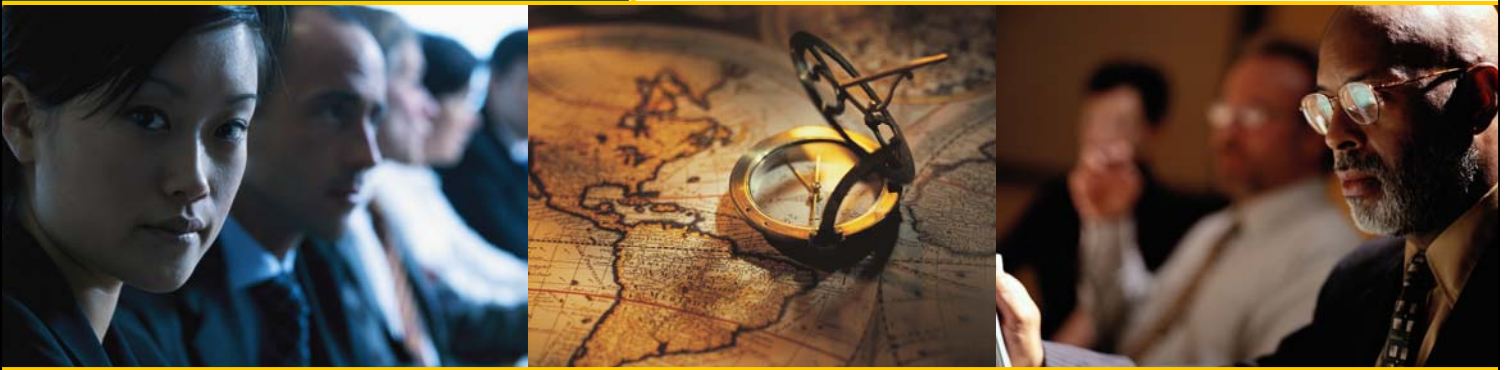


Independent Review of ESE Services in Broward County Public Schools

FINAL REPORT



Evergreen Solutions, LLC

May 30, 2014

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In December 2013, Broward County Public Schools (BCPS) contracted with Evergreen Solutions, LLC to conduct an External Independent Review of Exceptional Student Education (ESE) Services, specifically with regard to students with disabilities. The evaluation includes an analysis of the characteristics of the ESE student population in addition to determinations on ESE program effectiveness in supporting positive outcomes for students receiving special education services. The program evaluation identifies areas of strength and areas for improvement in the organization and delivery of services.

Broward County Public Schools is the sixth largest school district in the United States and the second largest in the State of Florida. With 324 schools* serving over 260,000 students, BCPS has nearly 31,900 employees, over 31,000 students with disabilities, and more than 1,600 ESE teachers.

Overview

The comprehensive evaluation of the ESE services included an analysis of program effectiveness through careful review of available data, benchmarking, interviews, and survey feedback for specific task areas. These areas are:

- District and School Staffing and Support to Schools
- ESE Support and Related Services
- Use of Federal, Local, and State Funds
- Communication
- Professional Development
- Parent Engagement
- Community Engagement/Partnerships
- Child Find – Birth to Age 5
- Referral, Evaluation, and Eligibility – Ages 6-21
- Individualized Education Plans (IEP)
- Transition/Matriculation
- Inclusionary Practices
- Performance and Instruction of Students

To ensure that each item in the scope of work was appropriately addressed, Evergreen developed a comprehensive work plan for the evaluation.

Work Plan and Methodology

Evergreen's evaluation work plan was developed to address specific areas of the BCPS ESE Program. The evaluation work plan is structured into four phases and 20 work tasks.

*Of these, there are about 95 charter schools which are not included in this study.



- Phase I – Project Initiation (Tasks 1 and 2)
- Phase II – Diagnostic Review (Tasks 3-5)
- Phase III – Comprehensive Review of the SBBC Exceptional Student Education Department (Tasks 6-19)
- Phase IV – Project Reporting (Tasks 20)

Phase I, Project Initiation, included such activities as reviewing and finalizing the project work plan, schedule, and deliverables, as well as identifying potential stakeholders whose input would be solicited throughout the study. Additionally, preliminary data collection activities took place during this phase.

Phase II, Diagnostic Review, was conducted during the week of February 3, 2014. Evergreen consultants interviewed central office administrators concerning the management and operations of the Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services. The diagnostic review allowed Evergreen’s Team to assess ESE operations, further develop possible information and data needs for the study, capture perceptions and input from key district staff, and evaluate current operations in the ESE Division to identify preliminary areas for potential improvements in efficiency or effectiveness.

Phase III, Comprehensive Review of the SBBC Exceptional Student Education Department, included a formal onsite review of Broward County Public Schools in March 2014 by a team of six consultants. Prior to conducting the onsite review, each team member was provided with an extensive set of information about ESE operations, available from the initial data collection and diagnostic review. During the onsite work, team members conducted a detailed review of the structure and operations in their assigned functional areas.

Phase IV, Project Reporting, included submission of the draft and final reports. The Evaluation Report represents Evergreen’s comprehensive findings, recommendations, and commendations, and represents a culmination of the efforts completed in all previous phases. This report is divided into four chapters, including an introductory chapter, a chapter providing peer comparison data, a chapter dedicated to Evergreen’s evaluation survey results, and a chapter providing findings, recommendations, and commendations for each area.

