

**2013-14 Exceptional Student Education
Monitoring and Assistance
On-Site Visit Report**

**Escambia County School District
March 10-12, 2014**



This publication is produced through the Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services (BEESS), Division of Public Schools, Florida Department of Education, and is available online at <http://www.fldoe.org/ease/mon-home.asp>. For information on available resources, contact the BEESS Resource and Information Center (BRIC).

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November 19, 2014

Malcolm Thomas, Superintendent
Escambia County School District
75 North Pace Blvd.
Pensacola, Florida 32505

Dear Superintendent Thomas:

We are pleased to provide you with the **2013-14 Exceptional Student Education (ESE) Monitoring and Assistance On-Site Visit Report for Escambia County School District**. This report was developed by integrating multiple sources of information related to an on-site monitoring visit to your school district on March 10-12, 2014. Those information sources included interviews with district and school staff and students, student focus groups, and student record reviews, **Local Educational Agency Profiles, Guiding Questions – District Level Needs Assessment** and an action-planning and problem-solving process. This report will be posted on the Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services' (BEESS) website and may be accessed at <http://www.fldoe.org/ease/mon-home.asp>.

The 2013-14 ESE Monitoring and Assistance process focuses on those State Performance Plan indicators that contributed to the targeting of school districts for coordinated early intervening services and those indicators that affect equity and access in the educational environment for students with disabilities. Additionally, the process focuses on a shift from ESE compliance to outcomes to prepare all students for college and career readiness, which include: increasing standard diploma graduates; decreasing the number of students dropping out of school; increasing regular class placement; decreasing the need for seclusion and restraint; and eliminating disproportionality in eligibility identification and discipline.

The Escambia County School District was selected for an on-site visit due to low graduation rates of students with disabilities. The on-site visit was conducted by a state support team (SST) that included BEESS and discretionary project staff.

Monica Verra-Tirado, Ed.D., Chief
Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services

Superintendent Thomas
November 19, 2014
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Ms. Teri Szafran, ESE Director and her staff were very helpful to the SST in preparing for the on-site visit and throughout the visit. In addition, the principals, other staff members, and students at the schools visited welcomed the SST and demonstrated a commitment to the education of students in the school district.

As part of the SST's visit, representatives from the school district's ESE department, the school staff and other school district staff participated in an action-planning and problem-solving process. This group reviewed the school district's data collected before and during the on-site visit, and came to consensus on a priority goal related to preparation for college and career readiness. An action plan, developed around that goal, will be implemented by the ESE department with the assistance of designated discretionary project staff from the SST.

Thank you for your commitment to improving services to exceptional education students in the Escambia County School District. If there are any questions regarding this report, please contact me at 850-245-0475 or via email at monica.verra-tirado@fldoe.org.

Sincerely,

Monica Verra-Tirado, Ed.D., Chief
Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services

Enclosure

cc: Teri Szafran
Cathy Bishop
Patricia Howell
Annette Oliver
Judith White

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

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Authority

The Florida Department of Education (FDOE), Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services (BEESS), 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 exceptional student education (ESE) laws and rules (sections 1001.03(3), 1003.571 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 sections 1001.42, 1003.57 and 1003.573, F.S. Through these monitoring activities, the bureau examines records and ESE services, evaluates procedures, provides information and assistance to school districts and otherwise assists school districts in operating effectively and efficiently. The monitoring system is designed to facilitate improved educational outcomes for students while ensuring compliance with applicable federal laws and regulations and state statutes and rules.

Under 34 CFR §300.646(b)(2), if a state identifies significant disproportionality based on race or ethnicity in a local educational agency (LEA) with respect to the identification of children as children with disabilities, the identification of children in specific disability categories, the placement of children with disabilities in particular educational settings or the taking of disciplinary actions, the LEA must use the maximum amount (15 percent) of funds allowable for comprehensive coordinated early intervening services (CEIS) for children in the LEA, particularly, but not exclusively, for children in those groups that were significantly overidentified.

Section 1003.573, F.S., Use of restraint and seclusion on students with disabilities, was created in July 2010, and established documentation, reporting and monitoring requirements for districts regarding the use of restraint and seclusion for students with disabilities. School districts were required to have policies and procedures that govern parent notification, incident reporting, data collection and monitoring of the use of restraint or seclusion for students with disabilities in place no later than January 31, 2011. In July 2011, s. 1003.573, F.S., was amended to require that the FDOE establish standards for documenting, reporting and monitoring the use of manual or physical restraint and occurrences of seclusion. In September and October 2011, the standards established by the FDOE were provided to school districts and were included in the district's Exceptional Student Education Policies and Procedures (SP&P) document.

