

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

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**Taylor County School District  
December 12-13, 2013**



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 6, 2014

Paul E. Dyal, Superintendent  
Taylor County School District  
318 North Clark Street  
Perry, Florida 32347-2930

Dear Superintendent Dyal:

We are pleased to provide you with the **2013-14 Exceptional Student Education (ESE) Monitoring and Assistance On-Site Visit Report for Taylor 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 December 12-13, 2013. Those information sources included interviews with district and school staff, student-focus groups, 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 Taylor County School District was selected for an on-site visit related to the district's rates for graduation, dropout and the use of restraint for 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 Dyal  
November 6, 2014  
Page Two

Ms. Ramona Patrick, 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 and other staff members 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 schools visited and other school district staff participated in a problem-solving and action-planning process. This group reviewed the school district's data collected prior to 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, is being 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 Taylor 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](mailto:monica.verra-tirado@fldoe.org).

Sincerely,

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

Enclosure

cc: Ramona Patrick  
Cathy Bishop  
Patricia Howell  
Judith White

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**Taylor County School District**

**December 12-13, 2013**

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

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Monitoring and Assistance  
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**Taylor County School District**

**December 12-13, 2013**

**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 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 aged 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 Taylor County School District was informed that the bureau would be conducting an on-site monitoring visit for the following focus areas: the district's rates for graduation and dropout and the use of restraint for students with disabilities.

### **School Selection**

Upon review of the school district's data reported via the FDOE's web-based reporting systems for incidents of restraint and seclusion, graduation, dropout and additional data provided by the school district, it was determined that the monitoring and assistance process would involve the following schools and programs for record reviews, school-level administrator interviews or on-site visits:

- Perry Primary School
- Taylor County High School
- Taylor Technical Institute

### **On-Site Activities**

#### **SST – On-Site Visit Team**

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

#### **FDOE, BEESS**

- Judith White, program specialist (facilitator)
- Amelia Faith Bowman, program specialist (co-facilitator)

#### **FDOE/Bureau Discretionary Projects**

- Beth Hardcastle, Florida's Problem Solving/Response to Intervention (PS/Rtl) Project (action-planning and problem-solving facilitator)
- Rebecca Sarlo, PS/Rtl Project (action-planning and problem-solving co-facilitator)
- Jennifer Barnhill, human resource development specialist, Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System (FDLRS)
- Kathleen Christiansen, Florida's Positive Behavior Support Multi-tiered System of Supports (PBS:MTSS) Project
- Dana Huggins, project manager, Multiagency Network for Students with Emotional/Behavioral Disabilities (SEDNET)
- Martha Murray, technical assistance specialist, PBS:MTSS Project
- Sallie Payne, facilitator, Florida Inclusion Network (FIN)
- Ann Selland, school improvement specialist, Region IV, FDOE Office of Differentiated Accountability (DA), University of South Florida (USF) PS/Rtl Project
- Susan Saunders, Technology Specialist/Professional Development Alternatives (PDA) Coordinator, FDLRS
- Tury Lewis, regional representative, Project 10: Transition Education Network

## **Data Collection**

On-site monitoring and assistance activities included the following:

- Student focus groups and interviews –16 participants
- Teacher interviews – 10 participants
- Completion of seclusion room inspection checklist – one room
- Completion of Seclusion and Restraint protocol – three students' records
- Completion of IEP Implementation protocol – six students' records
- Action-planning and problem-solving process – 26 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 students selected for review of restraint or seclusion, IEP implementation, graduation and dropout rate:

- IEPs for current and previous school year
- Current functional behavioral assessment
- Current behavioral intervention plan (BIP)
- Discipline and attendance records for the 2013-14 school year
- Progress reports and report cards (current and previous year)
- 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 special education services, 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. Taylor County School District's questions were related to restraints, graduation and dropout. 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 Taylor County School District. Also included are commendations, findings of noncompliance and next steps, as applicable.