Evergreen’s approach and methodology for conducting this study included the following components:

- **Collecting and Reviewing Existing Reports and Data Sources.** Documents included organizational charts, staffing ratios, training modules, board policies and procedures, student achievement data, annual reports, annual budget and expenditure reports, and strategic plans. At the onset of evaluation activities, Evergreen submitted a list to BCPS of 126 data elements. This list focused on items typically available in a school district’s ESE Program. Over the course of the evaluation, Evergreen consultants also requested additional items as needs arose.



- **Generating Comparisons to and Benchmarking BCPS against Peer School Districts.** Both state (in Florida) and national peers were selected for comparison purposes. Selected Florida districts were:

- Duval County Public Schools
- Hillsborough County Public Schools
- Miami-Dade County Public Schools
- Orange County Public Schools
- School District of Palm Beach County
- Pinellas County Public Schools

Selected national districts were:

- Charlotte-Mecklenburg Public Schools, NC
- Fairfax County Public Schools, VA
- Gwinnett County Public Schools, GA
- Houston Independent School District, TX
- Montgomery County Public Schools, MD

The comparison data were obtained in January and February 2014. Evergreen developed a database of over 35 comparison charts with various select data elements available from the Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) or from the national comparison district's state departments of education. **Chapter 2** of this report provides additional information on peer districts.

- **Conducting Interviews and Focus Groups with Administrators, Teachers, and Staff.** Evergreen conducted over 150 interviews and three focus groups with district stakeholders, including central office and school administrators, general education and ESE teachers, and other staff.
- **Conducting Interviews and Focus Groups with Students and Parents.** Over 90 parents and approximately 100 students were interviewed or involved in focus groups as part of the study. Evergreen also conducted two public forums to discuss the study and answer parent questions. The public forums were held at South Plantation High School (February 25, 2014 from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.) and at Blanche Ely High School (March 10, 2014 from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.). Further, during the week of March 10, 2014, Evergreen conducted parent interviews with over 70 parents to allow parents the opportunity to share their concerns.
- **Conducting a Comprehensive BCPS Staff ESE Evaluation Survey.** A comprehensive online evaluation survey was developed to obtain perceptions of internal stakeholders regarding ESE services in Broward County Public Schools. The online evaluation survey targeted nine different district stakeholder groups to ensure that feedback was diverse and not skewed based on the perceptions of any particular group. The stakeholder groups were: district and area administrators; district and area program specialists; school administrators; non-instructional student support services staff (e.g., guidance counselors, social workers, and psychologists); special education teachers; other special education service



providers/therapists (e.g., speech-language pathologist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, orientation and mobility instructor); general education teachers; paraprofessionals; and other BCPS staff.

The development of the BCPS Staff Evaluation Survey, as well as development of the methodology for survey dissemination, started in late December 2013 and finalized in early January 2014. Survey questions were pulled from Evergreen's survey database or developed to address specific components of the BCPS ESE program. The draft survey was sent to BCPS for review and approval as part of the development process. Upon approval, the evaluation survey was finalized and delivered via email to stakeholders on January 24, 2014, with an extended closure date of March 11, 2014. Thus, staff had a total of 46 days to participate in the survey.

The survey included four demographic items, 39 survey items rated on a five-point agree/disagree scale, six items rated on a four-point scale (improving, staying the same, declining, and no opinion), and one item soliciting free response feedback—for a total of 50 survey items. The online evaluation survey was sent to over 16,970 stakeholders. In total, 5,024 stakeholders participated in the ESE online evaluation survey for a completion rate of 29.6 percent. **Chapter 3** of this report provides a detailed overview of Evergreen's survey and the staff survey results are presented in **Appendix A**.

- **Conducting a Comprehensive BCPS Parent ESE Evaluation Survey.** Evergreen developed and administered a parent survey during the course of this study (February 19 through March 14, 2014). This survey provided Evergreen with quantitative and qualitative feedback from parents of students with disabilities receiving ESE services in Broward County Public Schools. The survey was sent out via email, announced via the districts ParentLink phone system, and posted on the district website. In total, the survey targeted over 30,000 parents of students with disabilities enrolled in BCPS. It included 23 items, including a free response item for participants to provide narrative feedback on any aspect of ESE services they deemed significant. Evergreen received 1,029 responses from parents, for a total completion rate of approximately 3.4 percent. The largest percentage (51.7 percent) of parents who responded have elementary school students. The second largest grouping is middle school and then high school parents, at 16.7 percent and 16.5 percent of total respondents, respectively. The parent survey results are included in **Appendix B**.

COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Detailed commendations and recommendations developed as a result of Evergreen's External Independent Review of Exceptional Student Education (ESE) Services in Broward County Public Schools are provided throughout the full report. In total, 45 commendations and 110 recommendations were made by the Evergreen Evaluation Team.



Evergreen’s independent review focused on all aspects of the ESE program—organizational, operational, and programmatic. Components of each of these interact with and influence the others. Meeting the individually unique needs of exceptional students can be a complex and challenging process. When implementing ESE programs, a district must attend to the ways in which these inter-related components work in concert with each other. Throughout the course of this review, common themes emerged. Five priority areas derived from those themes and the entirety of the review.

