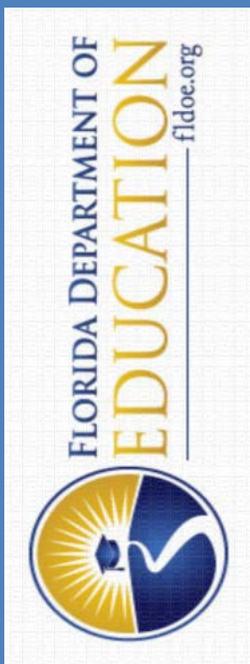


**2014-15 Exceptional Student Education
Monitoring and Assistance
On-Site Visit Report**

**Jackson County School District
February 11-12, 2015**



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

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Steve R. Benton, Sr., Superintendent
Jackson County School District
2903 Jefferson St.
Marianna, FL 32446-5958

Dear Superintendent Benton:

We are pleased to provide you with the 2014-15 Exceptional Student Education (ESE) Monitoring and Assistance On-Site Visit Report for Jackson 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 February 11-12, 2015. Those information sources included interviews with district and school staff, Local Educational Agency Profiles, Guiding Questions – District Level Needs Assessment and an action-planning and problem-solving process.

The Jackson County School District was selected for an on-site visit due to equity and access issues related to coordinated early intervening services for discipline, graduation rate, dropout rate, least restrictive environment and incidents of restraint. The on-site visit was conducted by a State Support Team (SST) that included bureau and discretionary project staff.

The 2014-15 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.

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

Superintendent Benton

June 2, 2015

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Mr. Shawn Larkin, Director of ESE, and his 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. 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/e/se/mon-home.asp>

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 an action-planning and problem-solving process. This group reviewed the school district's data collected prior to and during the on-site visit, and determined the areas of need to address in the action plan. Based upon the areas of need, the action plan 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 Jackson 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: Shawn Larkin
Cathy Bishop
Patricia Howell
Derek Hemenway

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Jackson County School District

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Jackson County School District

February 11-12, 2015

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.] and rules. 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, BEESS monitors ESE programs provided by district school boards in accordance with ss.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 students as students with disabilities, the identification of students in specific disability categories, the placement of students 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 students in the LEA, particularly, but not exclusively, for students 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 2014-15 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 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 3) 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 on the FDOE website.
- Seclusion – Rate of incidents of seclusion, as reported on the FDOE website.

The ESE Monitoring and Assistance process includes four phases:

- Phase 1 was composed of planning activities that occurred 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.

In a letter dated December 15, 2014, the superintendent of the Jackson County School District was informed that the bureau would be conducting an on-site monitoring visit for the following focus areas: CEIS for discipline, graduation rate, dropout rate, least restrictive environment and incidents of restraint.

School Selection

Upon review of the school district's data it was determined that the monitoring and assistance process would involve the following schools for school-level interviews, student focus groups, and classroom walk-through visits:

- Jackson Alternative School (JAS)
- Marianna Middle School
- Malone High School

On-Site Activities

On-Site Visit Team

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

FDOE, BEESS

- Derek Hemenway, Program Specialist, Dispute Resolution and Monitoring (DRM)
- Karlene Deware, Program Specialist, DRM
- Jerry Brown, Program Specialist, DRM
- Laurie Epps, Program Specialist, Instructional Support Services
- Diane Mennitt, School Nurse Consultant, Student Support Services

FDOE, Bureau Discretionary Projects

- Beth Hardcastle, Regional Coordinator, North, Florida Problem-Solving Response to Intervention (PS/Rtl) Project
- Tury Lewis, Regional Transition Representative, Region 1, Project 10: Transition Education Network
- Faye Yongue, Program Coordinator, Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System (FDLRS) Associate Centers
- Rusty Holmes, Consultant, Multiagency Network for Students with Emotional/Behavioral Disabilities (SEDNET)

Data Collection

On-site monitoring and assistance activities included the following:

- Review of recent data
- School-level administrator interviews
- School program walk-through visits
- Student focus groups
- Action-planning and problem-solving process
- Review of data from the school district's LEA Profiles, Guiding Questions – District Level Needs Assessment and data compiled from district data systems

Guiding Questions – District-Level Needs Assessment

Prior to the on-site visit, the school district was given questions to use as a guide in the collection of data. SST and district staff reviewed the data during the problem-solving and action-planning processes. Jackson County School District's questions were related to CEIS for discipline, graduation rate, dropout rate, least restrictive environment and incidents of restraint. A list of these questions is located in Appendix A of this report.