ESE Monitoring and Assistance Process

Background Information

The 2013-14 ESE Monitoring and Assistance process focuses on those State Performance Plan (SPP) indicators that contributed to the targeting of school districts for CEIS and the following indicators that affect equity and access in the educational environment for students with disabilities:

- Indicator 1 – Graduation: Percentage of youth with individual educational plans (IEPs) graduating from high school with a regular diploma.
- Indicator 2 – Dropout: Percentage of youth with IEPs dropping out of high school.
- Indicator 4 – Rates of suspension and expulsion:
 - A. Percentage of districts that have a significant discrepancy in the rates of suspensions and expulsions of greater than 10 days in a school year for children with IEPs.
 - B. Percentage of districts that have (a) a significant discrepancy, by race or ethnicity, in the rate of suspensions and expulsions of greater than 10 days for children with IEPs; and (b) policies, procedures or practices that contribute to the significant discrepancy and do not comply with requirements relating to the development and implementation of IEPs, the use of positive behavioral interventions and support and procedural safeguards.
- Indicator 5 – Educational environments:
Percentage of children with IEPs ages 6 through 21:
 - A. Inside the regular class 80 percent or more of the day;
 - B. Inside the regular class less than 40 percent of the day; and
 - C. In separate schools, residential facilities, or homebound/hospital placements.
- Indicator 10 – Disproportionality, specific disability categories: Percentage of districts with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories that is the result of inappropriate identification.
- CEIS – Services provided to students in kindergarten through grade 12 (with a particular emphasis on students in kindergarten through grade three) who are not currently identified as needing special education or related services, but who need additional academic and behavioral supports to succeed in a general education environment.
- Restraint – Rate of incidents of restraint, as reported in the FDOE website.
- Seclusion – Rate of incidents of seclusion, as reported in the FDOE website.

The 2013-14 ESE Monitoring and Assistance process includes four phases:

- Phase 1 was composed of planning activities that occur in advance of the first on-site visit to the school district.
- Phase 2 was the initial on-site visit to the selected school district by the state support team (SST).
- Phase 3 includes follow-up and post-initial visit activities that are conducted by a designated follow-up team, as determined by the SST, and identification of the ongoing data that will be collected.
- Phase 4 includes evaluation of the effectiveness of the school district's action plan, and should include participation of the comprehensive team that was involved in Phase 1.

For ESE compliance monitoring purposes, the bureau required all school districts to participate in the 2013-14 Level I Fall Cycle Self-Assessment process, which included the review of records for implementation of IEPs and a review of incidents of restraint and seclusion. School districts

identified as part of the monitoring and assistance process with on-site visits during the 2013-14 school year were exempt from self-assessing school records for IEP implementation and restraint and seclusion. Instead, bureau members of the school district's SST reviewed a sample of records as part of the on-site visit.

In a letter dated August 27, 2013, the superintendent of the Escambia County School District was informed that BEESS would be conducting an on-site monitoring visit for the following focus area: graduation rate for students with disabilities.

School Selection

Upon review of the school district's data, it was determined that the monitoring and assistance process would involve the following schools and programs for student focus groups and interviews and teacher focus groups:

- Escambia High School
- Tate Senior High School
- Bailey Middle School
- District Extended Programs (18-22 programs)

On-Site Activities

SST – On-Site Visit Team

The following SST members conducted the monitoring and assistance on-site visit:

FDOE, BEESS

- Judith White, transition specialist (facilitator)
- Jill Snelson, program specialist (co-facilitator)
- Janie Register, program specialist

FDOE/Bureau Discretionary Projects

- Rebecca Sarlo, PhD., secondary school coordinator, University of South Florida (USF) Problem Solving and Response to Intervention Project (PS/Rtl)
- Michael McAuley, FDOE Differentiated Accountability (DA), regional executive director
- Tury Lewis, regional transition representative, Project 10: Transition Education Network
- Allyn E. Harris, coordinator, Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System (FDLRS) Associate Centers Westgate
- Jayna Jenkins, multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) Liaison, problem solving response to intervention (PS/Rtl), Student Support Services Project
- Kathy Christiansen, assistant in technical assistance, Positive Behavior Support (PBS) Project
- Kimberlee Oakes, facilitator, Florida Inclusion Network (FIN)
- Chris Wells, coordinator, Multiagency Network for Students with Emotional and Behavioral Disabilities