Overall, the **Priority Areas** are to:

1. Expand the continuum of services and placements available within each school.
 - In the elementary grades, focus on educating students with disabilities in the schools they would attend if nondisabled—including students with more challenging needs.
 - In middle school and high school settings, focus on ensuring that students with disabilities being taught the general Florida Standards receive the specially designed instruction, related services, and supplementary aids and services they need to achieve their annual goals and progress in the general curriculum, and that robust transition plans and services are implemented.
2. Improve staffing levels to ensure they are sufficient to meet the needs of students with disabilities across all placements. In all schools, caseloads must be reasonable and manageable to ensure that:
 - IEP teams are empowered to base decisions regarding the amount of ESE services and supports each student will receive on the individual student’s needs;
 - ESE teachers and service providers can fully implement the IEPs of the students for whom they are responsible; and
 - ESE Specialists are effectively and consistently trained and provided the resources needed to fulfill their duties as case managers and compliance specialists.
3. Reinforce and support the district’s Child Find Teams and school-based collaborative problem solving/response-to-intervention (CPS/RtI) teams to ensure students with disabilities are identified, evaluated, and, as appropriate, found eligible or ineligible for ESE services with no undue delay.
 - Increase the capacity of Child Find Teams by adding staff and/or extending the contract year and on ensuring timely evaluation by promptly seeking parental consent once the district has knowledge that a child may be a child with a disability.
 - Ensure CPS/RtI teams have the knowledge, skills, and resources to effectively and efficiently implement the general education requirements found in Rule 6A-6.0331,



F.A.C., and that evaluations and eligibility determinations are based on the BCPS ESE Policies and Procedures and applicable State Board of Education rules.

4. Establish a framework to promote and support meaningful and appropriate involvement of internal and external stakeholders in educational programs for students with disabilities.
 - Delineate the roles, responsibilities, obligations, and spans of authority of each stakeholder group, and then clearly communicate and consistently implement them.
 - Provide structured opportunities for parents, teachers, school leaders, and district staff to provide input and share their insights regarding improving and enhancing ESE services within the district.
 - Ensure equitable participation for stakeholders across the district; promote candid and honest communication without fear of retaliation or reprisal; and include defined lines of communication.
5. More closely monitor ESE budgets and expenditures at the campus and department levels, for both Special Revenues and the General Fund, to ensure that ESE program dollars are effectively being used to enhance the delivery of services to students. In addition, analytic data are needed to accurately assess the cost and programmatic benefit of providing ESE services by program category and campus/location. In addition, campus administrators should be required to develop plans for the use of the ESE guaranteed allocation and its impact on ESE students.

A list of commendations and recommendations, as well as a brief summary of evaluation findings by area, are provided in the next section.

District and School Staffing and Support

The educational service delivery of a school district depends on central office staff to serve as the support system, and provide leadership and coordination for education that is provided in district schools. The effectiveness of instructional delivery depends on factors such as organization, staffing, and procedures that have been created and are monitored in order to assure consistency of instruction and student assessment across the school district. The way in which these central office factors are designed can either support or impede progress towards high achievement for students.

The **Commendations** for district and school staffing are:

- The Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services is commended for shifting its focus to curriculum and instruction, while continuing to address issues related to procedural compliance and policies.
- BCPS is commended for maintaining staffing ratios for its specialized ESE programs that ensure a low student-to-adult ratio and are based on the programmatic needs of students.



- The mission and vision of the Exceptional Student Education and Support Division promotes collaboration with district departments and designates comprehensive curriculum and instructional support to schools.

The **Recommendations** in this section include:

- 4.1-1: Expedite filling the position of Director of Exceptional Student Education.
- 4.1-2: Reclassify the position of Curriculum Specialist to Curriculum Coordinator.
- 4.1-3: Monitor the Division's goal of shifting its focus to curriculum and instruction.
- 4.1-4: Restructure the support facilitation staffing model to support greater collaboration and shared caseloads among ESE and dually certified staff, resulting in improved in-class support for students with disabilities and teachers in the general education setting.
- 4.1-5: Develop a comprehensive plan for addressing hard-to-fill vacancies and strategies to meet this challenge.
- 4.1-6: Update ESE job descriptions to accurately reflect job duties, necessary education, experience, physical requirements, and accountability measures.
- 4.1-7: Restructure the ESE Specialist staffing allocation to allow incremental support within the weighted FTE formula.
- 4.1-8: Update the ESE Specialist job responsibilities to accurately reflect the necessary qualifications, extend calendar by at least 10 days, remove non-ESE duties and duties related to gifted education, and ensure school-based accountability.
- 4.1-9: Evaluate the allocation of transition specialists and job coaches, and redistribute personnel to include assignment to students with mild-to-moderate disabilities from 14 to 18 years of age.
- 4.1-10: Ensure curriculum and instructional supports to the schools align with and are integrated within the continuous improvement models.
- 4.1-11: Establish a consistent schedule for ESE Curriculum Supervisors to participate in all principal meetings and visits to schools.



ESE Support and Related Services

Exceptional Student Education (ESE) provides extended support for students and their families and enhances student performance and academic achievement. These educational services are provided to supplement, accommodate, or modify the general academic course of study, and are intended to give adequate support to ensure the academic success of students with disabilities. The specialized student support role is to provide supplemental or extended support for students and their families that contribute to enhanced student performance and academic achievement.

