

**NOTICE OF INTENT**

**Form No. BAAC-01**

Section 1007.33(5)(d), Florida Statutes (F.S.), and Rule 6A-14.095, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.), outline the requirements for Florida College System baccalaureate program proposals. The completed Notice of Intent form, incorporated in Rule 6A-14.095, F.A.C., Site Determined Baccalaureate Access, shall be submitted by the college president to the chancellor of the Florida College System at [ChancellorFCS@fldoe.org](mailto:ChancellorFCS@fldoe.org).

**CHECKLIST**

The notice of intent requires completion of the following components:

- Program summary
- Program description
- Workforce demand, supply, and unmet need
- Planning process

**FLORIDA COLLEGE SYSTEM INSTITUTION INFORMATION**

Institution Name:	College of Central Florida
Institution President:	Dr. James Henningsen

**PROGRAM SUMMARY**

1.1	Program name.	Exceptional Student Education
1.2	Degree type.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bachelor of Science <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor of Applied Science
1.3	How will the proposed degree program be delivered? (check all that apply).	<input type="checkbox"/> Face-to-face (F2F) (Entire degree program delivered via F2F courses only) <input type="checkbox"/> Completely online (Entire degree program delivered via online courses only) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Combination of face-to-face/online (Entire degree program delivered via a combination of F2F and online courses)
1.4	Degree Classification of Instructional Program (CIP) code (6-Digit).	13.1001
1.5	Anticipated program implementation date.	July 2026
1.6	What are the primary pathways for admission to the program? Check all that apply.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Associate in Arts (AA) <input type="checkbox"/> Associate in Science (AS) <input type="checkbox"/> Associate in Applied Science (AAS)  If you selected AS/AAS, please specify the program:  Click or tap here to enter text.
1.7	Is the degree program a STEM focus area?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
1.8	List program concentration(s) or track(s) (if applicable).	N/A

## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

2.1 This section is the **executive summary** of this notice of intent. We recommend providing an abbreviated program description including but not limited to: the program demand, current supply, and unmet need in the college's service district; primary pathways to program admission; overview of program curriculum; career path and potential employment opportunities; and average starting salary. We encourage approximately 300 words for a sufficient description.

College of Central Florida's proposed Bachelor of Science in Exceptional Student Education will be a state-approved initial teacher preparation program, with approval by the Florida Department of Education. Our graduates will hold a Bachelor of Science in Exceptional Student Education (ESE) and will be uniquely trained to teach special education in the K-12 setting. Graduates of the BS-ESE program will have endorsements in Reading (K-12) and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL, K-12).

The curriculum will train and educate future teachers to assist and empower children with disabilities who need specially designed instruction and related services to meet the increasing demand for locally ESE-credentialed educators. With a focus on high-quality education, flexibility and experiential learning; this degree provides an opportunity for all students, specifically non-traditional students, to pursue their bachelor's degree in an educational setting best suited for their needs. In partnership with school districts, there will be an accelerated pathway for approved and experienced paraprofessionals and behavior technicians to enroll and then use the Temporary Teaching Intern Certification to become teacher of record in year 2 of enrollment.

The degree will require a total of 120 credits and be a 2+2 program articulation from the Associate in Arts (AA) degree. All applicants will be required to have earned an associate's degree prior to admission to include a total of 36 credits of general education coursework and 24 baccalaureate prerequisite and elective credits.

Marion County Public Schools hires approximately 30 ESE teachers each year and approximately 16% of ESE classes are being taught by uncertified teachers. There are 2,914 projected new teaching positions through the year 2031 (Citrus, Levy, Marion). According to IPEDS data, there are 18 statewide institutions who have ESE completers (CIP code 13.1001), none of which are located in CF's service area.

## WORKFORCE DEMAND, SUPPLY, AND UNMET NEED

3.1 Describe the workforce demand, supply, and unmet need for graduates of the program that incorporates, at a minimum, the shaded information from Sections 3.1.1 to 3.1.4. For proposed programs without a listed Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) linkage, provide a rationale for the identified SOC code(s). If using a SOC that is not on the CIP to SOC crosswalk, please justify why the SOC aligns with the baccalaureate program.