Data Collection

On-site monitoring and assistance activities included the following:

- Student focus groups and interviews – 25 participants

- Teacher focus groups – 16 participants
- Completion of Seclusion and Restraint protocol – four students
- Completion of IEP Implementation protocol – six students
- Action-planning and problem-solving process – 31 participants
- Review of data from the school district's LEA Profiles, Guiding Questions – District-Level Needs Assessment and data compiled from district data systems

Review of Records

The school district was asked to provide the following documents, as applicable, for each of the 10 students selected for review of restraint or seclusion and IEP implementation:

- IEPs for the 2012-13 and the 2013-14 school years
- Current functional behavioral assessment
- Current behavioral intervention plan (BIP)
- Discipline and attendance records for 2013-14 school year
- Progress reports and report cards for the 2012-13 and the 2013-14 school years
- Student's current schedule
- Parent notifications and other documentation related to incidents of restraint and seclusion
- Verification of training for staff members involved in incidents of restraint or seclusion
- Verification of the provision of related services and accommodations (lesson plans, teacher schedules and therapy logs)

Guiding Questions – District-Level Needs Assessment

Prior to the on-site visit, the school district was provided with questions to use as a guide in the collection of data. SST and district staff reviewed these data during the action-planning and problem-solving process. Escambia County School District's questions were related to seclusion, restraints and SPP Indicator 1. A list of these questions is located in Appendix A of this report.

Results

The following results reflect the data collected and reviewed through the activities of the 2013-14 ESE Monitoring and Assistance process for Escambia County School District. Also included are commendations, findings of noncompliance and next steps, as applicable.

Data Review

Graduation

Beginning with the 2010-11 school year, the U.S. Department of Education adopted a new graduation rate calculation (the federal uniform high school graduation rate). This calculation uses the number of first-time ninth graders from four years ago, plus incoming transfer students on the same schedule to graduate, minus students from this population who transferred out or left to enroll in a private school or home education divided into the number of standard diploma graduates from the same group. The resulting percentages are reported for 2010-11 through 2012-13 for students with disabilities and all students.

Federal Uniform High School Graduation Rate for Students Identified with Disabilities:

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Escambia	24%	23%	32%
Size-alike group	43%	47%	51%
State	44%	48%	52%

Federal Uniform High School Graduation Rate for All Students:

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Escambia	58%	62%	64%
Size-alike group	71%	75%	76%
State	71%	74%	76%

The standard diploma graduation rate is the number of standard diploma graduates divided by the number of students with disabilities who completed their education (received either a standard diploma, general education development, special diploma, certificate of completion or special certificate of completion) or dropped out. This graduation rate is calculated based on the total number of students with disabilities who exited school in a given year, rather than using the four-year cohort model described in the No Child Left Behind graduation rate. The data are reported for the three-year period from 2010-11 through 2012-13.

Standard Diploma Graduation Rate for Students Identified with Disabilities:

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Escambia	33%	35%	44%
Size-alike group	52%	52%	59%
State	54%	52%	58%

Special Diploma Graduation Rate for Students Identified with Disabilities:

Contributing to the low standard diploma rate in Escambia is the high special diploma rate. In 2012-13 the special diploma rate was 37.8 percent, 17.5 percent higher than the state rate of 20.3 percent, and the highest in the size-alike group. Almost 34 percent of students with a specific learning disability who graduated in Escambia did so with a special diploma, compared to only 9.2 percent statewide.

Student Focus Groups and Interviews

Student focus groups and interviews were conducted at two high schools during the monitoring and assistance on-site visit. Student views were collected on the following topics: IEP team meetings and parental participation, career and technical education, academics, extracurricular activities, Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test® (FCAT) 2.0, diploma options, dropout, and suspension and expulsion. Thirteen students at each of two high schools participated in focus groups and two students with disabilities at each school were interviewed, one who was working toward a standard diploma and one who was working toward a special diploma.

Students with disabilities at Tate High School were very positive about their school and complimentary of the relationships they had with ESE staff and the administration. Although some requested more variety in academic options, overall they felt well-prepared for their postsecondary goals and reported being involved with their annual IEP meetings.