The **Commendations** for ESE support and related services are:

- The BCPS Office of Support Services, SEDNET, Transportation Department, and the Executive Director of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services are commended for their application of business principles and use of data in decision making.
- The BCPS SEDNET Office is commended for strengthening services offered BCPS students through agency partnerships.
- Broward County Public Schools is commended for beginning to examine staffing related to caseloads.
- Broward County Public Schools is commended for recognizing the strategic role that a vibrant internship program can play in recruiting high quality staff.
- Broward County Public Schools is commended for its intentional recruitment, hiring, and training practices regarding psychologists to reflect the diversity of culture and language within the district.
- The BCPS Office of Psychological Services is commended for its exceptional processes and products that have brought the district state and national recognition.
- The BCPS Transportation Department and the Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services are commended for persistence and collaboration in maximizing Medicaid funds for transportation services to ESE students.
- The BCPS Transportation Department is commended for its proactive focus on data in guiding decisions about staffing, routing, and costs.
- Broward County Public Schools is commended for recognizing the interdependent relationship between programs and transportation and involving representatives of both in planning.
- The BCPS Transportation Department ensures operators and attendants are knowledgeable about ESE students, legal aspects of transporting students, and specific needs and strategies.



- Broward County Public Schools is commended for ensuring that students with disabilities have equal access to instructional technology.
- Broward County Public Schools is commended for ensuring computers distributed under the Digital 5 project were provided to students with disabilities and mainstream students alike.

The **Recommendations** in this section include:

- 4.2-1: Develop a prioritized schedule in which key areas of district operations are identified for deeper examination and related action.
- 4.2-2: Create three Supervisor positions for Assistive Technology, Behavior, and Speech and Language.
- 4.2-3: Protect the effective use of staff time by setting and adhering consistently to priorities for services.
- 4.2-4: Continue to examine staffing of speech/language pathologists (SLPs) with respect to caseload/workload issues and fund additional positions according to findings.
- 4.2-5: Expand the ESE Division's focus on data to the impact on students caused by staffing decreases in related service areas and develop strategies, including increasing staffing levels, to address identified needs.
- 4.2-6: Develop strategies to extend the impact the Assistive Technology Office has on educational opportunities for ESE students in all BCPS schools.
- 4.2-7: Examine and update reporting processes for assistive technology.
- 4.2-8: Expand identification of specific related services that are needed as students move from particular types of elementary cluster programs to middle schools and use that analysis to guide additional middle school supports for all ESE students.
- 4.2-9: Weigh the cost versus benefits of the school psychology internship positions to the district and identify funds to continue the program.
- 4.2-10: Develop processes and accountability strategies relating to IEP transportation components, especially the staffing of ESE bus attendants and one-on-one bus attendants.
- 4.2-11: Examine BCPS program placement determination in light of the impact of decisions on the length of ESE student bus rides, develop procedures to remedy the issues, and ensure that all transportation-related procedures are uniformly followed in the district.
- 4.2-12: Create a Technology Plan for students with disabilities for the 2014-15 school year.



Use of Funds

Program cost factors assure that programs receive an equitable share of funds in relation to its relative cost per student. Evergreen reviewed the budget procedures within the ESE program to determine areas for improvement, and to ensure the district is capitalizing on total ESE dollars spent.

The **Recommendations** in this section include:

- 4.3-1: More closely monitor ESE budgets and expenditures at the campus and department level for both Special Revenues and General Fund, to ensure that program dollars are effectively being used to enhance the delivery of services to students.
- 4.3-2: Gather the analytic data needed to accurately assess the cost and programmatic benefit of providing ESE services by program category and campus or location.
- 4.3-3: Require campus administrators to develop plans for the use of the ESE Guaranteed Allocation and its impact on ESE students.

Communication with Stakeholders

Effective communication is critical to the success of any school district. Today's schools are constantly in the spotlight, expected to maintain transparent operations and at the same time under constant public scrutiny. In order to proactively mitigate these pressures, school districts must identify ways to effectively and openly provide an ongoing narrative about how positive differences in the lives of students are being made every day and how schools are succeeding in spite of reduced resources. Without this, stakeholders may form opinions from limited media coverage, biased accounts, gossip, and rumors.

The **Commendation** for communication with stakeholders is:

- The Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services is commended for its excellent ESE monthly newsletter, which acts a vehicle for sharing important and timely information regarding BCPS ESE services with all stakeholders.

The **Recommendations** in this section include:

- 4.4-1: Develop a comprehensive ESE Communications Plan.
- 4.4-2: Set guidelines for what questions should be submitted through BASIS, shorten the 24-hour response window, create an email response notification, and allow ESE Specialists to call District Program Specialists directly for concerns or issues that require more immediate response.
- 4.4-3: Overhaul the ESE website so that information is organized logically, contains current information, and is visual appealing to BCPS stakeholders.



- 4.4-4: Increase awareness of commendable ESE staff, programs, and practices.
- 4.4-5: Determine and share the most appropriate translation tools for ESE Specialists to use in daily correspondence with parents.
- 4.4-6: Use social media platforms to further engage ESE stakeholders.

Professional Development

The concept of professional development for teachers and administrators has undergone a paradigm shift. The old model of expert-driven, off-site workshops attended by teachers and administrators according to their interests or mandated for all by the district has been replaced by a model of collaborative, constructivist learning focused on supporting improved teaching and learning, and delivered at the school site as part of teacher regular routines. This job-embedded, research-based learning community approach requires teachers to reflect on student achievement levels as a function of their practice and collaboratively address ways to enhance instruction to promote higher levels of student achievement. The broad descriptor for this process is the Inquiry Model of Professional Development, and it is through the inquiry process that school communities can create short-term continuous improvement cycles that, when connected and focused on instructional practice and student learning, lead to whole school improvement.