**Demand:**

In the CIP to SOC crosswalk, CIP 13.1001 is aligned to the following SOCs: 25-2051 (Special Education Teachers, Preschool), 25-2055 (Special Education Teachers, Kindergarten), 25-2056 (Special Education Teachers, Elementary School), 25-2057 (Special Education Teachers, Middle School), 25-2058 (Special Education Teachers, Secondary School), 25-2059 (Special Education Teachers, All Other), and 25-9043 (Teaching Assistants, Special Education).

Florida Commerce lacks regional data for CF's service area for the SOC codes associated with the CIP code (13.1001). Consequently, Table 3.1.1 presents elementary education demand data in CF's service area to infer unmet needs based on trends in the education sector. These data indicate 790 total job openings, suggesting a similar demand in the field of exceptional education. In addition to providing projections for elementary school teachers in CF's service area, we also included in Table 3.1.1 the Florida Commerce statewide data for the special education teacher SOC codes (listed above). These data reveal a growing need for special education teachers across the state across all secondary education levels.

In 2023-2024, the [Florida Department of Education identified](#) critical teacher shortage areas in the following areas: Exceptional Student Education (ESE), English, Science, ESOL, Reading, Mathematics, and Tech Education (CTE). The report identified ESE teachers as the highest rank based on the percentage of courses taught by teachers not certified in an appropriate field. Based on statewide data, 60,710 ESE classes were taught during the 2021-2022 academic year with 16.05% of these classes taught by teachers not certified in the ESE field. There is a substantial, documented, and critical need to supply a pipeline of certified ESE teachers throughout the state of Florida. For critical teacher shortages in CF's service district, the following number of schools were identified as high priority: 4 in Citrus County, 10 in Levy County, and 20 in Marion County.

According to Florida Commerce's [Fastest Growing Industries report](#) on FloridaJobs.org, Educational Services ranks as the 6th fastest-growing industry in Florida, with a projected growth rate of 9.7% from 2023-2031.

Nationally, there is a pressing need for Exceptional Education teachers. In the 2022-23 school year, nearly 7.5 million (15%) of public-school students received Exceptional Education services, as reported by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). Despite a decline in overall public-school enrollment since the coronavirus pandemic, the number of students served under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) has risen. Our program provides an accessible entry point into teacher education, preparing future educators to enter the field with a bachelor's degree and earn a competitive salary without needing an advanced degree right away. Moreover, the projected growth and critical shortage underscore the importance of producing graduates equipped with the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) to meet workforce demands.

**Supply:**

There are no private or public postsecondary institutions in the CF service area (Citrus, Levy, and Marion counties) that can meet the demand for graduates in the service area. According to IPEDS data, there are 18 state-wide institutions who have Exceptional Student Education (CIP code 13.1001) completers, none of which are located within CF's service area of Citrus, Levy, and Marion counties. Additionally, of the 18 institutions comprised in the IPEDS data, two institutions – University of Florida and Flagler College – have recently discontinued their Exceptional Student Education programs. According to IPEDS data, these institutions produce a five-year average of 325 graduates per year statewide, with 292 completers graduating in 2022.

The institution closest to the CF service area that offers an ESE bachelor's degree program is the University of Central Florida. However, with its location over 90 miles from the CF campus, it is not a viable option for the nontraditional population of students CF proudly serves. Consequently, CF would serve a unique role in meeting the fully unmet need in the CF service area for exceptional student (grades K-12) education graduates who possess ESE and ESOL (K-12) endorsements. These data strongly support the need for College of Central Florida to begin a BS in Exceptional Education to help meet the demand for fully licensed teachers who are prepared to teach in a private or public school.

**Unmet Need:**

In Table 3.4.1, "Total Job Openings" (column A), only includes data for statewide projections; we did not include the total job openings for elementary school teachers in CF's service district. We believe Table 3.4.1 provides the most accurate picture of the need for special education teachers across the state, and how CF can close the employment gap in this critical profession, not just in our service area, but also statewide.

## DEMAND: FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY (DEO) EMPLOYMENT PROJECTIONS

3.1.1 The Excel spreadsheet below is set up with predefined formulas. To activate the spreadsheet, right click within the spreadsheet, go to “Worksheet Object”, and then “Open”. To exit, save any changes and exit out of the spreadsheet. Alternatively, double click anywhere on the table. To exit the spreadsheet, single click anywhere outside of the table.

