80%; June, 2003<br/>90%; June, 2004</p>    |
| Behavior / Discipline      | 6. There is inconsistent implementation of functional behavioral assessments (FBAs) and behavioral intervention plans (BIPs) for students with disabilities.                 | X          |            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ The ESE Suspension and Expulsion Work Group will review secondary ESE suspensions and work with school administrators and staff to provide strategies to reduce the number of suspensions.</li> <li>❑ Continue to disseminate information on the implementation of the BIP through the Exceptional Student Education/Office of Information Technology (ESE/OIT) Suspension Report provided to all K-12 school principals and region ESE Directors for monitoring of implementation.</li> </ul> | <p>Report the number of in-school and out-of-school suspensions in secondary schools (baseline).</p> <p>June, 2003</p>   |

| Category                         | Findings                              | ESE | All | System Improvement Strategy  | Evidence of Change<br>(Including Target Date)  |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----|-----|--|--|
| Behavior /<br>Discipline (cont.) |                                       | X   |     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="968 326 1570 431">❑ Continue to provide initial Functional Assessment of Behavior (FAB) trainings to teachers and pertinent personnel</li> <li data-bbox="968 472 1633 578">❑ Provide FAB refresher trainings stressing implementation of Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs) to teachers and other pertinent personnel.</li> </ul> | <p data-bbox="1665 326 1990 537">The ESE Suspension Report will reflect a 15% decrease in suspensions in secondary schools when compared to the previous year.</p> <p data-bbox="1665 561 1808 586">June, 2004</p> <p data-bbox="1665 634 1990 992">Report of district self-assessment (random selection of 20 students with disabilities who have been suspended for at least 10 days) reveals that procedures were followed to implement FABs and develop BIPs for all students.</p> <p data-bbox="1665 1016 1808 1040">June, 2003</p> <p data-bbox="1665 1049 1808 1073">June, 2004</p> |
| Opinions Related to the Trigger  | No significant findings in this area. |     |     |  |  |



| Category                  | Findings  | ESE | All | System Improvement Strategy  | Evidence of Change<br>(Including Target Date)  |
|---------------------------|---|-----|-----|--|--|
| Records and Forms Reviews | 7. Thirty-two IEP teams were required to reconvene.   | X   |     | <input type="checkbox"/> Continue to provide training opportunities to school administrators and teachers through FDLRS-S Inservices, Management Academy Workshops, and Teacher's Choice Instructional Videos. | <p>The district has convened all IEP meetings as of the date of this report.</p> <p>District self report reveals that 90% of IEPs reviewed meet compliance standards.</p> <p>June, 2003<br/>June, 2004</p> |
|                           | 8. Funding adjustments were made for the records of 24 students. The majority of adjustments (11) were for lack of prior written notice of change of placement. | X   |     | <input type="checkbox"/> Continue to provide training opportunities to school administrators and teachers through FDLRS-S Inservices, Management Academy Workshops, and Teacher's Choice Instructional Videos. | <p>District self report reveals that 90% of IEPs reviewed meet compliance standards.</p> <p>June, 2003<br/>June, 2004</p>  |
|                           | 9. Findings were noted on two of the forms. Changes are suggested on two forms at the next printing.  | X   |     | <input type="checkbox"/> Continue to collaborate with region staffing specialists, district staffing specialists, district administrators and DOE personnel regarding forms development.                       | <p>All required changes have been addressed as of the date of this report.</p> <p>Beginning with the 2002-2003 school year, the district will submit new forms to the DOE for input and suggestions.</p>   |

## **Appendix A- Survey Results**

**Miami-Dade County School District  
 Focused Monitoring Report  
 Parent Survey Results**

Responding to the need to increase the involvement of parents and families of students with disabilities in evaluating the educational services provided to their children, the Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Instructional Support and Community Services contracted with the University of Miami to develop and administer a parent survey in conjunction with the Bureau’s district monitoring activities. In 1999, the parent survey was administered in 12 districts; in 2000, it was administered in 15 districts and two special schools; and, in 2001, it was administered in four districts. At the time of this analysis, it had been administered to six districts in 2002.