The **Commendations** for professional development are:

- The Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services is commended for developing leadership modules to build the capacity of administrators and ESE Specialists regarding critical knowledge of ESE laws, regulations, and inclusive school cultures.
- The Directors of Support Services and Office of Psychological Services are commended for their thoughtful approach to planning for professional growth that is likely to sustain and embed new knowledge and skills into practice.
- The Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services is commended for recognizing the need for Facilitative IEP (FIEP) training and providing it for all school teams and administrators.

The **Recommendations** in this section include:

- 4.5-1: Build on the online training for principals and ESE Specialists and ensure that central office administrators are included.
- 4.5-2: Move FDLRS to a direct reporting relationship to the Executive Director of the Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services, and assemble core groups with common responsibilities to identify strategies for maximizing the use of all available resources to better meet student needs.



- 4.5-3: Assemble a cross-divisional task group to examine key common elements that are effective with special needs learners that should be core elements of all content, instruction, and professional development discussions, planning, and decisions.
- 4.5-4: Develop a teacher course catalog (much like one for high schools or colleges) that prioritizes professional development options according to critical learning needs.
- 4.5-5: Develop consistent, efficient, and effective district processes to ensure that all ESE educators are able to benefit from professional learning opportunities related to their field.
- 4.5-6: Commit to the professional growth of staff working with ESE students and communicate that commitment through word, planning, and action.
- 4.5-7: Expand the array of training offered to ESE paraprofessionals, and create targeted training for transportation staff in Broward County Public Schools.
- 4.5-8: Convene a representative group of professional development providers that includes those at the Arthur Ashe Center to meet with decision makers to identify all location-specific barriers to professional learning, develop specific strategies to ameliorate them, and set a timetable by which obstacles will be resolved.

Parent Engagement

All too often the relationship between parents and educators becomes tenuous, and can even negatively affect outcomes for students in the classroom. School districts are counteracting this by exploring new ways and models to better involve parents of students with disabilities in their child's education. For most districts, this involves taking small steps to improve methods of communication, fostering a higher level of awareness regarding the importance of parent involvement in the educational process, and putting in place policies and practices that ensure parent concerns can be addressed in a transparent, fair, effective, and timely manner.

The **Commendations** for parent engagement are:

- Broward County Public Schools is commended for assessing parent training needs, and delivering on those needs.
- The Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services is commended for planning and delivering an ESE open house for new parents.

The **Recommendations** in this section include:

- 4.6-1: Implement of Robert's Rules of Order during BCPS ESE Advisory Council meetings to foster more productive and efficient outcomes.
- 4.6-2: Identify and schedule alternate meeting locations of the ESE Advisory Council and live stream Council meetings to ensure parents across Broward County have an opportunity to participate.



- 4.6-3: Collect information on issues brought forward by parents during ESE Advisory Council meetings and maintain a list of priority issues.
- 4.6-4: Improve the Needs Assessment Survey by adding “School Name” to the demographics section of the survey tool, offering the survey in an electronic format, and ensuring that the calendar of workshops is distributed in a timely manner before the beginning of each semester.
- 4.6-5: Prepare multimedia versions of those trainings requested or delivered frequently.
- 4.6-6: Develop a comprehensive ESE Services Manual for parents that provides information on ESE services specific to BCPS, and supplements information in the FDOE Parent Introduction Guide.
- 4.6-7: Conduct a review of school-based volunteer programs and opportunities to ensure that all schools are capitalizing on their pool of potential volunteers.
- 4.6-8: Develop stringent business rules for issue escalation, and implement a tracking system for entering and tracking parent issues through closure.
- 4.6-9: Establish the role of ESE Parent Liaison within the Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services to facilitate and improve parent engagement, and monitor parent issues through resolve.

Community Engagement/Partnerships

Teachers and administrators, research literature, and areas of best practice speak widely about the need for community understanding of and involvement in the public schools in order for achievement to improve for all students. It is through significant partnerships between the schools and their many stakeholders that the resources and perceptions, policies, and practices will evolve to support 21st century schooling that is powerful enough to have an impact on every student. Classroom teachers, principals, schools, and school districts working in isolation from their communities cannot achieve the goal of higher achievement and more fully developed young citizens.

The **Commendation** for community engagement and partnerships is:

- The Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services is commended for cultivating, maintaining, and nurturing community partnerships that benefit students with disabilities.

The **Recommendations** in this section include:

- 4.7-1: Increase the speed of response for students needing immediate mental health services.



- 4.7-2: Develop basic performance measures for community service providers delivering mental health services to students in Broward County Public Schools.
- 4.7-3: Create a multimedia version of the “*What you need to know before you go into a school?*” training.
- 4.7-4: Communicate to community service providers the BCPS student eligibility requirements that lead to student referrals for their services.
- 4.7-5: Commence monthly meetings of community service providers.

Child Find – Birth through Age Five

Child Find is the component of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) that requires states to identify, locate, and evaluate all children with disabilities, aged birth through 21, who are in need of special education services. The Child Find mandate applies to all children who reside within a state, including children who attend private schools and public schools, highly mobile children, migrant children, homeless children, and children who are wards of the state.

The **Commendations** for Child Find are:

- Broward County Public Schools is commended for its seamless transition of toddlers with disabilities served by the local Early Steps to the district’s Part B PreK ESE program.
- The FDLRS/Child Find staff and PreK Assessment Team members are commended for the unwavering commitment they demonstrate to the program, the children, and their families.
- The PreK Assessment Team members are commended for the individualized attention evident in the evaluations reviewed, particularly in light of the strain on resources resulting from the high volume of evaluations completed.