[CLICK HERE FOR INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE DEMAND SECTION](#)

Name/Title	SOC Code	County/ Region	2023	2031	**Level Change	***Total Job Openings	Average Hourly Wage	Annualized Salary	FL	BLS
Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	25-2021	Citrus, Levy, & Marion	1233	1292	4.79	790	29.94	\$ 62,271	B	B
Special Education Teachers, Preschool	25-2051	Statewide	1582	1730	9.36	1115	28.04	\$ 58,322	B	B
Special Education Teachers, Kindergarten and Elementary School	25-2052	Statewide	3755	4089	8.89	2626	28.24	\$ 58,732	B	B
Special Education Teachers, Middle School	25-2057	Statewide	1847	2002	8.39	1279	29.87	\$ 62,138	B	B
Special Education Teachers, Secondary School	25-2058	Statewide	8432	9153	8.55	5858	31.17	\$ 64,829	B	B
Special Education Teachers, All Other	25-2059	Statewide	4049	4429	9.39	2857	\$ 27.91	\$ 58,049	B	B
								\$ -		
								\$ -		
								\$ -		
								\$ -		
					Total	1816	\$ 29.19	\$ 60,723		

\*Please replace the “Base Year” and “Projected Year” headers with the years reflected in the projections portal (e.g., Base Year is 2019, Projected Year is 2027).

\*\*Please note that the “Level Change” column in Table 3.1.1 corresponds to the “Percent Growth” employment projections data produced by the DEO.

\*\*\*Please note that the "Total Job Openings" columns is preset to be divided by 8.



**DEMAND: OTHER ENTITY INDEPENDENT OF THE COLLEGE – (LIST NAME OF OTHER ENTITY HERE)**

3.1.2 The Excel spreadsheet below is set up with predefined formulas. To activate the spreadsheet, right click within the spreadsheet, go to “Worksheet Object”, and then “Open”. To exit, save any changes and exit out of the spreadsheet. Alternatively, double click anywhere on the table. To exit the spreadsheet, single click anywhere outside of the table.

Occupation			Number of Jobs				Salary		Education Level	
Name/Title	SOC Code	County/ Region	*Base Year	*Projected Year	Level Change	Total Job Openings	Average Hourly Wage	Annualized Salary	FL	BLS
								\$ -		
								\$ -		
								\$ -		
								\$ -		
								\$ -		
								\$ -		
								\$ -		
								\$ -		
								\$ -		
								\$ -		
								\$ -		
								\$ -		
Total						0				

\*Please replace the “Base Year” and “Projected Year” headers with the corresponding years reported.

**SUPPLY: NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS, IPEDS**

3.1.3 The Excel spreadsheet below is set up with predefined formulas. To activate the spreadsheet, right click within the spreadsheet, go to “Worksheet Object”, and then “Open”. To exit, save any changes and exit out of the spreadsheet. Alternatively, double click anywhere on the table. To exit the spreadsheet, single click anywhere outside of the table.

[CLICK HERE FOR INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE SUPPLY SECTION:](#) If institutions do not have data available for completers in the service district, please report statewide data. You may note these are statewide figures.

Program		Number of Degrees Awarded					
Institution Name	CIP Code	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	5-year average or average of years available if less than 5-years
The CF service district (Citrus, Levy, and Marion counties) does not have any institutions that confer degrees in Exceptional Student Education.	13.1001	0	0	0	0	0	0
Statewide - state colleges (6)	13.1001	125	149	120	123	144	132
Statewide - state universities (9)	13.1001	162	197	202	183	169	183
Statewide - private institutions (3)	13.1001	5	9	8	22	7	10
	<b>Total</b>	<b>292</b>	<b>355</b>	<b>330</b>	<b>328</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>325</b>

\*Please replace the “Most Recent Year” through “Prior Year 4” headers with the corresponding years reported.

**ESTIMATES OF UNMET NEED**

3.1.4 The Excel spreadsheet below is set up with predefined formulas. To activate the spreadsheet, right click within the spreadsheet, go to "Worksheet Object", and then "Open". To exit, save any changes and exit out of the spreadsheet. Alternatively, double click anywhere on the table. To exit the spreadsheet, single click anywhere outside of the table.