Results

The following results include data for each of the focus areas as well as information related to the area.

CEIS – Discipline

Districts are required to set aside 15 percent of IDEA, Part B funds for coordinated early intervening services if **any** of the following criteria are met:

- Students of a particular race are at least 3.5 times more likely to be identified as disabled when compared to all other races combined. The calculation is repeated for students with disabilities, students identified as intellectually disabled, students with emotional or behavioral disabilities, students with specific learning disabilities, students with Autism Spectrum Disorder, students identified as other health impaired, and students identified as speech or language impaired.
- Students with disabilities ages six to 21 of any race are at least 3.5 times more likely to be placed in a separate class or other separate environment when compared to all other races combined. The calculation is used only for the total of all students with disabilities.
- Incidents of removal of students with disabilities through In-School Suspension (ISS), Out-of-School Suspension (OSS), or expulsion for students with disabilities of any given race are at least 3.5 times more likely to occur when compared to all other races combined. The calculation is used only for the total of all students with disabilities.

Jackson County was required to set aside these funds during the 2014-15 school year due to black students with disabilities being **3.97** times more likely to be removed due to ISS, OSS or expulsion than all other races combined. The calculation was based on 2011-12 discipline data.

The CEIS calculation for discipline is different from the calculation for SPP Indicators 4A and 4B. Indicator 4 calculations is based on the **number of students** with disabilities being removed for greater than 10 days due to OSS or expulsion compared to their nondisabled peers. The CEIS discipline calculation is based on the **number of incidents**, including ISS, OSS and expulsion, and only looks at students with disabilities.

The 15 percent of the IDEA Part B funds were to be used for students who are not currently identified as needing special education or related services, but who are receiving additional behavioral supports in order to succeed in the general education curriculum. 2014-15 was the first year the district was required to set aside 15 percent of their IDEA funds for CEIS related to discipline. The risk ratio **3.97** is based on 2012-13 data. During the 2015-16 school year the district will not be required to set aside 15 percent as the district's risk ratio for CEIS discipline is **1.43** based on 2013-14 data.

CEIS Risk Ratios for Discipline

Year	2014-15	2015-16
Risk Ratio	3.97	1.43

According to the district's SP&P document, 10 schools in the district have implemented Positive Behavior Support (PBS). At JAS, the short-term program is used as an alternative to OSS. Students are placed at the JAS short-term program for three to five days where they receive services per their IEP.

The district's SP&P includes the following interventions being implemented district-wide or at multiple school sites in order to provide assistance to nondisabled students in need of Tier 2 and Tier 3 supports for behavior:

- Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) process
- Assistance with bus interventions and training
- Professional development in areas including MTSS, PBS, and behavior interventions
- Bus safety training and intervention groups
- Social skills and social learning groups
- Behavior intervention recommendations
- Check and Connect
- Training in mentoring, classroom management, and behavior management

Project Wisdom program's Beyond the Infraction Initiative and a credit recovery program were being implemented at JAS. In addition, an Academic Life Skills program was being implemented at the Malone School.

The district reported that the following actions were supported with the CEIS funds during the 2014-15 school year:

- Identification of general education students in need of additional supports based on office discipline referrals, teacher or administrator referral, and students who currently receive MTSS interventions for behavior.
- Provision of resources for schools to access Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions to support nondisabled students in need of behavioral supports.
- Collaboration with MTSS team members when behavior is a concern.
- Provision of support to the district's transportation department in the area of bus behavior management and discipline.
- Provision of Tier 1 support to schools and Tier 2 and Tier 3 supports to nondisabled students in need of behavioral supports.
- Provision of training and support to staff in areas of monitoring, check in and check out, classroom management, etc., in order to support the students in need of Tier 2 and Tier 3 supports for behavior.
- Conducting classroom observations, with feedback to teachers that includes strategies, recommendations and interventions.
- Participating in conducting Functional Behavioral Assessments (FBA)s and Behavioral Intervention Plans (BIP)s.