Behavioral expectations are reported to be standardized and consistently applied. Many teachers were noted for encouraging students to recognize the connection of what they are learning in school to college preparation. Some were noted to encourage students only by stating they had to have the class to graduate.

Students also highly praised teachers they perceived to be energetic and passionate about their subjects, reporting that they looked forward to those classes, and would appreciate if all teachers evidenced that kind of enthusiasm. They were very grateful to teachers who provided additional academic assistance before and after school, specifically noting that mathematics and social studies did an excellent job of providing this help. It was more challenging to find time to meet with teachers who were also coaches.

Students recommended that graduating students be afforded an opportunity to impart their wisdom to rising ninth graders and also felt that the Spirit Club, which is no longer viable, might be a type of club that could begin again. It was shared that several felt that some of the “open” clubs really weren’t open to ninth graders, or were cliquish.

No students reported being assigned a mentor or an advisor, but all stated there was an adult on campus to whom they could speak, if needed.

Some students expressed concern regarding not getting the electives they wanted.

Students noted that teachers provided a rubric so students understood how each activity counted toward the final grade.

Some students expressed concern regarding funding for clubs and the use of funds raised. It seemed the students did not understand why funds were sometimes used as they were, and wondered if more transparency could be provided about decisions for the funding of clubs and for the use of club monies.

Students specifically mentioned the Jennings Building on the Tate campus as being in need of repair. They requested that attention be paid to the outdated buildings as they felt there were several on campus in need of upgrading.

General education students at Tate High School also reported that expectations were clear, that there was lots of academic assistance available and that rubrics were provided.

The students noted that the engagement level of teachers varied greatly, as did behavior expectations in the classroom. Behavior expectations in common areas were reported as being very clear via verbal and written instruction as well as wall posters.

The students felt that the make-up policy for absences was too strict.

Students stated that it was important to be involved in school activities and some wanted more of these provided.

They expressed some concern about disproportionality and stated that black students did not often take advanced courses and there was a perception that teacher expectations were lower for minority students than for white students.

Escambia High School students with disabilities reported that the social aspects of their school life were central to their experience, that sports were available and that “lots of kids can fit in.” They did, however, also report bullying of the students they did not perceive to “fit in.”

Students mentioned that a lot of academic assistance was available, and especially mentioned peer tutoring as helpful. They noted that all the learning strategies teachers were effective. They did state that being referred to Focus, Escambia’s student information system, to catch up on missed work with no other instruction was not helpful.

Overall, the students felt that the amount of time they worked alone or in groups was appropriate, although a few felt that some teachers spent too much time lecturing.

Students were well aware of attendance and behavior policies, but wished teachers would also follow cell phone rules.

Students placed a great deal of emphasis on how they could help younger students, especially freshmen, and they also expressed that teachers should emphasize more how important graduating is and they should ensure that seniors do not drop out. Students said they were not assigned a mentor, but did have a school counselor.

Students would prefer more choice of elective courses.

Escambia High School general education students could articulate PBS programs and noted that teachers have similar behavioral expectations. They described an improvement in behavior at Escambia High in the last few years, noting that fighting has decreased dramatically.

Some students noted that school could be boring and suggested that fewer lectures, more activities and a block schedule would help.

In common with the students with disabilities, it was noted that counselors were available to discuss academic and personal issues, but that they had not been assigned a mentor.

Teacher Focus Groups

Teacher focus groups were held at one high school and one middle school. Separate groups were conducted with ESE and general education teachers. In addition to general questions, information was gathered on environmental systems, instructional systems and behavioral systems.

Middle school teachers reported the following:

- The administration is very supportive.
- Discovery Education is widely used.
- Teachers can analyze what students are struggling with and they report using the videos and other embedded tools often.
- The accelerated math system is usable and helpful.

