**2015-16 Exceptional Student Education
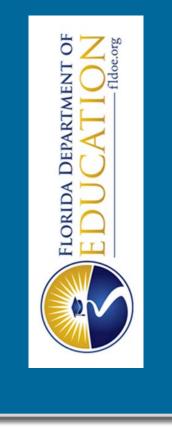Monitoring and Assistance
On-Site Visit Report**

**Charlotte County School District
April 19-21, 2016**

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
fldoe.org

September 19, 2016

Steve Dionisio, Superintendent
Charlotte County School District
1445 Education Way
Port Charlotte, Florida 33948-1052

Dear Superintendent Dionisio:

The Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services (BEESS) is pleased to provide you with the 2015-16 Exceptional Student Education (ESE) Monitoring and Assistance On-Site Visit Report for the Charlotte 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 April 19-21, 2016. Those information sources included interviews with district and school staff, local educational agency profiles, and an action-planning and problem-solving process.

The Charlotte County School District was selected for an on-site visit for the following focus areas related to students with disabilities: federal dropout rate, least restrictive environment, incidents of restraint and seclusion, and discipline (4B). The on-site visit was conducted by a state support team (SST), which included BEESS staff and discretionary project staff.

The 2015-16 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, career and life 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.

Ms. Karen Owens, Director of ESE, and her staff were very helpful to the SST in preparing for and throughout the on-site visit. In addition, school-level personnel welcomed SST members and demonstrated a continued commitment to the education of students in the school district. This report will be posted on the BEESS website and may be accessed at http://www.fldoe.org/ese/mon-home.asp.

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

Thank you for your commitment to improving services to exceptional education students in the Charlotte 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: Karen Owens
     Heidi Metcalf

**2015-16 Exceptional Student Education
Monitoring and Assistance
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Charlotte County School District

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

Table of Contents

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 (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]). BEESS 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, BEESS 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 who are not currently identified as needing special education or related services, but who need additional academic or behavioral supports in order to succeed in a general education environment. These children should include particularly, but not exclusively, children in those groups that were significantly over-identified.

Section 1003.573, F.S., Use of restraint and seclusion on students with disabilities, establishes documentation, reporting and monitoring requirements for districts regarding the use of restraint and seclusion on students with disabilities. It also requires districts to have policies and procedures in place that govern parent notification, incident reporting, data collection and monitoring the use of restraint or seclusion for students with disabilities. As required, FDOE has established district- and school-based standards for documenting, reporting and monitoring the use of restraint and seclusion. These standards are included in each district's Exceptional Student Education Policies and Procedures document.

ESE Monitoring and Assistance Process

Background Information

The 2015-16 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. In the regular class 80 percent or more of the day
  B. In 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 is composed of planning activities that occur in advance of the first on-site visit to the school district.
- Phase 2 is the initial on-site visit to the selected school district by the state support team (SST).**The initial on-site visit was April 16-17, 2014, and the second visit took place on April 27-29, 2015.**
- Phase 3 is follow-up and post-initial visit activities, which 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 is 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 September 21, 2015, the superintendent of the Charlotte County School District was informed that BEESS would be conducting an on-site monitoring visit for the following focus areas: dropout rate, least restrictive environment (LRE), incidents of restraint and incidents of seclusion. In early February 2016 after BEESS received the 2014-15 discipline data for 4B, and the interim ESE director was notified that the on-site visit would include this indicator.

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 administrator, teacher, and student focus groups and school walk-through debriefings:
- Charlotte High School
- L.A. Ainger Middle School

- Murdock Middle School
- Charlotte Harbor Center School

On-Site Activities

On-Site Visit Team

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

FDOE, BEESS
- Monica Verra-Tirado, State Director for Special Education, Bureau Chief
- Karin Gerold, Program Specialist, Dispute Resolution and Monitoring (DRM)
- Jacqueline Roumou, Program Specialist, DRM
- Karrie Musgrove, Program Specialist, Instructional Student Support

Peer Monitors
- Wylene Herring-Cayasso, Director of ESE, Manatee County School District
- Mary Asciutto, Staffing Specialist, Highlands County School District