In conjunction with the 2002 Miami-Dade County monitoring activities, the parent survey was sent to parents of the 41,036 students with disabilities for whom complete addresses were provided by the district. A total of 6,170 parents (PK, n = 427; K-5, n = 2,680; 6-8, n = 1,632; 9 - 12, n = 1,431) representing 15% of the sample, returned the survey. Three thousand six hundred and twenty-two surveys were returned as undeliverable, representing 9% of the sample.

Parents responded “yes” or “no” to each survey item, indicating that they either agreed or disagreed with the statement. The district response for each item was calculated as the percentage of respondents who agreed with the item.

|   | <b>% Yes</b> |
|---|--------------|
| <b>Staff Training and Knowledge</b>   |              |
| • Overall, I am satisfied with the level of knowledge and experience of school personnel.                               | 78           |
| • Overall, I am satisfied with the way special education teachers and regular education teachers work together.         | 76           |
| <b>Placement</b>  |              |
| • Overall, I am satisfied with the amount of time my child spends with regular education students.                      | 73           |
| • Overall, I am satisfied with the exceptional education services my child receives.                                    | 75           |
| • My child spends most of the school day involved in productive activities.   | 73           |
| • At my child's IEP meetings we have talked about ways that my child could spend time with students in regular classes. | 62           |
| • My child's school addresses my child's individual needs.  | 77           |
| • My child's school encourages acceptance of students with disabilities.  | 79           |
| • My child's school involves students with disabilities in clubs, sports, or other activities.                          | 63           |

\* These questions answered by parents of students grade 8 and above.

**Miami-Dade County School District  
 Focused Monitoring Report  
 Parent Survey Results**

|   | <b>% Yes</b> |
|---|--------------|
| <b>Curriculum and Instruction</b>   |              |
| • Overall, I am satisfied with my child's academic progress.  | 68           |
| • My child is learning skills that will be useful later on in life.   | 80           |
| • My child is aiming for a standard diploma.  | 82           |
| • My child's teachers set appropriate goals for my child.   | 83           |
| • My child's teachers give homework that meets my child's needs.  | 76           |
| • My child's teachers give students with disabilities extra time or different assignments, if needed.   | 75           |
| • My child's school provides students with disabilities updated books and materials.  | 64           |
| • My child's school offers a variety of vocational courses, such as computers and business technology.  | 62           |
| • My child's school offers students with disabilities the classes they need to graduate with a standard diploma.                                    | 73           |
| <b>Behavior/Discipline</b>  |              |
| • N/A   |              |
| <b>Stakeholders' Opinion Related to the Trigger/Other Items</b>   |              |
| • Overall, I am satisfied with the effect of exceptional student education on my child's self-esteem.   | 73           |
| • Overall, I am satisfied with the way I am treated by school personnel.  | 86           |
| • Overall, I am satisfied with how quickly services are implemented following an IEP (Individualized Educational Plan) decision.                    | 73           |
| • My child is usually happy at school.  | 83           |
| • My child has friends at school.   | 91           |
| • At my child's IEP meetings we have talked about whether my child needed services beyond the regular school year.                                  | 69           |
| • At my child's IEP meetings we have talked about which diploma my child may receive.*  | 54           |
| • At my child's IEP meetings we have talked about the requirements for different diplomas.*   | 45           |
| • At my child's IEP meetings we have talked about whether my child would take the FCAT (Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test).                     | 62           |
| • At my child's IEP meetings we have talked about whether my child should get accommodations (special testing conditions), for example, extra time. | 59           |
| • My child's teachers expect my child to succeed.   | 88           |
| • My child's teachers call me or send me notes about my child.  | 81           |
| • My child's teachers are available to speak with me.   | 91           |
| • My child's school wants to hear my ideas.   | 73           |

\* These questions answered by parents of students grade 8 and above.

