

Florida Department of Corrections

Final Report: On-Site Monitoring Exceptional Student Education Programs

June 21-23, 2011



Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services
Florida Department of Education

This publication is produced through the Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services Resource and Information Center (BRIC) of the Florida Department of Education. For more information on available resources, contact BRIC.

BRIC website: <http://www.fldoe.org/ese/clerhome.asp>

Bureau website: <http://www.fldoe.org/ese/>

E-mail: BRIC@fldoe.org

Telephone: (850) 245-0477

Fax: (850) 245-0987

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

KATHLEEN SHANAHAN, Chair

ROBERTO MARTÍNEZ, *Vice Chair*

Members

GARY CHARTRAND

DR. AKSHAY DESAI

BARBARA S. FEINGOLD

JOHN R. PADGET

Gerard Robinson
Commissioner of Education



August 12, 2011

Mr. Allen Overstreet, Education Administrator
Florida Department of Corrections
Bureau of Re-Entry Program and Education
501 South Calhoun Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-2500

Dear Mr. Overstreet:

We are pleased to provide you with the *Final Report: On-Site Monitoring of Exceptional Student Education Programs* for the Florida Department of Corrections (DOC). This report was developed by integrating multiple sources of information related to an on-site monitoring visit to DOC facilities on June 21–23, 2011, including student record reviews, interviews with educational and central office staff, and classroom observations. The final report will be posted on the Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services' website and may be accessed at <http://www.fldoe.org/ese/mon-home.asp>.

Mr. John Howle, Special Education Administrator, and his staff were very helpful during the Bureau's preparation for the visit and during the on-site monitoring. In addition, the Education Supervisors and other staff members at each of the institutions welcomed and assisted the monitoring team during the on-site visit. The Bureau's on-site monitoring activities identified some discrepancies that require corrective action as well as strengths related to DOC's special education services.

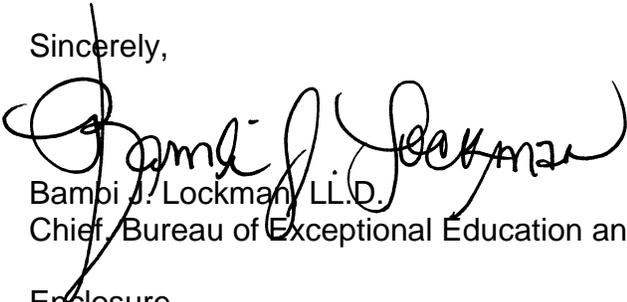
BAMBI J. LOCKMAN, LL.D.

Chief, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services

Mr. Allen Overstreet
August 12, 2011
Page Two

Thank you for your commitment to improving services to exceptional education students in DOC. If there are any questions regarding this final report, please contact Patricia Howell, Program Director, Monitoring and Compliance, at (850) 245-0476 or via electronic mail at Patricia.Howell@fldoe.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bambi J. Lockman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "B".

Bambi J. Lockman, LL.D.
Chief, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services

Enclosure

cc: John Howle
Debra Schneider-Loucks
Karen Denbroeder
Patricia Howell
Vicki L. Eddy

**Florida Department of Corrections
Final Report: On-Site Monitoring
Exceptional Student Education Programs**

June 21–23, 2011

**Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services
Florida Department of Education**

Florida Department of Corrections

Final Report: On-Site Monitoring Exceptional Student Education Programs June 21–23, 2011

Table of Contents

Authority.....	1
Monitoring Process	1
Background Information	1
On-Site Activities	2
<i>Monitoring Team</i>	2
<i>Coordinators for DOC during the Monitoring Visit</i>	2
<i>Correctional Institutions</i>	2
<i>Student Focus Groups</i>	2
<i>Data Collection</i>	2
<i>Review of Records</i>	3
Results	3
Commendations	3
Concerns	6
Findings of Noncompliance	6
Corrective Action	6
Technical Assistance	8
Glossary of Acronyms and Abbreviations	9

Florida Department of Corrections
On-Site Monitoring
Exceptional Student Education Programs
June 21–23, 2011

Final Report

Authority

The Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services (Bureau), in carrying out its roles of leadership, resource allocation, technical assistance, monitoring, and evaluation, is required to oversee the performance of district school boards in the enforcement of all laws and rules related to exceptional student education (ESE) (sections 1001.03(8) and 1008.32, Florida Statutes [F.S.]). One purpose of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is to assess and ensure the effectiveness of efforts to educate children with disabilities (s. 300.1(d) of Title 34, Code of Federal Regulations [CFR]). The Bureau is responsible for ensuring that the requirements of IDEA and the educational requirements of the State are implemented (34 CFR §300.149(a)(1) and (2)).