The **Recommendations** in this section include:

- 4.8-1: Request that parents and/or guardians complete a customer service poll at each point of contact to solicit feedback regarding barriers they may have experienced in accessing the Child Find services.
- 4.8-2: Revise the policy regarding obtaining consent for evaluation from parents of PreK children who do not pass the screening to include seeking consent as soon as possible, preferably on the same date as the screening.
- 4.8-3: Establish an internal workgroup to solicit input from size-alike peer districts and/or regional neighboring districts to identify aspects of the district’s PreK Child Find System that require or would benefit from redesign or restructuring.



- 4.8-4: Add at least two permanent PreK Assessment Teams to those currently in place.
- 4.8-5: Make all contracts of staff required for preKindergarten evaluations 216-day contracts and evaluate the possibility of compressing screening and evaluation sessions.
- 4.8-6: Implement policies to provide for stronger district control of basic ESE programmatic decisions, including the location of specialized program clusters or classrooms such as PreK ESE classrooms.
- 4.8-7: Focus efforts to expand the capacity of the PreK ESE program on providing more inclusive placements, including providing services and supports to children in community-based early care/child care programs.

Referral, Evaluation, and Eligibility – Ages Six through 21

State and district obligations regarding referral, evaluation, and eligibility determinations for students suspected of having a disability are referred to as the Child Find mandate under IDEA. In order to ensure that students who may need ESE services are identified, Florida's State Board of Education Rule 6A-6.0331, F.A.C., requires school districts to develop and implement coordinated general education intervention procedures for students who need additional academic and behavioral support to succeed in the general education environment. With a few stated exceptions, the rule states that, prior to referring a student for evaluation as a student with a disability the district must implement evidence-based interventions.

The **Commendations** for referral, evaluation, and eligibility are:

- Broward County Public Schools is commended for committing to a renewed focus on the development and implementation of a fully functioning districtwide multi-tiered system of supports that incorporates clear and consistent procedures for school-based collaborative problem solving teams and gives them the resources necessary to provide effective data-based instruction and interventions to all students.
- Psychological Services staff are commended for ongoing support of schools and CPS/RtI teams as they strive to provide appropriate and effective instruction and intervention to students and produce accurate and meaningful RtI data to inform evaluation and eligibility decisions for students with disabilities.
- Broward County Public Schools is commended for the quality and professionalism demonstrated by its evaluation teams.

The **Recommendations** in this section include:

- 4.9-1: Develop an infrastructure to create and support a seamless CPS/RtI system within a framework of MTSS across all BCPS schools.



- 4.9-2: Ensure all stakeholder groups are represented in the committee or workgroup engaged in developing CPS/RtI procedures and resources, and monitor the process to ensure the individuals selected to participate are knowledgeable, committed, and actively involved.
- 4.9-3: Incorporate resources to support social/behavioral development in addition to academic achievement into all MTSS and CPS/RtI reforms.
- 4.9-4: Expand the existing body of CPS/RtI tools to include explicit guidance and technical assistance on the establishment and consistent implementation of decision rules for assessing intervention effectiveness as well as a uniform understanding of what constitutes reasonable and/or sufficient intervention efforts prior referring a student for evaluation.
- 4.9-5: Use the significant knowledge base and expertise within Psychological Services to assist in the development of an effective support structure for schools as they development more effective CPS/RtI processes.
- 4.9-6: Analyze the referral and eligibility data for all schools, disaggregated by level, to determine the extent to which schools are successfully identifying students with disabilities and to ensure that there are no patterns of either over- or under-referral across schools.
- 4.9-7: Conduct a review of student referral records to identify the extent to which teams engaged in the problemsolving process adhere to the criteria for referring students for evaluation without unnecessary delay.
- 4.9-8: Provide technical assistance and support to foster team member confidence in the integrity and validity of the data produced through CPS/RtI, in conjunction with actions taken to revise and/or enhance MTSS and the CPS/RtI process.
- 4.9-9: Establish a committee of district and school-based staff involved in referral, evaluation, and eligibility of students with disabilities to evaluate the extent to which current district practices related to specific learning disabilities (SLD) align with written policies of the state and district.
- 4.9-10: Investigate the potential reason for the increasing trend in SLD in BCPS compared with a decreasing trend in the peer school districts, concurrent with the previous recommendation to evaluate practices related to SLD.
- 4.9-11: Implement policies that clearly establish the roles, responsibilities, and authority of members of the multiple teams involved in ESE functions, including CPS/RtI teams, eligibility staffing committees, and IEP teams.



Individualized Educational Plans

An individualized educational plan, or IEP, is defined at 34 CFR § 300.22 as “a written statement for a child with a disability that is developed, reviewed, and revised” by a team of professionals and the parent in accordance with specific regulations. The IEP serves as the blueprint for the ESE services and supports a student receives from a school district.