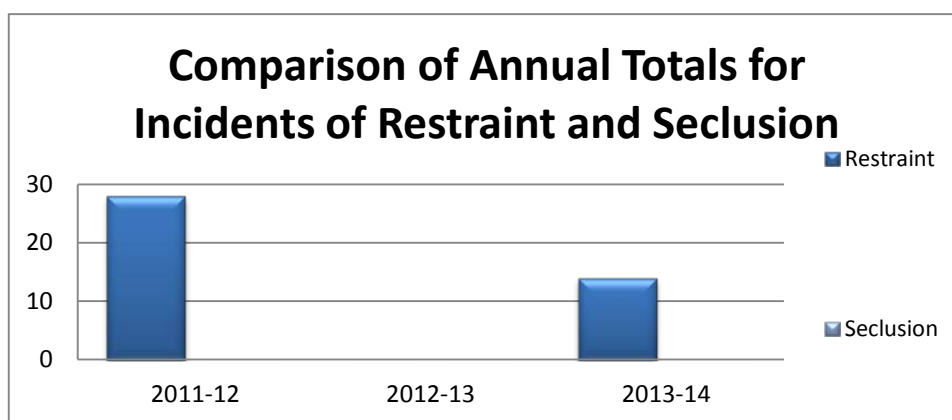
Size-alike comparisons are made with data from the following districts classified as small: Baker, Bradford, Calhoun, DeSoto, Dixie, Franklin, Gadsden, Gilchrist, Glades, Gulf, Hamilton, Hardee, Hendry, Holmes, Jackson, Jefferson, Lafayette, Lake Wales Charter, Levy, Liberty, Madison, Okeechobee, Suwannee, Taylor, Union, Wakulla and Washington.

## **Restraint and Seclusion**

According to the school district's SP&P document, the school district utilizes FDLRS to train personnel with regard to the use of restraint and seclusion using the crisis management

program Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI). The district was in the process of building one seclusion room at Perry Primary School; however, as of the time of the visit, it was not yet approved for use to meet State Fire Marshal Rule 69A-58.0084, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.). The district also receives support of behavior specialists through an agreement with Behavior Management Consultants (BMC).

## Data Review



Source: Florida Restraint and Seclusion Database

In addition to the data above, the school district reported the following during interviews, review of the guiding questions and the action-planning and problem-solving process:

- During the 2012-13 school year, there were fewer than 10 incidents of seclusion. There were also fewer than 10 incidents reported for the 2011-12 school year.
- During the 2012-13 school year, there were fewer than 10 incidents of restraint. This was a decrease from the 28 incidents reported for the 2011-12 school year.
- The school district's goal is to reduce incidents of restraint and seclusion by 10 percent, as referenced in their SP&P document.
- Activities that are occurring in the school district in regard to implementing the strategies in the SP&P document include the following:
  - Strengthening the implementation of an Early Warning System (EWS) to identify systemic behavioral issues and individual behavioral needs
  - Reviewing IEPs and Section 504 plans
  - Conducting evaluations or reevaluations and Functional Behavioral Assessments
  - Evaluating the effectiveness of BIPs specific to individual students' responses and progress
  - Evaluating the effectiveness of health care plans specific to individual students responses and progress
  - Strengthening MTSS
  - Providing CPI and Nonviolent Crisis Intervention training
  - Providing trauma informed care
  - Increasing opportunities for mental health services for students with disabilities

During the on-site visit, SST members visited a seclusion room at Perry Primary School. The room currently being used for seclusion did not meet the requirements in Rule 69A-58.0084, F.A.C. The room did not qualify as a secured seclusion time-out room; corrective action was taken immediately by removing the door to the room.