FDOE, BEESS Discretionary Projects
- Paula da Silva, Facilitator, Problem Solving, Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS)
- Kelly Justice, Problem-Solving Facilitator, Problem Solving: Response to Intervention (PS:RtI)
- Helen Burton, Region 8B Project Manager, Multiagency Network for Students with Emotional/Behavioral Disabilities (SEDNET)
- Leigh Anna Nowak, Coordinator, Centers for Autism Related Disabilities (CARD)
- Lisa Friedman-Chavez, Regional Transition Representative, Project 10: Transition Education Network
- Debra Giacolone, Director, Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System Associate Centers (FDLRS)
- Katherine Ceasar, Representative, FDLRS
- Katie Kelly, Facilitator, Florida Inclusion Network (FIN)
- Margaret Sullivan, Director, State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG)
- David Davis, State Technology Team Coordinator, Technology and Learning Connections (TLC)
- Janet Good, Region 3 Technology Coordinator, TLC
- Rose Iovannone, Director Interdisciplinary Center for Evaluation and Intervention (ICEI), FDLRS/Multidisciplinary Center
- Gary Pearsy, Region 2 Technology Coordinator, TLC

Data Collection

On-site monitoring and assistance activities included the following:
- Review of recent data
- Welcome session with district and school-level staff – 34 participants
- School-level administrator focus groups – 19 participants
- Teacher focus groups – 21 participants

- Student focus groups – 29 participants
- School walk-through debriefings – multiple classrooms
- Seclusion rooms checklist visit – one school, four classrooms
- Action-planning and problem-solving process – 32 participants

Status Update for the 2014-15 ESE Monitoring and Assistance On-Site Visit

The following information is taken from the **2014-15 on-site monitoring** report. A status update to the required actions and recommendations has been added for each area listed.

Next Steps	
Incidents of Restraint and Seclusion	
Summary	Prior to the 2014-15 on-site visit, the district signed a memorandum of understanding with the PBIS project to participate in the PBIS Restraint and Seclusion Workgroup, which includes collaborating with a district leadership team in a problem-solving and action-planning process that will 1) assist the district in evaluating their restraint and seclusion data, 2) assist the district with conducting a needs assessment to determine their strengths and needs, 3) identify evidence-based strategies to address restraint and seclusion, and 4) implement and evaluate the evidence-based strategies.
Required Actions	The district must continue participation in the PBIS Restraint and Seclusion Workgroup and provide BEESS with quarterly updates that will include a summary of the activities and data on the following dates: • **August 28, 2015** • **October 30, 2015** • **January 29, 2016** • **April 29, 2016** No later than **August 28, 2015**, the district must submit evidence of the development of an action plan with long- and short-term goals designed to reduce the need for restraint and seclusion in the district. The district must submit narratives on the progress of the action plan to BEESS on the following dates: • **October 30, 2015** • **January 29, 2016** • **April 29, 2016** No later than **October 30, 2015**, the district will submit evidence (sign-in sheets with personnel names and roles, time and date of training) of a completed Crisis Prevention Institute training with an emphasis on Autism for school personnel who have students with a primary or secondary diagnosis of an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and other appropriate personnel. In addition, no later than **October 30, 2015**, the district will provide de-escalation training for school personnel who have students with

	a primary or secondary diagnosis of an emotional behavioral disability. Documentation of both trainings should be provided to BEESS no later than **November 20, 2015**. No later than **October 30, 2015**, the district will submit evidence (sign-in sheets with personnel names and roles, time and date of training) of participation and documentation from any required follow up activities from the CARD module.
Status Update	On October 30, 2015, January 29, 2016, and April 29, 2016, the district provided BEESS quarterly data, a summary of activities and training reports indicating that the district had worked with discretionary projects, including the PBIS Restraint and Seclusion Workgroup, and conducted trainings related to the reduction of incidents of restraint and seclusion all within the required timelines. In addition, data were reviewed at weekly and monthly meetings by school-based and district problem-solving teams during the 2015-16 school year. The schools where incidents of restraint and seclusion were occurring have demonstrated a reduction of incidents of restraint and seclusion for the 2015-16 school year.
Dropout Rate	
Summary	The district's federal dropout rate for students with disabilities was reported at 21.7 percent for the 2013-14 school year, which is above the state average of 19.2 percent.
Required Actions	The district must submit evidence (e.g., professional development training documents, early warning criteria and accompanying student data, dropout data, multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) team meeting agendas and notes, District Improvement and Assistance Plan) of implementation of the School Portal and application of MTSS no later than the following dates: • **October 30, 2015** • **January 29, 2016** • **April 29, 2016**
Status Update	On October 30, 2015, January 29, 2016, and April 29, 2016, the district provided quarterly data, a summary of activities and training materials indicating that the district had implemented the district's early warning system, which tracked both early warning indicators. School-based problem-solving teams reviewed the data and used the information to determine instructional strategies and interventions.
Educational Environment – Least Restrictive Environment	
Summary	The district's rate of students with disabilities being served for more than 80 percent of the time in regular education settings was 49.1 percent during the 2013-14 school year and decreased to 45.9 percent during the 2014-15 school year.
Recommendations	The district will continue to collaborate with FIN to ensure that the