The **Commendations** for individualized educational plans are:

- Broward County Public Schools is commended for the coordinated and comprehensive set of resources the district provides to ESE Specialists, teachers, service providers, and other interested parties regarding district policies, procedures, and recommended practices. The use of eBox, ESE eNews, and other tools provide all stakeholders with easy access to valuable and timely information.
- Broward County Public Schools is commended for the positive efforts demonstrated by staff with regard to developing meaningful IEPs and for the way parents are actively included in the process.
- Broward County Public Schools is commended for its implementation of a centralized web-based ESE management system.
- Broward County Public School is commended for the quality of the content in the majority of individual educational plans reviewed. It is evident that staff developing the plans are knowledgeable about the students and that care has been taken to reflect the unique nature of each student in their IEPs.
- BCPS is commended for its commitment to increasing and maintaining the quality of IEPs developed within the district by operationalizing the way IEP Teams should implement the intent of IDEA.
- Broward County Public Schools is commended for the impact of its IEP training on the overall content of the plans and the extent to which the present levels and annual goals reflect IEP Team consideration of the unique qualities and needs of the students.

The **Recommendations** in this section include:

- 4.10-1: Review the alert system in EasyIEP™ to identify ways it can be used more effectively to notify users of upcoming changes to functionality, revised content, or new compliance requirements.
- 4.10-2: Solicit input from BCPS Program Specialists, school-based ESE Specialists, and ESE teachers and service providers regarding ways the current IEP system could be enhanced to proactively guide teams in developing high quality IEPs.



- 4.10-3: Assess the level and type of support currently in place for EasyIEP™ to determine if it is sufficient to meet the needs of all users, including new hires and experienced teachers, with regard to content and technical support.
- 4.10-4: Review local policies regarding IEP development and content, assess their impact on quality and efficiency of services, and identify potential benefits and pitfalls inherent in requiring procedures or content that goes beyond federal and state requirements.
- 4.10-5: Include data-based analysis of the potential impact of requiring draft IEP components five days prior for every IEP team meeting in the district's review of local policies recommended above.
- 4.10-6: Enhance the training components related to measurable annual goals and internal methods for monitoring and oversight to ensure IEP team members consistently apply what is learned during training. Continue to reinforce the importance of incorporating multiple data sources, including results of classroom, benchmark, and standardized assessments.
- 4.10-7: Enhance the training related to measurable postsecondary goals and internal methods for monitoring and oversight to ensure they reflect an observable, measurable action that will occur in the future (after graduation or obtaining the age of 21), and correspond in a meaningful and reasonable way to the students interests, skills, and abilities as described in the present level statement.
- 4.10-8: Examine current guidance being provided to IEP teams regarding service decisions and ensure that it clearly and accurately describes the team's obligation and authority to include in the IEP the services and supports necessary to provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment.
- 4.10-9: Implement policies that clearly establish authority of members of a duly constituted IEP team to fulfill their assigned roles and responsibilities.
- 4.10-10: Conduct an indepth review of IEP implementation, focusing on services that are not directly tied to ESE course enrollment (e.g., support facilitation, consultation, collaboration) and that are provided on an itinerant basis (e.g., speech and language therapy, counseling, occupational therapy, physical therapy).
- 4.10-11: Establish a workgroup, comprised of school leaders and district staff, to develop procedures for ensuring IEPs are implemented in their entirety, focusing on both the subject of instruction (i.e., annual goals) and the amount and type of service required (e.g., direct ESE support, consultation, collaboration, and accommodations).



Transition/Matriculation

The stated purpose of IDEA is “to ensure that all children with disabilities have available to them a free appropriate public education that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living.” This preparation begins in prekindergarten and continues through transitions to postsecondary opportunities.

The **Commendations** for transition and matriculation are:

- The prekindergarten to elementary matriculation process allows for smooth transition from one setting to another. The process focuses on children’s readiness for kindergarten and includes the key stakeholders of receiving schools and families.
- Broward County Public Schools is commended for establishing partnerships across the district with community members and developing district-level staff who are well-trained in providing assistance to both teachers and students.
- Broward County Public Schools is commended for its continuous progress in increasing positive measures of post-school outcomes for students with disabilities.
- Broward County Public Schools is commended for its commitment to fostering active involvement by students in the developing their summary of performances (SOPs) to ensure the content as accurate and meaningful as possible.
- Broward County Public Schools is commended for its commitment to helping students develop self-determination skills through active participation as members of their IEP teams.

The **Recommendations** in this section include:

- 4.11-1: Create a district matriculation procedure for promoting students with disabilities from elementary to middle school.
- 4.11-2: Assess existing matriculation activities throughout Broward County Public Schools and develop a resource guide of best practices.
- 4.11-3: Create a district protocol for students with disabilities matriculating from middle school to high school to ensure that appropriate and sufficient supports and services are in place to meet each student’s needs.
- 4.11-4: Conduct a comprehensive review/evaluation of all transition programming, with a focus on how schools are implementing vocational education for ESE students, and develop a guide based on researched best practices and effective service delivery models.



- 4.11-5: Utilize the training, technical assistance, and resources provided by the Project 10: Transition Education Network to develop a comprehensive transition program in BCPS secondary schools.
- 4.11-6: Increase the monitoring of students with disabilities who are academically successful and consider participation in accelerated academic programs in transition planning, as appropriate.
- 4.11-7: Offer Modified Occupational Completion Points (MOCPs) for vocational education to increase opportunities for vocational education or employability skills training for high school students with disabilities.
- 4.11-8: Revise the district's pupil progression plan to specify the availability of MOCPs.
- 4.11-9: Expand capacity in meeting the needs of adult students with disabilities who desire or would benefit the most for community-based services that are not housed on a traditional school campus, and ensure that all students who are eligible for and would benefit from a program have the opportunity to participate.
- 4.11-10: Establish an easily located page on the Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services website to provide parents, students, and staff members with informative and action-oriented information and links to the array of specialized transition programs available across the district.
- 4.11-11: Establish collaborative relationships among transition directors and specialists in the other enrollment group districts.
- 4.11-12: Review the business requirements completion of the EasyIEP™ summary of performance to ensure that the logic and flow of the final document are not compromised by efforts to streamline the process.
- 4.11-13: Review the summary of performance form to determine if the information regarding a student's status as an English language learner is necessary. If so, provide training to staff responsible for completing the SOP to ensure a description is provided of ELL services and, if not, delete this section of the form.