Additionally, by using CEIS funds the district was able to hire a behavioral analyst, a reading coach and a math coach (on a half-time basis), and has staffed a paraprofessional on buses to provide safety instruction and behavior management.

Incidents of Restraint

2012-13		2013-14	
Number of Incidents	Number of Students	Number of Incidents	Number of Students
44	28	75	26

The district reported that during the 2013-14 school year there were more than 70 total incidents of restraint, with more than 60 occurring at JAS. In 2014-15 this decreased to 15 total incidents, as of February 1, 2015, with 12 occurring at JAS.

According to the district's SP&P document, the district uses the Handle with Care (HWC) and Crisis Prevention Institute's Nonviolent Crisis Intervention (CPI) crisis management programs. HWC is used at JAS and the Hope School (a special center school), where all staff members are trained. CPI is used in other schools where it is less likely for serious bodily injury to occur. CPI training is offered through the Panhandle Area Education Consortium (PAEC). Trained staff must complete refresher courses at least annually. Also, administrators at the Hope School and JAS review the monthly reports, analyze data, and monitor staff involvement, appropriate use, possible overuse, and notification of parents or guardians. The data is used to initiate IEP reviews or BIPs, offer technical assistance to staff, and identify teachers or other staff in need of additional support or training. At the end of each quarter, district staff members review data and reporting. The following are initiatives implemented by the district since 2013-14 to reduce restraint:

- Students who are likely to have problems leading to restraint are assigned to staff who are most able to intervene and remain calm.
- FBAs and BIPs are reviewed and made to be more specific for those students who have intense needs related to self-abusive or aggressive behaviors.
- The HWC training now emphasizes verbal techniques for de-escalation.
- The Center for the Advancement of Children's Learning (CACL) program is located at JAS and addresses the needs of students with emotional or behavioral problems. Staff members at JAS received training in the program to ensure consistency in the implementation of the school plan. The training includes interventions for de-escalating behaviors.

The district's goal is to reduce the number of total restraints by 50 percent and the number of prone restraints by 10 percent during the 2014-15 school year. The following are activities that are part of the district's plan to reduce the use of restraint during the 2014-15 school year:

- JAS administration will ensure that all teachers working in the CACL program at the school will receive Aggression Replacement Training which is the designated program for 5th – 12th grade.
- JAS administration will ensure that all the teachers teach social skills and replacement behaviors daily in the CACL program.
- JAS administration will ensure that the CACL program is followed consistently and contingencies on the behavior intervention plans are followed consistently.
- The CACL staff will meet weekly to continue learning about behavioral techniques through the use of books and videos. They will also use this time to debrief and problem solve about any behavior issues that have occurred.
- If a restraint occurs, staff will meet at the end of that day to discuss the event and how it could have been prevented.
- District ESE Program Specialist meets with the teachers who have students in need of behavioral supports to begin a new FBA or revise the BIP based on current data.
- The calming room that was begun at JAS will be completed this year.

Graduation rates

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 by the number of standard diplomas from the same group.

Students with Disabilities

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Jackson	34.72%	44.78%	49.12%
State	47.71%	52.33%	55.06%

District staff indicated that interventions were being provided district-wide for students who had absentee and discipline issues. In addition, during the summer of 2015, the district plans to implement an Early Warning System (EWS) district-wide.

Dropout Rates

The Federal Dropout Rate for Students with Disabilities: The number of students who exited special education due to dropping out, divided by the number of students who graduated with a regular high school diploma, special diploma, certificate of completion, special certificate of completion, dropped out or died.

	2012-13	2013-14
Jackson	21.6%	5.6%
State	20.3%	19.2%

District staff indicated that students with more severe behavioral needs were being provided individual-based academic and behavioral interventions to meet their needs.

Educational Environment

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE): The number of students with disabilities ages six - 21 in regular class divided by the total number of students with disabilities ages six - 21 reported in October (Survey 2).

Students with Disabilities in Regular Class

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Jackson	66%	60.1%	56.3%
State	71%	71.3%	74.4%

Based on data, the percentage of students with disabilities who spend the majority of their time (80 percent or more) in the regular class setting has steadily decreased.