	Best Practices for Inclusive Education (BPIE) services plan is implemented in the district and school.
Required Actions	The district must submit evidence (e.g., action plans for inclusion of students, BPIE services plan, student LRE data, professional development training documentation) of implementation of the district's plan for the inclusion of students with disabilities into the general education setting to BEESS on the following dates: • **August 28, 2015** • **October 30, 2015** • **January 29, 2016** • **April 29, 2016**
Status Update	On August 19, 2016, October 30, 2015, January 29, 2016, and April 29, 2016, the district provided quarterly data, a summary of activities and training materials indicating that the district had worked with FIN on master scheduling to increase the number of students with disabilities in the general education environment. In addition, data indicated that the district's LRE rate increased from 45.9 percent to 59.7 percent from the 2014-15 to the 2015-16 school years and from 59.7 percent to 62 percent from December 2015 to March 2016.
Phases 3 and 4 of the ESE Monitoring and Assistance process	
Summary	By **December 18, 2015**, and **April 1, 2016**, the SST, ESE director and designated district staff will evaluate the effectiveness of the school district's action plan and determine additional next steps, as appropriate.
Status Update	The district provided BEESS updates regarding the effectiveness of their action plan on August 19, 2016, October 30, 2015, and April 29, 2016. The district also developed next steps at the on-site monitoring problem-solving meeting conducted on April 21, 2016.

2015-16 ESE Monitoring and Assistance On-Site Visit Results

The following data are related to the focus areas and activities for the 2015-16 ESE Monitoring and Assistance On-Site Visit for Charlotte County School District.

Dropout Rate

The federal dropout rate for students with disabilities is calculated by taking the number of students who exited special education as a result of dropping out, divided by the number of students who graduated with a regular high school diploma, special diploma, a certificate of completion, a special certificate of completion, dropped out or died. The district's federal dropout rate for students with disabilities for the 2014-15 school year has increased and is **above** the state rate.

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	
Charlotte	**26.1%**	**19.5%**	**21.7%**	**28.7%**

State Rate	**21.1%**	**20.3%**	**19.2%**	**18.7%**

Educational Environment (Least Restrictive Environment)

To the maximum extent appropriate, students with disabilities are to be educated with nondisabled students. These LRE data are calculated by dividing the number of students with disabilities aged 6 through 21 served in the regular class for 80 percent or more of the day, by the total number of students with disabilities aged 6 through 21 reported in October (survey 2). These data do not include parentally placed private school students or students served in Florida county jails, Florida Department of Juvenile Justice facilities or Florida Department of Corrections. The district's percentage of students with disabilities being served in the regular class was **below** the state rate in the 2014-15 school year.

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Charlotte	**57.3%**	**49.1%**	**45.9%**	**59.7%**
State	**70.7%**	**71.3%**	**74.4%**	**73.0%**

Incidents of Restraint

According to the FDOE's restraint and seclusion database, the number of incidents of restraint in the district has decreased since the 2014-15 school year. In addition, the total percentage of students with disabilities restrained in the district for the 2015-16 school year was **1.80** percent, while the state average is 0.94 percent.

According to the school district's 2015-16 SP&P document, Nonviolent Crisis Intervention (NCI) training is used to train staff members on the use of restraint for the most challenging behaviors and when maintaining safety at a school is an ongoing challenge for a particular school site.

According to the district's 2015-16 SP&P document, the plan for reducing the need for the use of restraint was to decrease the number of incidents by 12 percent, which would be approximately 216 total incidents for 2015-16. The district met this goal.