In fulfilling this requirement, the Bureau monitors ESE programs provided by district school boards in accordance with §§1001.42, 1003.57, and 1003.573, F.S. Through these monitoring activities, the Bureau examines and evaluates procedures, records, and ESE services; provides information and assistance to school districts; and otherwise assists school districts in operating effectively and efficiently. The monitoring system is designed to emphasize improved educational outcomes for students while ensuring compliance with applicable federal laws and regulations and state statutes and rules.

Monitoring Process

Decisions regarding the type and extent of monitoring activities, including the need for on-site visits, are based on the most current data available for a given school district. Due to the unique nature of educational programs implemented in correctional settings, on-site monitoring of special education services in Florida Department of Corrections (DOC) facilities is conducted annually. This schedule allows Bureau staff to effectively target technical assistance to DOC staff. In addition to the on-site visits, DOC participated in the 2010–11 self-assessment process.

Background Information

In a letter dated December 3, 2010, the Director of Education and Initiatives at DOC was informed that the Bureau would be conducting an on-site monitoring visit related to DOC's ESE programs. During the 2010–11 self-assessment monitoring process, DOC

was required to evaluate implementation of standards related to measurable postsecondary goals and transition services for 11 students and standards related to the individual educational plan (IEP) for 11 students. Thirteen findings of noncompliance were identified through this process. The noncompliance was corrected for the individual students, and DOC demonstrated 100 percent compliance on each standard through the review of random sample of student records. During the 2010–11 school year, DOC staff continued to provide training to ESE and basic educational staff, particularly in the development of appropriate IEPs, postsecondary goals, and transition services. Based on this information, a decision was made to focus the June 21–23, 2011, on-site monitoring activities on development and implementation of IEPs at three correctional institutions.

On-Site Activities

Monitoring Team

On June 21–23, 2011, the following Bureau staff members conducted the on-site monitoring visit:

- Vicki Eddy, Program Specialist, Monitoring and Compliance (Team Leader)
- Karlene Deware, Program Specialist, Monitoring and Compliance

Coordinators for DOC during the Monitoring Visit

- John Howle, Special Education Administrator
- Debra Schneider-Loucks, Government Operations Consultant

Correctional Institutions

Correctional institutions visited included the following:

- Lake Correctional Institution
- Hamilton Correctional Institution
- Suwannee Correctional Institution

Student Focus Groups

Seven students from two correctional institutions participated in student focus groups Bureau staff conducted. These students were selected from the group of students chosen for case studies. The students who participated in the focus groups shared the following:

- They were included in the IEP process
- Services on their IEPs were being provided, including during confinement
- Their ESE teachers were very helpful

Data Collection

Monitoring activities at three correctional institutions included the following:

- Record reviews – 15 students
- Observations – 3 classrooms
- Student focus groups – 7 students
- Educational staff interviews:
 - Central office – 2 participants
 - Education supervisors – 3 participants

- Correctional administrators – 1 participant (local education agency representative at Lake Correctional Institution)
- General education teachers – 4 participants
- ESE teachers – 3 participants

Review of Records

DOC was asked to provide the following documents for each student selected for review:

- Previous IEP
- Current IEP (including the notice of conference)
- Test for Adult Basic Education (TABE) scores
- Progress on annual goals
- Student attendance
- Student schedule

Results

The following results reflect the data collected through the activities of the on-site monitoring as well as commendations, concerns, and findings of noncompliance.

Commendations

All of the correctional institutions visited are to be commended for the following:

- The education supervisors appear to be extremely supportive of the teachers.
- Students were observed working quietly and independently in the classrooms.
- The general education and ESE teachers interviewed demonstrated knowledge of individual student needs.
- Educational staff members interviewed demonstrated a high level of professionalism and commitment to the students.
- There are ongoing meetings among general education and ESE teachers to monitor and discuss the educational progress and needs of individual students.
- Varied service delivery models are provided to meet the educational needs of the students (e.g., pull-out, one-on-one tutoring, small group instruction, consultation).
- There are strategies in place to motivate inmates to persevere with their education goals.
- ESE aides are included in annual training and are part of the integrated team approach.
- Students with disabilities are given priority for educational services if there is limited space in the classrooms.
- The speech language pathologist works with students individually and provides follow-up instruction for the ESE teacher.
- The general education and ESE teachers use the Curriculum Frameworks.