- Behavioral expectations and procedures are generally standardized across the school. Each teacher reports personalizing the approach, but all agreed the standardized approach allows for students to clearly understand expectations.
- There was concern with the size of the middle school visited.
- There was concern regarding attendance. Teachers report that the school uses ConnectEd to call home each time a student is absent. Students are allowed three days to make up work.
- There was interest in attending more training beyond the introduction of how to differentiate instruction.
- The teachers recommended that training provide time to plan lessons and communicate with other teachers with whom they work.
- There was frustration with the number of students who regularly leave school during the 7th and 8th period.
- Teachers need assistance with master schedule design and the use of personnel to ensure adequate assistance for included students with disabilities.
- Professional development on how to adopt MTSS/Rtl at the secondary level for administrators, guidance counselors and school psychologists would be welcome.
- There was some frustration with the middle school rubric. All students with averages below 55 are automatically given a 55, and then can earn additional points for certain behaviors. Teachers report that students know they'll get enough of these points to get them to a 60 and they'll get a credit. Up to nine points can be earned for behavior, participation and supplies. Teachers believe these students will ultimately fail in high school as the rubric does not serve as an incentive and negative behaviors happen because of it.
- When teachers or teacher assistants do come to support the included students, the general education teachers report that there is no common planning time.
- Assistants do not always have the subject area knowledge to be of help.
- Middle school students that had no recess time and a double block of learning strategies and reading, resulted in students with disabilities not having time to "let off steam."
- In the first year of inclusion, the teachers recommend a resource room designed to provide specific skill instruction.
- Some general education teachers struggle with implementing accommodations or are not comfortable with them.
- The teachers reported the need for more effective behavioral intervention in elementary school.
- Transition meetings from elementary to middle and middle to high school are appreciated and helpful.
- General education teachers need IEP training and inclusion training.

High school teachers reported the following:

- The middle school does not prepare students for high school.
- There is no planning time with co-teacher available.
- Credit Recovery via virtual is not working well.
- There are mixed opinions on PBS.
- Having a support facilitator in the class works well, but they do not always have them available.
- General education teachers no longer attend IEP team meetings, and are not being informed of the information on the IEP unless they look it up.

- The policy for making up work for missed classes is too strict.
- The teachers expressed interest in knowing how to address behavior in a culturally sensitive manner.
- A freshman program is needed.
- The teachers expressed concern that counselors seem to spend more time doing testing than counseling.
- There is a lack of coordination between general education teachers and support facilitation teachers.

Commendations

1. The school district had data readily available, and was able to complete the guiding questions document thoroughly.
2. The school district increased its federal uniform graduation rate 8.9 percent in one year, from 22.9 percent in 2011-2012 to 31.8 percent in 2012-2013.
3. The district's extended programs that were visited appeared to meet most (if not all) of the evidence-based framework for 18 to 22-year-old community-based programs outlined by Mitchell-Panter Consulting (revised 2013).

ESE Monitoring and Compliance

Records Review

BEESS staff reviewed records of 10 students in the school district, from a sampling of schools. Standards from the IEP Implementation, Restraint and Seclusion and SPP Indicator 4 discipline protocols were reviewed. No findings of noncompliance were noted in these records.

Action-Planning and Problem-Solving Process and Next Steps

As part of the monitoring and assistance on-site visit, the SST members, ESE director and representatives from the Escambia County School District participated in an action-planning and problem-solving process. The group reviewed the data collected prior to and during the on-site visit and developed a list of priorities and obstacles. An action plan was developed to address the first priority selected, which was to increase the graduation rate for all students and specifically for students with disabilities. Related priorities included:

- Decreasing the percentage of middle school students failing two or more courses;
- Decreasing the percentage of high school students failing one or more courses;
- Decreasing the percentage of students with excessive absenteeism; and
- Decreasing the percentage of students with one or more suspensions.

The school district's action plan included providing intensive training on MTSS/Rtl, especially at the middle and high school levels, to ensure the presence of critical infrastructure and implementation support and developing an easily assessable and user-friendly Early Warning System that allows for effective and efficient identification of students and systems in need of support.