**Graduation:**

**Federal Uniform High School Graduation Rate:**

Beginning with the 2010-11 school year, the U.S. Department of Education adopted a new graduation rate calculation. 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
Taylor County	28%	27%	36%
Size-alike group	44%	46%	49%
State	44%	48%	52%

**Federal Uniform High School Graduation Rate for All Students:**

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Taylor County	61%	63%	62%
Size-alike group	65%	69%	70%
State	71%	74%	76%

**Standard Diploma Graduation Rate:**

The number of standard diploma graduates divided by the number of students with disabilities who completed their education (received either a standard diploma, general educational 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 four-year period from 2009-10 through 2012-13.

**Standard Diploma Graduation Rate for Students Identified with Disabilities:**

	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Taylor County	52%	46%	37%	47%
Size-alike group	48%	56%	51%	55%
State	53%	54%	52%	58%

## Dropout:

### Dropout Rate:

The number of students grades 9-12 for whom a dropout withdrawal reason was reported, divided by the total enrollment of grades 9-12 students and students who did not enter school as expected as reported at the end of the school year (survey 5). The resulting percentages are reported for students with disabilities and all students for the years 2009-10 through 2012-13.

### Dropout Rate for Students Identified with Disabilities:

	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Taylor County	7%	6%	8%	3%
Size-alike group	5%	4%	4%	4%
State	4%	4%	3%	4%

### Dropout Rate for All Students:

	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Taylor County	3%	4%	3%	3%
Size-alike group	3%	2%	2%	2%
State	2%	2%	2%	2%

Data above is reported from the LEA Profile for Taylor County available at <http://www.fldoe.org/eae/datapage.asp>

## Student Focus Groups

Student focus groups were conducted at Taylor County High School and Taylor County Middle School during the monitoring and assistance on-site visit. Student views were collected on the following topics: academics, extracurricular activities, diploma options, dropout, suspension and expulsion, resources and services needed, IEP team meetings and transitions, and career and technical education related to job training and college readiness.

The general education student focus group participants had mixed opinions regarding their school environment. While some stated that their school was efficient, others stated that it was chaotic. Some students expressed concerns related to behavior on the school bus and asked that school uniforms no longer be required. Students also requested more time in school, a better discipline plan and more options for class topics. Students stated that sometimes attendance was not consistent because students missed school, listing reasons such as anxiety, bullying or not wanting to ride the bus. Some students requested that job skill classes be added for mechanics, robotics, home economics and wood shop. It was also stated that the school had nine computers available, but that they were not in good condition.

The student with disability focus group had a mixed opinion of their school environment. While some students described their school as challenging with teachers who treat them fairly, others stated that there was too much homework and they did not like the dress code. Students expressed that many kids in class are shy, but will ask the teacher for help after class and that the teachers are always willing to help them. The students stated that there are adults, in addition to the teacher, in all of their classes to help when the teacher is busy or they need extra help. The students stated that the teacher tells them what is expected of them and that they know the consequences for not following expectations. When the students were asked why attendance was not always consistent, they stated that some students did not want to be at school. The students shared their plans after finishing high school, which included attending college to become an emergency medical technician or engineer, playing college football, joining the Air Force or racing dirt bikes. Students stated that they would be more motivated if

they had more activities, music, time on the computer, free time, physical education or optional classes. The students suggested a class related to religious studies or a class that helped them learn how to reach their future goals and needs. Students also indicated that they would like for the dress code to end, to have more choices for lunch, to sit where they want to during lunch and to be in more general education classes. Another student stated that they want all ESE classes because teachers help the students more and have more patience.

The high school student interviewees stated that they were invited to and attended their annual IEP team meetings, but that they did not feel involved in the meeting. The students stated that they knew other students who had been suspended for fighting, being disrespectful or were caught with a cell phone too many times. The students reported that there were individuals at home or at school that were willing to talk with them and help with personal or educational needs. The students stated that they were involved in extracurricular activities, held part-time jobs and have plans to attend college in the future.