	2013-14 (August – July)	2014-15 (August – July)	2015-16 (August – July)
Number of Incidents*	**293**	**245**	**111**
Number of Students	**69**	**75**	**54**

Incidents of Seclusion

According to the FDOE's restraint and seclusion database, the number of incidents of seclusion in the district has decreased since the 2014-15 school year. In addition, the total percentage of students with disabilities secluded in the district for the 2015-16 school year was **0.40** percent, while the state average was 0.17 percent.

According to the school district's 2015-16 SP&P document, the district plan for reducing the need for the use of seclusion was to decrease the number of incidents by 15 percent, which

would be approximately 159 total incidents for 2015-16. The district met this goal.

	2013-14 (August – July)	2014-15 (August – July)	2015-16 (August – July)
Number of Incidents*	**167**	**187**	**51**
Number of Students	**25**	**34**	**12**

Discipline Rate and Risk Ratio (4B)

Subsequent to the on-site visit, BEESS received the 2014-15 discipline data for 4B, which indicated a risk ratio greater than 3.0 for black students in the district. Florida has defined significant disproportionality as a risk ratio of 3.0 or greater. Therefore, the district was notified that 4B would be included in the on-site visit.

Discipline risk ratios for students with disabilities are calculated by first dividing the number of students with disabilities from a specific racial and ethnic group who received out-of-school suspensions or expulsions totaling more than 10 days, by the total-year enrollment of students with disabilities from the same racial and ethnic group. Second, the number of all nondisabled students who received out-of-school suspensions or expulsions totaling more than 10 days is divided by the total number of nondisabled students. The risk ratio is calculated by dividing the result of the first step by the result of the second step. A risk ratio of 1.0 indicates that students with disabilities of a given race are no more likely to be suspended or expelled than all nondisabled students. The district's 4B data indicated that students with disabilities in the district whose race is black are **5.64** times more likely to be suspended or expelled as all nondisabled students. This was the first year that the district had a risk ratio greater than 3.0.

Interviews Conducted

Administrator Focus Groups

Members of the SST conducted focus groups with administrative staff from Charlotte High School, L.A. Ainger Middle School, Murdock Middle School and Charlotte Harbor Center School regarding dropout rates, LRE, incidents of restraint and seclusion, and discipline (4B).

Themes that emerged from the administrator focus groups included the following:
- An early warning system is used to track students for graduation.
- One school created a transcript and provided it to all students to help them monitor their grade-point average, credits earned and classes needed, which allows students to self-monitor their progress toward graduation with their cohort.
- School counselors are available during lunch periods to conference with students when issues arise.
- One school adopted a schoolwide positive behavior system referred to as the Renaissance Program. Each nine weeks, students receive a "fresh start" and are able to win prizes.
- Each school has different methods to review and monitor student academic and behavioral data using the districtwide School Portal.
- ESE liaisons at schools provide support to the students and teachers for inclusion.
- Flexible scheduling with the assistance from FIN allows students with disabilities to be scheduled first.

- As a result of students with disabilities being included in the general education classroom, there are fewer discipline referrals and more opportunities for student interaction with nondisabled students. Students with disabilities are making academic progress and making more of an effort to become active participants in the general education classrooms.
- Staff members are embracing opportunities to expand their skills to support students with disabilities in the general education setting.
- The administration at the center school researches and reviews current policies and meets frequently to determine what changes are needed.
- The center school's transition plan, which facilitates a student's transition back to their neighborhood school, is effective.

Teacher Focus Groups

Members of the SST conducted focus groups with teachers from Charlotte High School, L.A. Ainger Middle School, Murdock Middle School and Charlotte Harbor Center School regarding dropout rates, LRE, incidents of restraint and seclusion, and discipline (4B).