**Miami-Dade County School District  
 Focused Monitoring Report  
 Parent Survey Results**

|   | <b>% Yes</b> |
|---|--------------|
| <b>Stakeholders' Opinion Related to the Trigger/Other Items (cont.)</b>                           |              |
| • My child's school encourages me to participate in my child's education.                         | 79           |
| • My child's school informs me about all of the services available to my child.                   | 66           |
| • My child's school makes sure I understand my child's IEP.                                       | 83           |
| • My child's school sends me information about activities and workshops for parents.              | 67           |
| • My child's school provides information to students about education and jobs after high school.* | 51           |
| • My child's school does all it can to keep students from dropping out of school.                 | 76           |
| • I have attended one or more meetings about my child during this school year.                    | 92           |
| • I participate in school activities with my child.   | 66           |
| • I am a member of the PTA/PTO.   | 29           |
| • I belong to an organization for parents of students with disabilities.                          | 16           |
| • I have used parent support services in my area.   | 24           |
| • I am comfortable talking about my child with school staff.                                      | 89           |
| • I attend School Advisory Committee meetings concerning school improvement.                      | 36           |

\* These questions answered by parents of students grade 8 and above.

**Miami-Dade County School District  
 Focused Monitoring Report  
 Teacher Survey Results**

In order to obtain the perspective of teachers who provide services to students with disabilities, the Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Instructional Support and Community Services, contracted with the University of Miami to develop and administer a teacher survey in conjunction with the Bureau’s focused monitoring activities. The survey was administered for the first time during the 2002 monitoring year.

Surveys were sent to all teachers at all schools in Miami-Dade County. Surveys were returned by 8,244 teachers, representing 41% of all ESE and general education teachers in the district. Data are from 248 schools, representing 58% of the district’s 429 schools. Percentages reported below are based on the numbers of respondents who replied that their school was “consistent” in the areas surveyed.

| <b>HIGH</b><br><b>(More than 75% of the respondents reported consistency in these areas.)</b>                                       | <b>%<br/>Yes</b> |
|---|------------------|
| • To keep students with disabilities from dropping out, my school develops IEPs according to student needs.                         | 85               |
| • To help students with disabilities who take the FCAT, my school provides students with appropriate testing accommodations.        | 84               |
| • To keep students with disabilities from dropping out, my school conducts ongoing assessments of individual students' performance. | 77               |
| • To help students with disabilities who take the FCAT my school provides teachers with FCAT test preparation materials.            | 76               |

| <b>MIDDLE</b><br><b>(More than 25% but fewer than 75% of the respondents reported consistency in these areas.)</b>  |    |
|---|----|
| • To keep students with disabilities from dropping out, my school makes an effort to involve parents in their child's education.  | 75 |
| • To provide students with disabilities access to the general curriculum, my school ensures that students with disabilities feel comfortable when taking classes with general education students. | 71 |
| • To provide students with disabilities access to the general curriculum, my school places students with disabilities into general education classes whenever possible.                           | 70 |
| • To provide students with disabilities access to the general curriculum, my school modifies and adapts curriculum for students as needed.  | 69 |
| • To keep students with disabilities from dropping out, my school allows students to make up credits lost due to disability-related absences.   | 69 |
| • To keep students with disabilities from dropping out, my school ensures that classroom material is grade- and age-appropriate.  | 65 |
| • To provide students with disabilities access to the general curriculum, my school addresses each student's individual needs.  | 65 |