### **Teacher Focus Groups**

Teacher focus groups were conducted with elementary and high school teachers during the monitoring and assistance visit. The teachers were asked questions related to environmental systems, instructional systems, behavioral systems and general topics.

The elementary-level teacher focus group participants stated that they had students with disabilities such as those with autism spectrum disorder, specific learning disabilities, language impairments, and speech impairments in their classrooms. The teachers stated that students are unaware that they are in an inclusion setting, even in small groups. The teachers expressed that the ESE teachers have multiple duties that include collaborating with the general education teacher, holding data chats, supporting struggling students by re-teaching or providing accommodations, and online lesson planning. The teachers stated that, during IEP team meetings, they provide information related to the students' testing data, current academic strengths, difficulties and future goals. The teachers use the IEP goals and accommodations to guide their instruction. Teachers stated that they use the UNRAVEL Reading Strategy, Explicit Instruction, higher order thinking questions and student group questioning to ensure student success. Teachers expressed concern for their students' transition plans and lack of services at the middle school level. The teachers would like to see more involved transition planning meetings, collaborative teaching and planning and more funds for the ESE students. The teachers stated that there were not many behavior issues and that attendance is a school-wide issue. The teachers also stated that it would be helpful to have another elementary school in their district.

The high-school level teacher focus group participants stated that they have students with disabilities, such as autism spectrum disorder and specific learning disability, in their classrooms. The teachers expressed that they have consistent class rules and procedures in place to create an orderly learning environment that they use along with team work and redirection in rare instances of behavior issues. The teachers stated that there is a full-time special education teacher who is available if needs arise that the general education teacher cannot accommodate, but, for the most part, students are given accommodations and work in teams to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to succeed. Teachers use the student's IEP to provide necessary accommodations. Teachers stated that student motivation and attendance are the biggest obstacles, but staff members do their best to support the students in every way possible. There are also systems in place to allow students to make up their missing assignments during absences. The teachers stated that each classroom and school has their own set of rules and that their district uses PBS, often reviewing rules and procedures with the

students to ensure that they understand what is expected of them. Teachers stated that they receive annual training related to ESE students and restraint and seclusion updates. Teachers requested to receive additional training related to disability awareness.

### Commendations

1. The district is commended for compliance with restraint and seclusion protocols for the sample of records reviewed.
2. The district's data regarding the standard graduation rate for students identified with disabilities increased from 37 percent in 2011-12, to 47 percent in 2012-13 and the federal uniform graduation rate increased from 27 percent in 2011-12 to 36 percent in 2012-13.
3. The district's data regarding dropout rate for students identified with disabilities decreased from eight percent in 2011-12, to three percent in 2012-13.

### ESE Monitoring and Compliance

#### Records Review

Bureau staff reviewed records of six students in the school district, from a sampling of two schools. Standards from the IEP Implementation and Restraint and Seclusion protocols were reviewed. Findings of noncompliance regarding IEP implementation were noted in two students' records.

Standard, Identified Noncompliance	Supporting Data
IEP Implementation (IPI)-2 There is evidence of the implementation of strategies to work toward mastery of the annual goals as specified on the IEP: lesson plans, log(s), interview(s), other. (Rule 6A-6.03028(3)(h), F.A.C.)	For one student at Taylor Technical Institute, no evidence of consultation services was provided as specified in the IEP.
IPI-3 There is evidence of the provision of special education services or specially designed instruction as specified on the IEP. (Rule 6A-6.03028(3)(h), F.A.C.)	For one student at Taylor Technical Institute, no documentation of ESE service was provided as specified in the IEP.
IPI-6 There is evidence of the provision of program modifications or classroom accommodations as specified on the IEP: lesson plans, log(s), interview(s), other. (Rule 6A-6.03028(3)(h), F.A.C.)	For one student at Taylor Technical Institute, no evidence of the provision of student accommodations was provided as specified in the IEP.
IPI-7 There is evidence of the provision of supports for school personnel as specified on the IEP: lesson plans, log(s), interview(s), other. (Rule 6A-6.03028(3)(h), F.A.C.)	For one student at Taylor Technical Institute, no evidence of collaboration sessions was provided as specified in the IEP.
IPI-8 The student's progress toward meeting the annual goals was measured, and the report of progress was provided as often as stated on the IEP. (34 CFR §300.320(a)(3))	For two students at Taylor Technical Institute, no IEP goal progress reports were provided.