The SST team members observed that students in the sixth grade at Marianna Middle school were in self-contained settings or in general education classrooms. The SST team members were

concerned about the continuum of services offered at this school as they did not observe the availability of resource rooms. In addition, at the alternative school (JAS) there was some concern about teacher-to-student ratio as students are placed at the school regularly. The district has not completed the Best Practices for Inclusive Education (BPIE) process yet and does not have a date scheduled with Florida Inclusion Network (FIN) to begin the process.

Due to the percentages of students identified with disabilities receiving instruction in restrictive environments when compared to percentages in like-sized districts, the district was required to engage in a problem-solving process to consider needs and supports.

The district's goal is to achieve the state goal of 72 percent of students participating in regular class settings. Planned activities to address the percentage of students with disabilities receiving instruction in restrictive environments reported from district problem-solving activities include:

- Including professional development activities related to LRE, inclusion and analyzing and modifying staffing plans to include better planning for use of ESE resources in principal collaboration meetings.
- Planning a BPIE activity with collaboration from FIN.
- Planning district-level meeting to discuss MTSS training for all district staff.

Interviews, Student Focus Group and Observations

SST members conducted classroom walk-through visits and interviews at the Marianna Middle School, Malone School, and JAS. Results are described below by school.

Marianna Middle School

SST members noted collaboration between ESE and general education staff at Marianna Middle School. Teachers indicated that school administrators were very supportive and encouraged professional development. However, teachers also stated that they were understaffed, particularly in regard to ESE classes. They noted that two ESE teachers served approximately 70 students from mixed grade levels. Students were currently having difficulty mastering grade-level standards. Teachers also indicated that more behavioral services were needed.

Administrators were asked about discipline procedures, LRE, and use of data. They noted that in regard to discipline, students with referrals are involved in the process of determining why the behavior is occurring and what classroom interventions can be done to change behavior. BIPs are developed upon a student's second referral. In regard to LRE, administrators discussed that ESE students were gradually transitioned into the general education population, and that school staff were using data to support students moving to more inclusive settings and out of separate class settings. Parents were encouraged to participate in meetings and conferences. Additional supports included after-school tutoring, life-management skills classes, and counseling services.

Malone School

At Malone School, students that participated in a focus group were asked about participation in IEP team meetings and transition planning, academics and extracurricular activities, accommodations and dropping out of school. Students indicated that they were engaged in a variety of classes and activities and had participated in IEP team meetings and advisement sessions for post-secondary options. They also noted they had received both classroom and state assessment accommodations, but were not familiar with waivers. Additionally, the students from the focus group did not share any thoughts about dropping out of school.

Teachers were asked about graduation, dropout, discipline, and use of data. Teachers noted that staff at the school worked together well in the interests of students and in making sure that accommodations for students were implemented, which is vital to student success. Teachers stated that a barrier to graduation rates was students moving from one school to another due to family circumstances or other outside conditions, and receiving teachers would not know about students' needs other than information on the IEP. Additionally teachers noted that available professional development opportunities were not always attended by educational staff. Teachers commented that training opportunities for PBS and the Strategic Instruction Model (SIM) were available.

Administrators were asked about graduation, dropout, discipline, and use of data. They stressed staff efforts to support the school having a family-like atmosphere, with mixed grades and communal meals, and they emphasized that older students supported and mentored younger students. They noted that the school did get support for multi-tiered behavioral intervention, but that district discipline policy did allow the use of corporal punishment, and that students with consistent behavioral issues were referred to the district office. In regard to graduation and dropout rates, they indicated that staff collaborated well together and were responsible for the increase in the graduation rate. They stated that training for the Check and Connect program and SIM would be available during the summer. In addition, they noted that the school did not have an ESE teacher dedicated to middle school grade levels.

JAS

At JAS, the SST members noted that the physical structure and environment of JAS was very conducive to learning. Administrators explained that the short-term program, functioning as an alternative to out-of-school suspension, allowed students with IEPs to continue to complete assignments. SST members had concerns regarding the entry criteria for CACL, the therapeutic nature of the program and the length of the program. Specifically, SST members observed that the factors for placing a specific student in CACL were not always clear, and in some cases the program seemed more punitive than therapeutic. Additionally, although the length of the program was designed to be 90 days, some students appeared to remain in CACL longer, while others seemed to be ready to return to their home school, but needed to complete the remainder of the 90-day period.