Next Steps	
Graduation Rate	
Summary:	The federal uniform graduation rate in Escambia increased from 22.9% in 2011-12 to 31.8% in 2012-13. However, it is still much lower than the state rate of 52.33%. The standard diploma graduation rate, which is not limited to a four-year cohort, for 2012-13 was 44%, the second lowest in the comparison group. For the last three consecutive years, Escambia County had well over 20% fewer students with SLD earning a standard diploma than the state average. Escambia's overall special diploma graduation rate, at 37.8%, is the highest in the comparison group.
Required Actions:	<p>Recent legislative changes in Florida that allow all students to earn a standard diploma, combined with a better prepared 2014-15 ninth grade cohort, should assist in the efforts to improve these results. It is imperative that the district ensure that current ninth grade students are enrolled in courses that will contribute to their graduation success. Students on access points should be enrolled in access or higher level courses and other students with IEPs should be enrolled in general education courses. The district will review course enrollments for all students with disabilities in ninth grade and provide a report to BEESS by January 9, 2015.</p> <p>In addition, the district will review the IEPs of students currently working toward a special diploma who are not on access points to determine if the diploma decision was appropriate. In cases where it is determined that a special diploma is not appropriate, the student must be moved to a standard diploma with appropriate supports and accommodations. A report detailing this review must be submitted to BEESS by January 23, 2015.</p>
Middle School Rubric	
Summary:	In middle school, ESE students who do not achieve a grade of 55 are given 55 and allowed to earn extra points for non-academic activities. This grading practice may make it difficult for teachers to know if a student has mastered the middle school course standards and may contribute to low performance in high school.
Recommendation:	The district should examine the student progress data to determine whether this practice contributes to or negatively impacts student success and make an evidence-based decision on whether to continue the practice.
Required Action:	None
General education teachers participation in IEP team meetings	
Summary:	It was reported during the focus group for high school teachers that general education teachers no longer attended IEP team meetings, and were not being informed of the information on the IEP unless they look it up.

Next Steps	
	34 CFR §300.321 (a) indicates that members of a child's IEP team must include a general education teacher, if the child is, or may be participating in the regular education environment. General education teachers indicated that they did not always participate in the development of IEPs, and that, under these circumstances, they generally signed IEPs afterwards.
Recommendation:	<p>The district should check into the statement reported during the high school teachers' focus group to determine whether IEP teams have the required general education teacher participation. In addition, the district should confirm with the school that general education teachers are provided access to and sufficient information regarding specific responsibilities for IEP implementation.</p> <p>It is recommended that compliance with 34 CFR §300.321 be monitored on a frequent basis.</p>
Required Action:	The district shall ensure that a general education teacher is present in the IEP team meetings if the child is, or may be, participating in the regular education environment.
Phases 3 and 4 of the ESE Monitoring and Assistance process	
Summary:	<p>Additional action planning and problem solving for other priorities for the school district in regard to federal uniform graduation rate for students with disabilities will be scheduled by the SST liaison for the school district and the ESE director.</p> <p>By January 20, 2015, the SST team, ESE director and designated district staff will evaluate the effectiveness of the school district's action plan(s) and determine additional next steps, as appropriate.</p>

Technical Assistance

1. **Implementing a Multi-Tiered System of Support for Behavior: Recommended Practices for School and District Leaders** (Florida's PBS Project) may be accessed at http://flpbs.fmhi.usf.edu/pdfs/RTIB%20Guide%20101811_final.pdf and provides an overview of the critical components of an MTSS for behavior. These critical components describe systems changes that are necessary for a results-driven ESE system.
2. According to s. 1003.57, F.S., once every three years, each school district and school shall complete a Best Practices in Inclusive Education (BPIE) assessment with a FIN facilitator and include the results of the BPIE assessment and all planned short-term and long-term improvement efforts in the school district's SP&P. BPIE is an internal assessment process designed to facilitate the analysis, implementation and improvement of inclusive educational practices at the district and school team levels. A FIN facilitator is available to assist the school district in scheduling and completing the BPIE, and based on the results, will identify how FIN can provide support to the school district (<http://www.floridainclusionnetwork.com/>).
3. **Project 10: Transition Education Network** is available to assist Florida school districts in building capacity to provide secondary transition services to students with disabilities in order to improve their academic success and post-school outcomes. Project 10 serves as the primary conduit in addressing law and policy, effective practices, and research-based interventions in the area of transition services for youth with disabilities. (<http://www.project10.info/>)
4. The district's **ESE Policies and Procedures** document provides district- and school-based standards for documenting, reporting and monitoring the use of manual, physical or mechanical restraint and seclusion developed by the FDOE. The school district's document for the 2013-14 through 2015-16 school years may be accessed at <http://beess.fcim.org/sppDistrictDocSearch.aspx>.
5. The technical assistance paper entitled **Guidelines for the Use, Documentation, Reporting, and Monitoring of Restraint and Seclusion with Students with Disabilities**, dated October 14, 2011, may be accessed at <http://info.fldoe.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-6212/dps-2011-165.pdf>. This document provides guidance regarding the use, documenting, reporting and monitoring of restraint and seclusion with students with disabilities in school districts, including (a) when restraint or seclusion might be used, (b) considerations when selecting a training program for restraint, (c) what should be documented, (d) parent notification and reporting, and (e) monitoring use. It also contains information about s. 1003.573, F.S., Use of restraint and seclusion on students with disabilities.
6. The **National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center** (NSTTAC) provides technical assistance and disseminates information on evidence-based practices leading to improved academic and functional achievement for students with disabilities, including lowering dropout rates and increasing graduation rates, preparing them for college or other postsecondary education and training and the workforce. NSTTAC resources can be accessed at <http://nsttac.org/>.
7. The **Florida Division on Career Development and Transition**, in partnership with BEESS and NSTTAC, sponsor a yearly VISIONS conference, NSTTAC Institute. BEESS provides financial assistance for district teams to attend this conference/institute, which focuses on evidence-based practices and provides facilitated transition team planning activities.