[CLICK HERE FOR INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE ESTIMATES OF UNMET NEED SECTION](#): If institutions do not have data available for completers in the service district, please report statewide data. You may note these are statewide figures.

	<b>Demand</b>	<b>Supply</b>		<b>Range of Estimated Unmet Need</b>							
	(A)	(B)	(C)	(A-B)	(A-C)						
	Total Job Openings	Most Recent Year	5-year average or average of years available if less than 5 years	Difference	Difference						
<b>DEO Total</b>	1716	292	325	1424	1391						
<b>Other Totals</b>				0	0						

3.2 Describe any other evidence of workforce demand and unmet need for graduates as selected by the institution, which may include qualitative or quantitative data and information not reflected in the data presented in Sections 3.1.1 to 3.1.4, such as local economic development initiatives, emerging industries in the area, or evidence of rapid growth.

In-migration to Marion County is rapidly out-pacing projections. Ocala was recently named in a list as one of the “Top 10 Metro Areas for Future Job Growth” and named “#4 Fastest Growing Metro Area” in the U.S. by the US Census Bureau in 2024. In 2023-2024, Marion County Public Schools enrolled 45,651 students, the highest amount in the county’s history. In 10 years, school district enrollment has grown by 9%. Due to this growth, Marion County has documented the need and planned for five new schools and nine new wings to existing schools to be constructed over the next 15 years. Per Marion County Public Schools, the district plans to hire 30 ESE teachers per year over the next few years. Citrus County is expecting 14% growth in district enrollment through 2030, in large part due to the construction of the Veterans Parkway. This project will result in more residents moving into the area and there are currently 16,000 new homes and apartments in potential development phases in Citrus County over the next 10 years

3.3 If the education level for the occupation identified by the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) or the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) presented in Sections 3.1.1 to 3.1.2 is below or above the level of a baccalaureate degree, provide justification for the inclusion of that occupation in the analysis.

N/A

3.4 Describe the career path and potential employment opportunities for graduates of the program.

Students who graduate with an A.A. degree can progress into the B.S. Exceptional Education program as a career pathway. Additionally, students from any regionally accredited institution can enroll in and complete the B.S. in Exceptional Education. There are several teaching positions available in the Citrus, Levy, and Marion school districts. Graduates of this program are eligible for the Florida Exceptional Teacher Certification for grades K-12, as well as endorsements in Reading (K-12) and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL, K-12). According to the U.S. Department of Education, ESOL for grades K-12 has been listed as a teacher shortage area since 2019.

Graduates of this program will have numerous opportunities to work in the field of Exceptional Education in Citrus, Levy, and Marion counties, as well as the surrounding Florida region. They will be qualified and prepared to teach all grade levels in various school settings,

including public, private, charter, and virtual schools. Exceptional Education graduates from this program will have upskilled opportunities leading to additional teaching certificates by taking and passing subject area exams. For example, a teacher can take and pass the English Language Arts exam to become eligible to teach high school and middle school English classes.

Furthermore, graduates may pursue industry certificates such as Autism Spectrum Disorder and Special Education: Severe/Profound. Program graduates would also be eligible to pursue advanced degrees in Education, expanding their employment opportunities and increasing their earning potential. Advanced positions of interest may include roles such as principals, assistant principals, guidance counselors, ESE specialists and superintendents.

## PLANNING PROCESS

4.1 Summarize the internal planning process. In timeline format, please describe the steps your institution took in completing the internal review and approval of the baccalaureate program. For example, summarize actions taken by the academic department proposing the degree, any non-academic departments, the college-wide curriculum committee, the college president, the Board of Trustees and any other areas.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>
July 2024	In response to external stakeholder requests, CF VP Academic Affairs (Dr. Mark Paugh), VP Workforce Development and Innovation (Dr. Jennifer Fryns), and the Dean of Criminal Justice and Teacher Education met to review demand data, discuss possible curriculum, and evaluate staffing and viability. Discussions were initiated via email with Teacher Education faculty to gather feedback and consider staffing plans. It was determined that a full-time faculty position as program manager would be justified but the current field placement coordinator duties might be sufficient.
August 6, 2024	Presidents' staff (executive leadership) reviewed data and discussed the demand and viability of a new B.S. in ESE.
August 29, 2024	The Teacher Education department met to begin planning a timeline and proposal for high points of the application process.