In addition, the following commendations relate to Lake Correctional Institution:

- Educational staff members adapt and incorporate techniques to address the unique psychological needs of the inmates.

- ESE students work on Adult Basic Education, General Educational Development (GED), or vocational programs. Students who earn a GED can go on to a vocational program or to an on-the-job training program.
- The ESE teacher provides services to students in the mental health facility more frequently than the students' IEPs require.
- The ESE teacher uses prescriptive teaching in many formats by showing students what they have mastered and how to build upon this knowledge.
- The ESE teacher encourages respect among students and uses classroom opportunities to provide social skills training.
- Inmates are encouraged to share learned skills with other students who are less skilled.
- Inmate peer tutors are available to assist the teachers in the classrooms as there are approximately 25 students to one teacher.
- Services are provided to students in confinement every 10 days, which is more frequently than the students' IEPs require.
- A unique vocational program for Wastewater/Water Treatment Technologies is offered with certification.
- The ESE teacher helps to teach students how to overcome testing phobia by using a flip chart to test and interactive computer programs to build test-taking skills.
- High-interest software that requires analysis and builds high-level skills is used with the students.
- Educational staff obtained a Perkins grant to build a miniature model of a wastewater/water treatment plant at the education facility. This model is used for students enrolled in the Wastewater/Water Treatment Technologies program who cannot go to the actual treatment plant to earn training hours for certification due to current behavioral concerns.
- One day per week a volunteer provides instruction on small engine repair to general education students and students with disabilities who want to go into lawn service upon release.
- A Smart board is used in the classroom.
- The GED test is given each quarter; 25 students recently took the test, including some of the ESE students.

The following commendations relate to Hamilton Correctional Institution:

- Options for ESE students include GED preparation classes, transition classes (preparing for release from prison), and vocational programs.
- ESE and general education teachers collaborate to provide students with more than the required services on the IEP despite large case loads.
- ESE teachers have developed curriculum to meet the individual needs of students and practical forms for implementation.
- Paraprofessionals and inmate aides work under the direction of the teachers to provide additional supports for students.
- One ESE teacher developed a reading program from the McGraw-Hill, Steck-Vaughn series with worksheets and using workbooks from Blackline Masters.
- A Smart board is used in the classroom.
- TABE scores are used to identify the student's specific area(s) of need.

- One-on-one instruction is provided for students with special needs.
- The ESE teacher gathers data regarding individual student needs for accommodations.
- Contact logs are kept for students in confinement, logging work that has been provided and completed.
- Students in confinement are provided services more often than the IEPs require.
- ESE teachers use an Interview Questionnaire based on the student's IEP to determine the student's interest and areas of need.
- A wide variety of vocational programs is offered (e.g., electrical, masonry brick and block, cabinetmaking, personal computer support).
- This quarter 32 students took the GED test and 24 passed, including some of the ESE students.

The following commendations relate to Suwannee Correctional Institution:

- ESE students can work on Adult Basic Education, earn a GED, and work on volunteer literacy studies after earning a GED.
- The Education supervisor is very resourceful in obtaining educational literature that meets the needs and interests of the inmates.
- The ESE teacher uses a spreadsheet to provide a clear snapshot of visits to the ESE students, including dates, assignments provided, and grades.
- ESE inmates are given a starter packet upon arrival that outlines general information on educational services.
- ESE students are interviewed using a Personal Goals Interview Sheet to gather information on academic and vocational goals as well as employment, independent functioning, communication, social and emotional, and community transition needs.
- The general education and ESE teachers provide high-interest assignments at individual student academic levels to build skills for daily living and to enable the inmates to make better choices.
- If a student has earned a GED, supplemental educational activities are provided based on the inmate's interests and hobbies.
- The general education and ESE teachers provide services more often than the students' IEPs require despite large case loads.
- The ESE teacher breaks down assignments to help the inmate stay focused in order to be successful.
- General education teachers use an Individual Academic Plan for ESE students, which includes subskills to be learned, date work was assigned for each skill, date work was returned, and the score received. The plan also includes books checked out and additional assignments the teachers provided.
- The plumbing vocational program provides certification upon completion.
- Thirty-four students earned GEDs this year, including some ESE students.
- Educational staff look for students' personal strengths and help them succeed in these areas (e.g., landscape, engine repair).
- Inmates have the opportunity to learn gardening skills by working in a vegetable garden.