Commendations

1. The district has committed to investing in the use of technology to enhance instruction (digital learning). Examples noted include the use of a wide variety of reading and math interventions, an ongoing initiative to provide tablets to each student at the Malone School, and a pending initiative to provide devices for English language learners for translation purposes at Marianna Middle School.
2. Free after-school tutoring with free transportation was provided at Marianna Middle School.
3. At the Malone School, students are provided with meal packages for weekends to help students return to school each week ready to engage in the learning process.
4. JAS had an experienced counselor regularly on site.
5. A selection of elective and extracurricular offerings was noted at each school and student participation appeared to be high.

2014-15 Action-Planning and Problem-Solving Process and Next Steps

As part of the monitoring and assistance during the on-site visit, the SST members, ESE director and representatives from the Jackson County School District met on February 12, 2015, to address action planning and problem solving. A formal problem-solving process session was not initiated

due to the number of issues already identified by the district. However, planning for the following actions was discussed:

1. MTSS and PBS implementation will be a focus for the district.
2. The district will convene a meeting before the end of the 2014-15 school year with district and school administration to discuss logistics for scheduling a district-wide MTSS and PBS training.
3. Professional development will be offered, particularly for the following areas: mental health services and the use of data by instructional staff.
4. Professional development will be offered for school-based administrators regarding LRE and alternate methods of delivery for specialized instruction.
5. The district will establish a date for the BPIE.

Next Steps	
CEIS – Discipline	
Summary:	2014-15 was the first year the district was required to set aside 15 percent of their IDEA funds for CEIS related to discipline. The district's risk ratio was 3.97 for 2014-15, based on 2012-13 data. During the 2015-16 school year the district will not be required to set aside 15 percent as the district's risk ratio for CEIS discipline is 1.43 , based on 2013-14 data.
Recommendation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MTSS and PBS district-wide training should be held and conducted by PS/Rtl Project and PBS: MTSS staff. • Consider if geographic location is a factor in discipline referrals. • Provide mental health professional development at JAS and district-wide.
Required Action:	None
Graduation Rate	
Summary:	The district's graduation rate for students with disabilities has steadily increased from 34.72 percent in 2011-12, to 44.78 percent in 2012-13, to 49.12 percent in 2013-14. The graduation rate is below the state rate of 55.06 percent.
Recommendation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MTSS and PBS district-wide training should be held and conducted by PS/Rtl Project and PBS: MTSS staff. • Increase the availability of transition services and activities. • Consider offering vocational programs and career preparation coursework.
Required Action:	None

Dropout Rate	
Summary:	The district's federal dropout rate for the 2012-13 year was 21.6% and decreased significantly in 2013-14 to 5.6%
Recommendation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MTSS and PBS district-wide training should be held and conducted by PS/RtI Project and PBS: MTSS staff. • Continue implementation of a district-wide EWS. • Provide more district ESE staffing and support. • Provide mental health professional development at JAS and district-wide. • Provide professional development and mentoring for first-year teachers, and consider coordinating with FDLRS representatives in regard to the SIM professional development initiative.
Required Action:	None
Educational Environment (LRE)	
Summary:	<p>Based on data, the percentage of students with disabilities who spend the majority of their time (80 percent or more) in the regular class setting has steadily decreased from 66 percent in 2012-13, to 60.1 percent in 2013-14, to 56.3 percent in 2014-15. The state rate for 2014-15 is 74.4 percent.</p> <p>The SST team members observed that students in the sixth grade at Marianna Middle school were in self-contained settings or in general education classrooms. The SST team members were concerned about the continuum of services offered at this school as they did not observe the availability of resource rooms. In addition, at the alternative school (JAS) there was some concern about teacher-to-student ratio as students are placed at the school regularly. In addition, the district has not completed the BPIE process yet and does not have a date scheduled with FIN to begin the process.</p>