Themes that emerged from the teacher focus groups included the following:
- The number of students in the inclusion setting could be increased if there were more instructional supports provided.
- More time for planning would help in order to meet the diverse needs of students.
- Students are more productive, more independent, willing to take risks, self-advocating and actively participating in the general education environment.
- At one school there are two school counselors that are stationed outside the cafeteria during every lunch period and are available to counsel students on a daily basis.
- More professional development is needed regarding accommodations and supports for the whole school so all students' needs can be met.
- There are concerns with the school board policies regarding make-up work, which were put in place to help with attendance issues.
- At one school, teachers are working with students' IEP teams to provide more opportunities for inclusion for students that are currently in self-contained classrooms.
- The learning strategies classes at one school could be improved by ensuring that students' academic needs are being addressed through a stronger focus on content.
- There is a need to educate parents of students entering the middle school to help them support their students' independence.
- Students with disabilities need to be able to self-advocate and track their academic progress.
- At the center school, there is a positive change in the discipline system and de-escalation strategies seem to be working to reduce the number of incidents of restraint.
- The process of transitioning students back to home-zoned schools from the center school is more successful than in the past. Some students who are ready to transition do not want to leave their current placement.

Student Focus Groups

Members of the SST conducted focus groups with students from Charlotte High School, L.A. Ainger Middle School, Murdock Middle School and Charlotte Harbor Center School. The students were asked to share their perspective on topics such as support from teachers, post-school goals, assistance received to prepare for life after high school, causes of dropout,

disciplinary issues, and additional resources or services needed.

Comments from the students included the following:
- Students are aware of their IEPs and attend their IEP team meetings. During IEP team meetings, the students receive advice from some of their teachers. The meetings should include less adult technical language to make them more understandable.
- IEP team meetings help students realize their present levels of performance and what they need to improve to reach their goals.
- Students have career goals, but need help and support to reach those goals.
- At one school, students are enrolled in a learning strategies course and enjoy the course, which is customized for their individual needs and provides extra assistance with work, tutoring and support for online classes.
- Students reported a need for more support within the general education classrooms, but indicated they do not always feel comfortable advocating for themselves.
- At one school, there is a need to set up a process where students could self-advocate better for their needs and services on their IEPs without having to bring their parents in for a full meeting.
- Students indicated they would like more opportunities for inclusive activities.
- At one school, the pace of instruction is often too fast in the inclusive classrooms. Students suggest that they would benefit from differentiated instruction, less lecture-type classes and more hands-on activities, and demonstrations and videos should be included to reinforce concepts.
- At the center school, the work is easy and the students do not feel challenged; however, in other schools the students feel that they are challenged academically by the teachers.
- At the center school, there are many extracurricular activities offered that the students participate in. In other schools there is a need for more choices in electives as remediation classes take away elective choices due to scheduling.
- In-school suspension is reinforcing for some students who want a quiet space to complete work.
- Out-of-school suspension is not working for all students and different alternatives are needed.
- Among the students, there is no desire to drop out of school and the students are aware of the impact of dropping out.

School Walk-Through Debriefings

School walk-through debriefings were conducted at Charlotte High School, L.A. Ainger Middle School, Murdock Middle School and Charlotte Harbor Center School.

Observations from the school walk-through debriefings included the following:
- The campuses were clean, well maintained, inviting and displayed motivational visuals throughout the buildings.
- Teachers and students were observed utilizing technology such as SMART Boards, computers and frequency modulation systems.
- Students were observed actively engaged and participating in instruction.
- Support staff was observed participating in academic instruction by leading small groups.
- Classrooms were structured and organized with age- and subject-appropriate materials.

Four seclusion classrooms at the Charlotte Harbor Center School were visited. Three of the four seclusion rooms revealed surfaces that were free of potentially dangerous materials. One room's electromagnetic lock had been removed and the room was being used as a "cool down"

room. It was recommended to school administration that the door be removed since the room was not being used as a seclusion room.

Commendations

1. The district's LRE rate for students with disabilities increased from 45.9 percent to 59.7 percent from the 2014-15 to the 2015-16 school year.
2. The district is investigating alternatives to discipline procedures, including restorative practices and alternatives to suspension.
3. The district is developing procedures for transitioning students with disabilities to more inclusive environments.

2015-16 Action-Planning and Problem-Solving Process and Next Steps

During the problem-solving and action-planning meeting with the SST and district-level staff, the district's leadership team shared their goals for students with disabilities that involved the following themes:

- Continue to implement more inclusionary practices in the general education classrooms, which will benefit all students.
- Continue with the philosophical changes in discipline and providing academic rigor at the center school.
- Explore alternatives to out-of-school suspension, including restorative and proactive strategies.