Concerns

The following concern relates to all three correctional institutions visited: some of the measurable annual goals rely on the short-term objectives for total clarity. The IEP form has been reformatted to address this concern, and DOC indicated plans to follow up with training for appropriate staff regarding use of the revised IEP form.

The following concerns relate to Lake Correctional Institution:

- On one of the IEPs, the transition service areas listed were incorrect; however, it was clear that the transition areas had been considered in the development of the postsecondary goals.
- The majority of the IEPs reviewed were hard to read as they had been amended by hand and included the signatures of each IEP team member beside each revision. DOC has indicated plans to provide technical assistance to ESE staff regarding IEP amendments.
- An inaccurate date of birth on one notice of conference was noted.

The following concerns relate to Hamilton Correctional Institution:

- On one of the IEPs, the transition service areas listed were incorrect; however, it was clear that the transition areas had been considered in the development of the postsecondary goals.
- On one of the IEPs, the transition services were not marked indicating consideration; however, it was clear that the areas had been considered in the development of the postsecondary goals.
- One ESE student who had recently decided to refuse services reported that ESE students who attend educational classes are assigned to a specific dorm that the student considers troublesome. An ESE teacher clarified that by refusing services the student was hoping to be moved to another dorm. DOC educational staff indicated plans to follow up with the institution's staff regarding this concern.

The following concerns relate to Suwannee Correctional Institution:

- Two conference notices contained a typographical error pertaining to the year for the date of the meeting.
- On one of the amended IEPs, the student's exceptionality was not included.

Findings of Noncompliance

Noncompliance with the IEP standard related to measurable annual goals was identified in four of the 15 records reviewed. Student-specific information needed for correction of noncompliance was provided to the DOC under separate cover.

Corrective Action

In a July 12, 2011, letter to DOC providing student-specific information, the Bureau required that no later than August 11, 2011, DOC must amend the IEPs to correct the identified noncompliance. In addition, **no later than July 12, 2012**, DOC must demonstrate 100 percent compliance with the standard in question through review of a

random sample of five IEPs developed after June 23, 2011. **No later than August 26, 2011**, DOC shall submit to the Bureau a corrective action plan (CAP) detailing the activities, resources, and timelines DOC will employ to ensure that the compliance target of 100 percent will be met within the required timeline.

Note: In accordance with the reporting requirements of the Annual Performance Report for the State Performance Plan, these items will be counted as findings of noncompliance related to IEP development. Documentation verifying completion of all components of the corrective action must be received in accordance with the timeline established above, but in no case longer than one year from the date of formal identification (July 12, 2012) in order for DOC to comply with the requirements of SPP indicator 15 (timely correction of noncompliance).

Technical Assistance

Specific information for technical assistance, support, and guidance regarding IEP development can be found in the *Exceptional Student Education Compliance Manual 2010–11*.

Bureau Contacts

The following is a partial list of Bureau staff available for technical assistance:

ESE Program Administration and Quality Assurance

(850) 245-0476

Karen Denbroeder, Administrator
Karen.Denbroeder@fldoe.org

Patricia Howell, Program Director
Monitoring and Compliance
Patricia.Howell@fldoe.org

Vicki Eddy, Program Specialist
DOC's ESE Compliance Liaison
Monitoring and Compliance
Vicki.Eddy@fldoe.org

Karlene Deware, Program Specialist
Monitoring and Compliance
Karlene.Deware@fldoe.org

Anne Bozik, Program Specialist
Monitoring and Compliance
Anne.Bozik@fldoe.org

Liz Conn, Program Specialist
Monitoring and Compliance
Liz.Conn@fldoe.org

Brenda Fisher, Program Specialist
Monitoring and Compliance
Brenda.Fisher@fldoe.org

Annette Oliver, Program Specialist
Monitoring and Compliance
Annette.Oliver@fldoe.org

ESE Program Development and Services

(850) 245-0478

Sheila Gritz, Program Specialist
Program Development
Sheila.Gritz@fldoe.org

Bureau Resource and Information Center

(850) 245-0477

Judy White, Director
BRIC@fldoe.org

**Florida Department of Education
Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services**

Glossary of Acronyms and Abbreviations

Bureau	Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services
BRIC	Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services Resource and Information Center
CAP	Corrective action plan
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
DOC	Department of Corrections
ESE	Exceptional student education
F.A.C.	Florida Administrative Code
F.S.	Florida Statutes
GED	General Educational Development
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
IEP	Individual educational plan
TABE	Test for Adult Basic Education



Florida Department of Education
Gerard Robinson, Commissioner

313052M