During the on-site visit, SST members visited a seclusion room at Perry Primary School. The room was not yet in use for seclusion; however, it was reported to be used within the Florida Restraint and Seclusion Database and through interview information from the classroom teacher. The room did not meet the following requirements in Division of State Fire Marshal Rule 69A-58.0084, F.A.C.:

(2)(b) An electro-magnetic locking device is the only approved device to secure a secured seclusion time-out room. The lock shall remain engaged only when the human hand is in contact with it placing pressure on it.

1. Upon release of pressure, the door shall unlock. The locking device shall be designed, and shall be operated, so that it cannot be engaged by leverage of an inanimate object or in any manner except by constant human contact.

2. The push button shall be recessed from the face of the unit housing, or in some other way designed to prevent taping or wedging the button in the engaged mode.

3. The device shall have an interface with the fire alarm system and shall automatically release and disengage upon activation of the fire alarm. The locking device shall automatically release and disengage in the event of power failure.

4. A timer shall not be used on the locking device.

(3) Door Requirements. The door shall have only a push panel exposed on the interior of the room. A vision panel shall be provided in the door, and it shall be no larger than 12" x 12" (144 square inches). The view panel shall consist of clear one-quarter inch (1/4") thick unbreakable plastic panel, flush with the face of the door on the inside. The view panel shall be positioned in the door to allow a staff member to continuously keep the student under observation. The view panel shall not be covered with any material.

(4) Finishes and materials. The ceiling, floor, and walls must be free of any loose, torn or potentially hazardous materials. All surfaces must be kept smooth and free of any hooks, outlets, switches or similar items. Construction materials shall meet all applicable provisions of the Florida Fire Prevention Code and the Florida Building Code. Each secured seclusion time-out room must be identified with a permanently mounted room number.

As the room did not qualify as a secured seclusion time-out room, it was immediately withdrawn from use through the removal of the door, which was considered corrective action.

### **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 Taylor County School District participated in a problem-solving and action-planning process. The group reviewed the data collected prior to and during the on-site visit and developed a list of priorities and obstacles. Action plans were developed to address the priority needs selected, which were restraint and graduation.

### **Restraint**

The district developed and completed the following action steps:

1. On February 19, 2014, the district held an additional meeting for further evaluation of procedures and implementation related to seclusion and restraint.
2. It was decided that by February 21, 2014, the director would disseminate a previously developed seclusion and restraint reporting requirements checklist to all site-based administrators.
3. BMC shared a seclusion and restraint reporting protocol regarding procedures, developed for Perry Primary with the director who disseminated to other schools for possible replication on February 21, 2014.



4. The district trained newer administrators and deans on FDOE and BEESS definitions and reporting requirements using materials developed by SEDNET related to the use of seclusion and restraint with ESE students in March 2014.
5. The district compiled an information list regarding staff at each site trained in CPI, and compared the list to FDLRS training documents on March 7, 2014.
6. The district and MTSS support team met to discuss and determine “standards” for who should be trained and certified in CPI at each site, and decided that ESE classroom personnel would be trained in CPI. They also decided that all staff would be trained in de-escalation strategies by FDLRS.

**Graduation**

The district developed and completed the following action steps:

1. School-based Administrators and district data representatives met to examine questions developed by the PS/Rtl Project, regarding an EWS for students at risk of not graduating with their cohort, on January 17, 2014.
2. The district and PS/Rtl Project presented a demonstration of district data systems for EWS application on January 23, 2014.