**Miami-Dade County School District  
 Focused Monitoring Report  
 Teacher Survey Results**

**MIDDLE (cont.)**

**(More than 25% but fewer than 75% of the respondents reported consistency in these areas.)**      **%  
Yes**

|   |    |
|---|----|
| • To keep students with disabilities from dropping out, my school provides positive behavioral supports.  | 64 |
| • To help students with disabilities who take the FCAT, my school aligns curriculum for students with the standards that are tested on the FCAT.  | 61 |
| • To encourage students with disabilities to stay in school, my school implements an IEP transition plan for each student.  | 61 |
| • To keep students with disabilities from dropping out, my school ensures that classroom material is culturally appropriate.  | 61 |
| • To provide students with disabilities access to the general curriculum, my school ensures that the general education curriculum is taught in ESE classes to the maximum extent possible.                    | 60 |
| • To keep students with disabilities from dropping out, my school encourages participation of students with disabilities in extracurricular activities.   | 60 |
| • To keep students with disabilities from dropping out, my school ensures that students are taught strategies to manage their behavior as needed.   | 55 |
| • To provide students with disabilities access to the general curriculum, my school encourages collaboration among ESE teachers, GE teachers and service providers.   | 53 |
| • To help students with disabilities who take the FCAT, my school gives students in ESE classes updated textbooks.  | 53 |
| • To keep students with disabilities from dropping out, my school provides social skills training to students as needed.  | 50 |
| • To provide students with disabilities access to the general curriculum, my school provides adequate support to GE teachers who teach students with disabilities.  | 48 |
| • To ensure that as many students with disabilities as possible graduate with a standard diploma, my school encourages students to aim for a standard diploma when appropriate.                               | 42 |
| • To provide students with disabilities access to the general curriculum, my school offers teachers professional development opportunities regarding curriculum and support for students with disabilities.   | 42 |
| • To ensure that as many students with disabilities as possible graduate with a standard diploma, my school informs students through the IEP process of the different diploma options and their requirements. | 42 |
| • To encourage students with disabilities to stay in school, my school provides students with information about options after graduation.   | 38 |

**Miami-Dade County School District  
 Focused Monitoring Report  
 Teacher Survey Results**

**MIDDLE (cont.)**

**(More than 25% but fewer than 75% of the respondents reported consistency in these areas.)**      **%  
Yes**

---

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure that as many students with disabilities as possible graduate with a standard diploma, my school provides extra help to students who need to retake the FCAT.</li> <li>• To keep students with disabilities from dropping out, my school implements a dropout prevention program.</li> <li>• To encourage students with disabilities to stay in school, my school provides students with job training.</li> <li>• To encourage students with disabilities to stay in school, my school teaches transition skills for future employment and independent living.</li> </ul> | <p>34</p> <p>30</p> <p>26</p> <p>25</p> |
|---|---|

**LOW**

**(Fewer than 25% of the respondents reported consistency in these areas.)**

---

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To encourage students with disabilities to stay in school, my school coordinates on-the-job training with outside agencies.</li> </ul> | <p>23</p> |
|---|-----------|



**Miami-Dade County School District  
 Focused Monitoring Report  
 Student Survey Results**

In order to obtain the perspective of high school students with disabilities who receive services from public school districts, the Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Instructional Support and Community Services, contracted with the University of Miami to develop and administer a student survey in conjunction with the Bureau’s focused monitoring activities. The survey was administered for the first time during the 2002 monitoring year.

Surveys and administration scripts were sent to all schools in Miami-Dade County with students in grades 9-12. A total of 3,226 surveys were returned, representing 29% of the high school students with disabilities in the district. Data are from 35 (52%) of the district’s 67 high schools. The percentage of students who replied “yes” is reported below.

| <b>HIGH</b><br><b>(More than 75% of the respondents reported consistency in these areas.)</b>              | <b>%<br/>Yes</b> |
|--|------------------|
| • At my school, ESE teachers believe that ESE students can learn.  | 87               |
| • At my school, ESE students are encouraged to stay in school.   | 84               |
| • At my school, ESE teachers give students extra help, if needed.  | 83               |
| • At my school, ESE students can take vocational classes such as computers and business technology.        | 82               |
| • I know the difference between a regular and a special diploma.   | 81               |
| • At my school, regular education teachers believe that ESE students can learn.                            | 80               |
| • At my school, ESE teachers teach students things that will be useful later on in life.                   | 79               |
| • I know what courses I have to take to get my diploma.  | 78               |
| • At my school, ESE students fit in at school.   | 78               |
| • At my school, ESE teachers give students extra time or different assignments, if needed.                 | 78               |
| • At my school, ESE students get the help they need to do well in school.                                  | 78               |
| • At my school, ESE teachers teach students in ways that help them learn.                                  | 77               |
| • At my school, regular education teachers teach ESE students things that will be useful later on in life. | 76               |
| <b>MIDDLE</b>  |                  |
| <b>(More than 25% but fewer than 75% of the respondents replied with “yes.”)</b>                           |                  |
| • I was invited to attend my IEP meeting this year.  | 75               |
| • At my school, ESE students get work experience (on-the-job training) if they are interested.             | 75               |
| • I am taking the following regular/mainstream classes: Electives (physical education, art, music)         | 74               |