8. **Evidence-based Framework for 18+ Community-based Services, Revised 2013** is a product of MP Consulting, LLC, a national consulting firm that provides professional development, program evaluations and technical assistance related to Special Education. Consultants work with school districts, state education resource/service centers, postsecondary education institutions, state agencies, community service providers, students with disabilities and their families. MP Consulting can be accessed at <http://www.mitchellpanter.com>.

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

2013-14 ESE Monitoring and Assistance

State Support Team for Escambia County School District

Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services

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

Glossary of Acronyms and Abbreviations

The following is a list of acronyms, abbreviations and terms used within this report.

BEESS	Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services
BIP	Behavioral intervention plan
BPIE	Best Practices for Inclusive Education
CEIS	Coordinated early intervening services
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
ESE	Exceptional student education
FCAT 2.0	Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test 2.0
FIN	Florida Inclusion Network
FDLRS	Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System
FDOE	Florida Department of Education
F.S.	Florida Statutes
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
IEP	Individual educational plan
LEA	Local educational agency
MTSS	Multi-tiered system of support
PBS	Positive Behavior Support
PS/RtI	Problem-Solving/Response to Intervention
RtI	Response to intervention
SLD	Specific learning disability
SP&P	Exceptional Student Education Policies and Procedures
SPP	State Performance Plan
SST	State Support Team
USF	University of South Florida

Appendix A

Guiding Questions – District-Level Needs Assessment

Appendix A: Guiding Questions – District-Level Needs Assessment

1. What are the most current data levels on each of the targeted BEESS indicators?
2. What is the gap between BEESS expected level(s) of targeted indicators and your district's current level(s) of targeted indicators?
3. Do data indicate equity issues related to the selected BEESS indicators? Are there subgroups for which the gap between expected and goal levels of performance and current levels of performance is more or less significant?
 - Gender
 - Race or ethnic group
 - Economically disadvantaged
 - Students with disabilities (by each sub-group)
 - English language learners
 - Comparison within and across above sub-groups
4. Disaggregate district-level indicator data to school levels. Which schools are contributing to total district frequency for each of the targeted BEESS indicators?
5. Disaggregate school-level indicator data by grade level. Which grades within each school are contributing to total school frequency for each of the targeted BEESS indicators?
6. Disaggregate between type of school (elementary, middle school and high school) by student outcomes.
7. What evidence-based practices are currently planned for use or implementation at the school level?
8. Are the expected evidence-based practices occurring sufficiently?
9. If expected evidence-based practices are not occurring or not occurring sufficiently, why not? (What are some potential barriers specific to targeted BEESS indicators at the school level?)
10. How are school-level evidence-based practices being supported by the district specific to BEESS indicators being targeted for improvement?
11. Are district supports for school-level practices being provided sufficiently?
12. If district supports are not occurring or not occurring sufficiently, why not? (What are some potential barriers specific to targeted BEESS indicators at the district level?)
13. What strategies, initiatives and resources have been identified in the District Improvement and Assistance Plan (DIAP) with regard to achieving annual measurable outcomes targets for students with disabilities?
14. As applicable, has the mid-year reflection based on mid-year assessment data been completed, and what, if any, adjustments have been made to the DIAP with regard to strategies to improve outcomes for students with disabilities?
15. What does the **ESE Policies and Procedures** document reflect with regard to the district's goal to improve targeted indicator performance? Did the district achieve the goal set during the prior year?
16. What is occurring to implement the strategies in the SP&P with regard to targeted indicator performance?
17. Based on all of the above answers, what priorities will be targeted to improve BEESS targeted indicators?



Pam Stewart, Commissioner

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