Next steps for the district and support team involve providing intentionally integrated support to connect varied action plans and continuous improvement efforts.

<b>Next Steps</b>	
<b>Graduation and Dropout Rates</b>	
Summary:	The district graduation and dropout rates improved significantly from 2011-12 to 2012-13, although the graduation rates, 36% federal uniform rate and 47 percent standard rate, require additional improvement.
Recommendation:	The district should continue to pay close attention to the data and the evidence-based practices that will keep the dropout rate low and increase the graduation rate for students with disabilities.
Required Action:	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 students not on access points with IEPs should be enrolled in general education courses, not fundamental courses, access courses or other ESE courses. The district will review course enrollments for all students with disabilities in ninth grade and provide a report to BEESS by November 14, 2014.
<b>Provision of ESE services and supports at Taylor Technical Institute</b>	
Summary:	At the time of the visit to Taylor Technical, there were several ESE students working on their standard diploma using a computer-based curriculum. There was no ESE teacher assigned to the facility.

<b>Next Steps</b>	
Recommendation:	N/A
Required Action:	The district must ensure that an ESE teacher is available on-site at all times to provide instruction and support to students with IEPs.
Provision of 18-22 programs for students with disabilities	
Summary:	The team asked to visit an 18-22, post-special diploma program as part of the monitoring and assistance visit and was told that there were no students in this type of program.
Recommendations:	The district should conduct a needs assessment, review programs in size-alike districts and consider developing a program for 18-22 year-old students.
Required Actions:	N/A
Phases 3 and 4 of the ESE Monitoring and Assistance process	
Summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional action-planning and problem solving for other priorities for the school district in regard to increasing the graduation rate and maintaining the decrease in the drop-out rate is needed.</li> <li>• This should take place in conjunction with the District Action Planning and Problem-solving Process (DAPPS).</li> <li>• By January 30, 2015, the SST and DAPPS 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.</li> </ul>

## 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](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. 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>.
3. 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.
4. The United States Department of Education, in collaboration with the United States Department of Justice, released **School Discipline Guidance** in the January 2014, Volume 4, Issue 1 of the **Office of Special Education Programs Monthly Update**. This package will assist states, districts and schools in developing practices and strategies to enhance school climate, and ensure those policies and practices comply with federal law. The resource documents listed below are included in the package, and are available at <http://www.ed.gov/school-discipline>:
  - **Dear Colleague** guidance letter on civil rights and discipline;
  - **Guiding Principles** document that draws from emerging research and best practices;
  - **Directory of Federal School Climate and Discipline Resources** that indexes federal technical assistance and other resources; and
  - **Compendium of School Discipline Laws and Regulations** that catalogue State laws and regulations related to school discipline.
5. 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/>).
6. 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/>)

Florida Department of Education  
Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services

2013-14 ESE Monitoring and Assistance

State Support Team for Taylor County School District

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## **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 should be occurring at the school level specific to BEESS indicators being targeted for improvement?
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 (SP&P) 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?

**Florida Department of Education  
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**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
BMC	Behavior Management Consultants
BPIE	Best Practices for Inclusive Education
CEIS	Coordinated early intervening services
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CPI	Crisis Prevention Institute
DA	Differentiated Accountability
DAPPS	District Action Planning and Problem-solving Process
DIAP	District Improvement and Assistance Plan
ESE	Exceptional student education
EWS	Early Warning System
F.A.C.	Florida Administrative Code
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
IPI	IEP Implementation
LEA	Local educational agency
MTSS	Multi-tiered system of support
PBS	Positive Behavior Support
PBS/MTSS	Positive Behavior Support/Multi-tiered System of Supports
PS/Rtl	Problem-Solving/Response to Intervention
Rtl	Response to intervention
SP&P	Exceptional Student Education Policies and Procedures
SST	State Support Team
USF	University of South Florida



Pam Stewart, Commissioner

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