**Miami-Dade County School District  
 Focused Monitoring Report  
 Student Survey Results**

| <b>MIDDLE (cont.)</b>  | <b>%<br/>Yes</b> |
|--|------------------|
| <b>(More than 25% but fewer than 75% of the respondents replied with “yes.”)</b>                                 |                  |
| • At my school, ESE students spend enough time with regular education students.                                  | 74               |
| • I took the FCAT this year.   | 74               |
| • At my school, ESE students get information about education after high school.                                  | 69               |
| • I agree with the type of diploma I am going to receive.  | 69               |
| • Teachers help ESE students prepare for the FCAT.   | 69               |
| • At my school, ESE teachers understand ESE students' needs.   | 68               |
| • At my school, ESE students participate in clubs, sports, and other activities.                                 | 67               |
| • I attended my IEP meeting this year.   | 67               |
| • At my school, regular education teachers teach ESE students in ways that help them learn.                      | 65               |
| • At my school, regular education teachers give ESE students extra help if needed.                               | 64               |
| • In my math classes, we work on the kinds of problems that are tested on the math part of the FCAT.             | 64               |
| • At my school, ESE students are treated fairly by teachers and staff.   | 63               |
| • At my school, regular education teachers understand ESE students' needs.                                       | 63               |
| • In my English/reading classes, we work on the kinds of skills that are tested on the reading part of the FCAT. | 62               |
| • I had a say in the decision about which diploma I would get.   | 60               |
| • At my school, ESE teachers provide ESE students with updated books and materials.                              | 60               |
| • I will probably graduate with a regular diploma.   | 59               |
| • I received accommodations (special testing conditions) for the FCAT.   | 58               |
| • I had a say in the decision about which classes I would take.  | 58               |
| • I am taking the following regular/mainstream classes: Math   | 58               |
| • I am taking the following regular/mainstream classes: English  | 58               |
| • I am taking the following regular/mainstream classes: Social Studies   | 57               |
| • I am taking the following regular/mainstream classes: Science  | 55               |
| • At my school, regular education teachers give ESE students extra time or different assignments if needed.      | 54               |
| • I am taking the following regular/mainstream classes: Vocational (woodshop, computers)                         | 53               |
| • I had a say in the decision about special testing conditions I might get for the FCAT or other tests.          | 49               |
| • I am taking the following ESE classes: English   | 44               |
| • I am taking the following ESE classes: Math  | 43               |

**Miami-Dade County School District  
 Focused Monitoring Report  
 Student Survey Results**

**MIDDLE (cont.)** **%**  
**(More than 25% but fewer than 75% of the respondents replied with “yes.”)** **Yes**

---

- |  |    |
|--|----|
| • I am taking the following ESE classes: Electives (physical education, art, music)      | 42 |
| • I had a say in the decision about whether I need to take the FCAT or a different test. | 30 |
| • I am taking the following ESE classes: Science   | 42 |
| • I am taking the following ESE classes: Social Studies                                  | 27 |

**LOW**  
**(Fewer than 25% of the respondents replied with “yes.”)**

---

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| • I am taking the following ESE classes: Vocational (woodshop, computers) | 4 |
|---|---|