<p>Recommendation:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that digital and technological instructional methods are supplementary to direct instruction and aligned with standards. • Ensure that data is collected from automated instructional programs (software) and reviewed to ensure that students' needs are addressed. • Consider training and professional development for instructional staff related to collecting and analyzing data and using data for progress monitoring and educational decision-making. • Provide MTSS and PBS district-wide training conducted by PS/Rtl Project and PBS: MTSS staff. • Review IEPs to ensure that each student's LRE has been appropriately identified. • Ensure that a variety of factors are reviewed when determining significant cognitive disabilities (FDOE's October 19, 2012 memo). • Provide parent outreach and education regarding inclusion and the continuum of services. • Consider collaborating with FIN. • Consider offering multiple duration (30, 45 days rather than just 90 days) and pathways at the alternative center's CACL program. • Collect and analyze data on "severe behaviors" exhibited by a student placed at the alternative school, in the CACL program, that would preclude placement back in the student's home school. • Consider contingency plans to reduce the amount of time spent in CACL for students who consistently demonstrate compliant behaviors and to ensure support during the student's transition.
<p>Required Action:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a date for the BPIE and complete it by August 2015 • By July 1, 2015, provide five sample IEPs with BIPs and other documentation, as appropriate, that indicate the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The district is providing a full continuum of services and adequate support for implementing students' IEPs in the LRE. ○ Student placements as developed in IEPs are consistent with students' present levels of performance statements. ○ Parent input is considered in placement decision-making, decisions are based on data, and decisions are made by IEP teams and not unilaterally made by parents or school district personnel. ○ The problem-solving process is used to match instructional resources to educational need.
<p>Incidents of Restraint</p>	
<p>Summary:</p>	<p>The district reported that during 2013-14 there were more than 70 total incidents of restraint, with more than 60 occurring at JAS. In 2014-15 this decreased to 15 total incidents, as of February 1, 2015, with 12 occurring at JAS.</p>

Recommendation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue current strategies and practices. • MTSS and PBS district-wide training should be held and conducted by PS/RtI Project and PBS: MTSS staff.
Required Action:	None
Phases 3 and 4 of the ESE Monitoring and Assistance process	
Summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional action planning and problem solving for other priorities for the school district will be scheduled by the SST liaison for the school district and the ESE director. • By March 31, 2016, 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.

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. 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
 - **Compendium of School Discipline Laws and Regulations** that catalogue state laws and regulations related to school discipline

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

2014-15 ESE Monitoring and Assistance

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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 restraint or OSS greater than 10 days? Are there other subgroups for which receipt of restraints or OSS greater than 10 days is more or less problematic?
 - Gender
 - Race or ethnic group
 - Economically disadvantaged
 - General education students
 - Students with disabilities (by each sub-group)
 - English language learners
 - Comparison within and across above sub-groups
4. Disaggregate district-level indicator data by schools. Which schools are contributing to total district for each of the targeted BEESS indicators?
5. Disaggregate school-level indicator data for each grade level served. Which grades are contributing to school totals for each of the targeted BEESS indicators?
6. Disaggregate between type of school (Elementary, Middle School, and High School) and by student outcomes.
7. What evidence-based practices are currently planned for use/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 DIAP with regard to achieving AMO 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 with regard to implementing the strategies in the ESE Policies and Procedures document 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
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.

AMO	Annual Measurable Objectives
BEESS	Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services
BIP	Behavioral intervention plan
BPIE	Best Practices for Inclusive Education
CACL	Center for Advancement of Children's Learning
CARD	Center for Autism and Related Disorders
CEIS	Coordinated early intervening services
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CPI	Crisis Prevention Institute's Nonviolent Crisis Intervention
DOE	Department of Education
DIAP	District Improvement and Assistance Plan
DRM	Dispute Resolution and Monitoring
ESE	Exceptional student education
EWS	Early Warning System
FBA	Functional behavioral assessment
FIN	Florida Inclusion Network
FDLRS	Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System
FDOE	Florida Department of Education
F.S.	Florida Statutes
HWC	Handle with Care
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
IEP	Individual educational plan
ISS	In-school-suspension
JAS	Jackson Alternative School
LEA	Local educational agency
LRE	Least restrictive environment
MTSS	Multi-tiered system of support
OSS	Out-of-school suspension
PAEC	Panhandle Area Education Consortium
PBS	Positive Behavior Support
PBS:MTSS	Positive Behavior Support/Multi-tiered System of Supports
SEDNET	Multiagency Network for Students with Emotional Behavioral Disabilities
SP&P	Exceptional Student Education Policies and Procedures
SPP	State Performance Plan
SST	State Support Team



Pam Stewart, Commissioner
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