August 2024 Curriculum Meeting	The college's Curriculum Committee was consulted for discussion and feedback, which was very positive.
September 2024	A CF workgroup continued more detailed planning and identified the need for a full time faculty member to lead the process.
October 30, 2024	The CF District Board of Trustees approved moving forward with the NOI process.
November 14, 2024	The CF Curriculum Committee reviewed the program concept and proposed timeline for NOI process. Timeline-wise, the program proposal and curriculum will be brought in late Spring 2025 for specific approval. CF had continued discussions about the need to hire a full-time program manager to also work on the state approval process for an Initial Teacher Preparation portfolio to be developed.

## PLANNING PROCESS

4.2 Summarize the external planning process with the business and industry community. In timeline format, please describe your institution's interactions and engagements with external stakeholders, including but not limited to industry advisory boards meetings, discussions with advisory committees, briefings from local businesses, consultations with employers, and conducting paper and online surveys.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>
May 2024	At an Educational Training Consortium (advisory committee) meeting, districts shared extenuating need for ESE certified educators.
May 31, 2024	Discussions at Chancellor's convenings with Marion County Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Diane Gullett and Citrus County School District Assistant Superintendent Dr. Scott Herbert led to a request for CF to review viability of a new B.S. in ESE.
June 24, 2024	Marion County Public Schools' senior administrators (Dr. Danielle Brewer, Dr. Margaret Talbert-Irving, Dr. Anna Williams-Jones) met with CF's VP Workforce Development and Innovation (Dr. Jennifer Fryns) to discuss needs and models for

	program. A need to upskill current paraprofessionals was shared.
August 6, 2024	CF shared information about potential proposal with Citrus County Schools and CareerSource Citrus Levy Marion.
August 7, 2024	CF leadership had a meeting with CareerSource Marion to discuss the potential for incumbent worker training to be used as tuition assistance.
October 24, 2024	At an Educational Training Consortium meeting, districts reiterated the need for ESE educators. We exchanged ideas about the modality options and who the districts wanted to see (current employees) enrolled in the program.
November 13, 2024	CF team met with Marion County Public Schools (MCPS). They would like CF to implement this program for local, currently employed paraprofessionals and behavioral technicians (who are required to have a 2-year degree for their positions). The group discussed taking advantage of the Temporary Teaching Intern certification program for those employees/students to have an accelerated pathway into the classroom as teacher of record. MCPS also expressed a desire for a program that is hybrid with a required in-person experience. This is rooted in the nature of the curriculum and the need for an in-person experience to learn how to manage a physical classroom and provide behavioral support. The team all agreed that it was most practical to have locally based partner that offers the degree.

<p>4.3 List external engagement activities with public and nonpublic postsecondary institutions. This list shall include meetings and other forms of communication among external postsecondary institutions regarding evidence of need, demand, and economic impact.</p>
<p>4.3.1 Public Universities in College’s Service District</p>
<p>Date(s): N/A</p> <p>Institution(s): N/A</p> <p>Activity Descriptions and Outcomes: N/A</p>
<p>4.3.2 Regionally Accredited Institutions in College’s Service District</p>
<p>Date(s): N/A</p> <p>Institution(s): N/A</p> <p>Activity Descriptions and Outcomes: N/A</p>
<p>4.3.3 Institutions outside of College’s Service District (If applicable)</p>
<p>Date(s): August-November 2024</p> <p>Institution(s): University of Central Florida, Valencia College, Seminole State College, Lake-Sumter State College, Daytona State College, Eastern Florida State College</p> <p>Activity Descriptions and Outcomes: CF has initiated communication and collaboration efforts with postsecondary partners to discuss and share information regarding the program. These efforts include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A phone call to Lake-Sumter;</li> <li>• Emails with University of Central Florida;</li> <li>• Sharing information with all state college Direct Connect partners through Curriculum Alignment Coordinating Committee (CACC), a UCF-led committee with Direct Connect state colleges;</li> <li>• CACC meeting with UCF in November 2024 as agenda discussion.</li> <li>• Sharing NOI draft with CACC via email December 2024 for feedback. All responses were supportive for this proposal to move forward and comment period ended Jan. 17, 2025.</li> </ul>