**Appendix B- ESE Monitoring Team Members**

**Miami-Dade County School District  
Focused Monitoring Report  
ESE Monitoring Team Members**

**September 23-27, 2002**

**Department of Education Staff**

ESE Program Administration and Quality Assurance

Eileen Amy, Administrator  
Iris Anderson, Program Specialist  
Gail Best, Program Specialist  
Rhonda Blake, Program Specialist  
Lee Clark, Program Specialist  
Kelly Claude, Program Specialist  
Patricia Howell, Program Specialist  
Kim Komisar, Program Specialist  
Tury Lewis, Program Specialist

**Department of Education Staff**

ESE Program Development and Services

Paul Gallaher, Program Specialist

**Peer Reviewers**

Patti Burrows, Pinellas County Schools  
Mary Camp, Sumter County Schools  
Ginny Chance, Santa Rosa County Schools  
Kathy Devlin, Sarasota County Schools  
Cathy Dooley, Seminole County Schools  
Maureen Guarino, Bay County Schools  
Terri Hanley, Pinellas County Schools  
Pam Harshbarger, Pinellas County Schools  
Debra Johns, Polk County Schools  
Pat Lawson, Lake County Schools  
Joanie Mayer, Seminole County  
Cara Sipel, Indian River County Schools  
Angela Spornraft, Hardee County Schools  
JoAnn Tabor, Okaloosa County Schools  
Linda Zurko, Palm Beach County Schools

**Contracted Staff**

Adalis Anasagasti, Researcher, University of Miami  
Maria Elena Arguelles, Researcher, University of Miami  
Patricia Barnes, Researcher, University of Miami  
Yvonne Campbell, Researcher, University of Miami  
Batya Elbaum, Project Director, University of Miami  
Julie Hewatt, Researcher, University of Miami  
Emily Joseph, Researcher, University of Miami  
Judy Mesler, Researcher, University of Miami  
Hope Nieman, Consultant  
Christopher Sarno, Researcher, University of Miami  
Denise Stewart, Consultant

## **Appendix C- Glossary of Acronyms**

## Glossary of Acronyms

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| Bureau     | Bureau of Instructional Support and Community Services |
| BIP        | Behavior Intervention Plan                             |
| CBC        | Competency Based Curriculum                            |
| CPI        | Crisis Prevention Intervention                         |
| CRISS      | Creating Independence Through Student-Owned Strategies |
| DOE        | Department of Education                                |
| EH         | Emotionally Handicapped                                |
| EMH        | Educable Mentally Handicapped                          |
| ESE        | Exceptional Student Education                          |
| ESOL       | English for Speakers of Other Languages                |
| FAB        | Functional Assessment of Behavior                      |
| FAPE       | Free Appropriate Public Education                      |
| FCAT       | Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test                  |
| FDLRS      | Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System       |
| FIN        | Florida Inclusion Network                              |
| GE         | General Education                                      |
| IDEA       | Individuals with Disabilities Education Act            |
| IEP        | Individual Educational Plan                            |
| LEP        | Limited English Proficient                             |
| M-DCPS     | Miami-Dade County Public Schools                       |
| Pre-K (PK) | Prekindergarten  |
| RIDE       | Remedial Instruction in Discipline                     |
| SED        | Severely Emotionally Disturbed                         |
| SLD        | Specific Learning Disability                           |
| SST        | Student Support Team                                   |



## **Appendix D- Forms Review**

**Miami-Dade County School District  
Focused Monitoring Report  
Forms Review**

This form review was completed as a component of the focused monitoring visit to be conducted on September 23-27, 2002. We have compared the following forms to the requirements of applicable State Board of Education Rules, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), applicable sections of Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations, and the Monitoring Work Papers/Source Book for 2002. The review includes recommended revisions based on programmatic or procedural issues and concerns. The results of the review are detailed below and list the applicable sources used for the review.

**Individual Educational Plan (IEP) Meeting**

**Form 4953 Revised 10/00** *Individual Educational Plan*  
**Source Book/Work Paper - IEP**  
**Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulation Section 300.347**

This form contains the components for compliance.