Next Steps	
Dropout Rate	
Summary	The district's dropout rate increased from 21.7 percent to 28.7 percent from the 2013-14 to the 2014-15 school year. This rate is higher than the state average of 18.7 percent for the 2014-15 school year.
Recommendations	It is recommended that the district continue to monitor and track data as it continues to participate in the follow-up activities shared during the 2015-16 on-site monitoring visit.
Required Actions	The district must submit evidence of implementation of the School Portal and application of MTSS by the following dates to the district's BEESS liaison: • **October 31, 2016** • **January 31, 2017** • **April 28, 2017**
Educational Environment (Least Restrictive Environment)	
Summary	The district's LRE rate increased from 45.9 percent to 59.7 percent from the 2014-15 to the 2015-16 school years. This rate is still below the state rate of 73 percent for the 2015-16 school year.
Recommendations	It is recommended that the district continue to monitor and track data as it continues to participate in the follow-up activities

	shared during the 2015-16 on-site monitoring visit.
Required Actions	N/A
Incidents of Restraint	
Summary	The district's incidents of restraint decreased from 293 incidents involving 69 students to 245 incidents involving 76 students from the 2013-14 to the 2014-15 school year. For the 2015-16 school year, the total percentage of students with disabilities restrained in the district was **1.80** percent, while the state average is 0.94 percent.
Recommendations	It is recommended that the district continue to monitor and track data as it continues to participate in the follow-up activities shared during the 2015-16 on-site monitoring visit.
Required Actions	The district must submit evidence of professional development training and notes and agendas from the PBIS Restraint and Seclusion State Workgroup meetings and other collaborative meetings, along with data analysis, to the district's BEESS liaison by the following dates: • **October 31, 2016** • **January 31, 2017** • **April 28, 2017**
Incidents of Seclusion	
Summary	The district's incidents of seclusion increased from 167 incidents involving 25 students to 187 incidents involving 34 students from the 2013-14 to the 2014-15 school year. For the 2015-16 school year, the total percentage of students with disabilities secluded in the district was **0.40** percent, while the state average was 0.17 percent.
Recommendations	It is recommended that the district continue to monitor and track data as it continues to participate in the follow-up activities shared during the 2015-16 on-site monitoring visit.
Required Actions	The district must submit evidence of professional development training and notes and agendas from the PBIS Restraint and Seclusion State Workgroup meetings, along with data analysis, to the district's BEESS liaison by the following dates: • **October 31, 2016** • **January 31, 2017** • **April 28, 2017**
Discipline – 4B	
Summary	Subsequent to the planning of the 2015-16 on-site monitoring visit, data regarding discipline of black students with disabilities with more than 10 days of suspension was released. The district's risk ratio for the 2014-15 school year was 5.64, which is greater than the risk ratio of 3.0. Florida has defined significant disproportionality as a risk ratio of 3.0 or greater.

Recommendations	N/A
Required Actions	The district must submit evidence of professional development training and notes and agendas from district-level meetings, along with data analysis of discipline by disability category and ethnicity, to the district's BEESS liaison by the following dates: • **October 31, 2016** • **January 31, 2017** • **April 28, 2017**
Phases 3 and 4 of the ESE Monitoring and Assistance Process	
Summary	By **December 16, 2016, and April 7, 2017**, the SST, ESE Director and designated district staff will evaluate the effectiveness of the school district's action plan and determine additional next steps, as appropriate, via a scheduled telephone call. The district will provide documentation to be discussed to the district's BEESS liaison prior to the scheduled call.

Technical Assistance

1. **Implementing a Multi-Tiered System of Support for Behavior: Recommended Practices for School and District Leaders** (Florida's PBIS 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 of 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 catalog state laws and regulations related to school discipline.

5. **Functional Behavioral Assessment and Positive Intervention Benchmarks of Effective Practice** (Florida's PBIS Project) may be accessed at http://flpbs.fmhi.usf.edu/pdfs/pbs_FBA_Benchmarks.pdf.

6. **PS:RtI Technology** may be accessed at http://www.floridarti.usf.edu/index.html. One function of this project provides regional technology coordinators and technology specialists the support to effectively implement accessible instructional materials, assistive technologies, learning technologies, and universal design for learning principles within all tiers of instruction. This project also manages, coordinates and supports the regional assistive technology loan libraries.

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