**The following comments are made regarding this form:**

- The IEP states that parents of students with disabilities will receive progress reports “four times a year.” It is thus assumed that all students in the Miami-Dade County School System receive progress reports four times a year. Parents of students with disabilities must be informed of student progress at least as often as parents are informed of the progress of nondisabled students.

**Parent Notification of Individual Educational Plan (IEP) Meeting**

**Form 4851E Revised 10/01** *Notification of Meeting*  
**Source Book/Work Paper - IEP**  
**Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulation Section 300.345**

This form contains the components for compliance.

**Documentation of Notice and Consent for Initial Placement**

**Form 4959 Revised 10/01** *Informed Notice of IEP Team Recommendation and Parental Consent for Educational Placement in ESE*  
**Source Book/Work Paper - Program Areas**  
**Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulation Sections 300.503, 300.505 and 300.534**

**The following must be addressed.**

- This form does not meet all of the compliance components for informed notice if taken by itself. The form refers to a previous “eligibility” form provided to the parent. If the parent attended the meeting and received both forms at the same time, compliance is met. However, if the “consent form” is mailed to the parent, a copy of the “eligibility” form must accompany it. This form needs to be changed to indicate that a copy of the eligibility form is attached.

**Informed Notice and Consent for Evaluation**

**Form 4961 Rev. 4/02** *Notice of Intent and Parental/Guardian Consent to Conduct an Evaluation*

**Source Book/Work Paper - Evaluation**

**Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulation Sections 300.503 and 300.505**

This form contains the components for compliance.

**Informed Notice of Reevaluation**

**Form 4958 Revised 4/02** *Informed Notice of Reevaluation Review Meeting and/or Consent for Reevaluation*

**Source Book/Work Paper - Reevaluation**

**Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulation Sections 300.503 and 300.505**

This form contains the components for compliance.

**Notification of Change in Placement and Change in FAPE**

**Form 4877E Revised 4/02** *Informed Notice of Proposal or Refusal to Change Evaluation, Identification, Educational Placement, or Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE).*

**Source Book/Work Paper - IEP**

**Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulation Section 300.503**

This form contains the components for compliance.

**Informed Notice of Refusal**

**Form 4877E Revised 4/02** *Informed Notice of Proposal or Refusal to Change Evaluation, Identification, Educational Placement, or Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE).*

**Source Book/Work Paper - IEP**

**Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulation Section 300.503**

This form contains the components for compliance.

**Documentation of Notice of Ineligibility**

**Form 4960 Revised 4/02** *Informed Notice of Initial Eligibility or Ineligibility*

**Source Book/Work Paper - Program Areas**

**Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulation Sections 300.503, 300.505 and 300.534**

This form contains the components for compliance.

**Documentation of Notice of Dismissal**

**Form 4877E Revised 4/02** *Informed Notice of Proposal or Refusal to Change Evaluation, Identification, Educational Placement, or Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE).*

**Source Book/Work Paper - Program Areas**

**Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulation Sections 300.503, 300.505 and 300.534**

This form contains the components for compliance.

**The following comments are made regarding this form:**

- It is noted that the term “dismissal” does not appear on the form. One required component for dismissal is that there is evidence of a reevaluation prior to dismissal. It is assumed that the reevaluation information will be included when the form is being completed. At the next printing of this form, the district may want to consider adding the terms “dismissal” and “reevaluation.”

**Documentation of Staffing/Eligibility Determination**

**Form 4960E Revised 4/02** *Informed notice of Initial Eligibility or Ineligibility*

**Source Book/Work Paper - Program Areas**

**Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulation Sections 300.503, 300.505 and 300.534**

**The following must be addressed.**

- There is not a place for the date of the eligibility review by the ESE administrator. It is suggested that you inform the people signing as ESE administrator or designee that they must date the signature, and at the next printing of the form include a place for the date.

It was noted that the district utilizes the procedural safeguards wording provided by the Bureau of Instructional Support and Community Services. The information sent to the Bureau regarding confidentiality of student records was also reviewed. These documents contain the components for compliance.