Inclusionary Practices

Inclusion is a philosophical and educational approach to providing students with disabilities educational opportunities in the same settings as their nondisabled peers. Federal and state regulations related to special education do not use the term "inclusion," but they do provide a clear framework for states, school districts and schools to increase inclusive opportunities through provisions requiring placement of students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment (LRE).



The **Commendations** for inclusionary practices are:

- BCPS is commended for its focus on and commitment to providing access to the general curriculum through regular class placement for students with disabilities.
- BCPS is commended for its progress in ensuring students with significant disabilities have access to nondisabled peers to the maximum extent appropriate by decreasing placements in ESE center schools and embedding additional supports in traditional school campuses through specialized cluster programs.
- BCPS is commended for its use of contracted services as a tool to expand the continuum of PreK ESE services to meet the needs of the most significantly involved children and to expand opportunities for inclusion.
- BCPS principals, teachers, other faculty, and staff are commended for the supportive and welcoming environment they foster in their schools on a daily basis.

The **Recommendations** in this section include:

- 4.12-1: Identify avenues to increase the level of specialized programmatic support available to all schools (e.g., behavior management, characteristics of ASD, access points and functional performance).
- 4.12-2: Conduct a review of current policies and practices regarding routine use of counseling as a primary source of support.
- 4.12-3: Enhance technical assistance provided to principals to reinforce the expectation that IEP teams consider the unique and individualized needs of a student first, and then work with school leadership to ensure the necessary supports are available.
- 4.12-4: Establish stronger district control of basic ESE programmatic procedures, including ensuring that sufficient special education, related services, and supplementary aids and services are available within each school to meet the needs of its students to the extent possible, and implement guidelines for reasonable caseloads and workloads.
- 4.12-5: Provide training and/or technical assistance encouraging principals to pursue innovative and productive strategies to improve the effectiveness of ESE programs in their schools.
- 4.12-6: Review recent organizational and staffing changes and current positions and develop strategies for increasing schools access to district-level program areas specialists and support services.
- 4.12-7: Evaluate current practices related to IEP team decisions regarding placement decisions that require the student to transfer to a traditional school campus other than the zoned school (i.e., cluster site) or to an ESE center school.



- 4.12-8: Expand efforts to identify high-quality regular early childhood programs within the community, and increase the district's portfolio of inclusive programs for young children with disabilities by increasing the number of contracted placements and implementing a push-in model of support.

Performance and Instruction of Students

Student performance standards in Florida establish the core content of the curricula to be taught and specify the core content knowledge and skills that K-12 public school students are expected to acquire. The standards are rigorous and reflect the knowledge and skills students need for success in college and careers. The standards and benchmarks describe what students should know and be able to do at grade-level progression for kindergarten through grade eight and in grade bands for grade levels nine through 12. The access points and core content connectors contained in the standards provide access to the general education curriculum for students with significant cognitive disabilities. Public schools must provide appropriate instruction to assist students in the achievement of these standards for special diploma, as appropriate.

The **Commendations** for performance and instruction of students are:

- The Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services is commended for its action initiatives that offer opportunities for expanded services and greater support to schools. ESE staff worked collaboratively with school staff to assess and identify key initiatives of action.
- The community-based instruction (CBI) program offers instruction of functional skills in natural environments to students with moderate and severe disabilities. The district's program is comprehensive, based on the individual needs of students, and highly supported by local business partners.

The **Recommendations** in this section include:

- 4.13-1: Evaluate the effectiveness of the action initiatives to determine continuation, modification, and expansion.
- 4.13-2: Establish opportunities for collaborative planning for special and general education teachers using common lesson planning tools and templates.
- 4.13-3: Incorporate high-yield strategies and formative assessment throughout instruction.
- 4.13-4: Participate in the Strategic Intervention Model and Content Enhancement Routines training offered by FDLRS, and establish pilot sites in BCPS secondary schools for implementation.
- 4.13-5: Identify instructional materials and curricula being used in special programs and develop a district-approved bank of resources that support the instruction of access points to the general education curriculum.



- 4.13-6: Adopt a life-centered curriculum for students with disabilities who are not being successful in general education and create opportunities for graduation with special diploma based on employability skills.



CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION



1.0 INTRODUCTION

In December 2013, Broward County Public Schools (BCPS) contracted with Evergreen Solutions, LLC to conduct an External Independent Review of Exceptional Student Education (ESE) Services, specifically with regard to students with disabilities. The evaluation includes an analysis of the characteristics of the ESE student population in addition to determinations on ESE program effectiveness in supporting positive outcomes for students receiving special education services. The program evaluation identifies areas of strength and areas for improvement in the organization and delivery of services.

Broward County Public Schools is the sixth largest school district in the United States and the second largest in the State of Florida. With 324 schools* serving over 260,000 students, BCPS has nearly 31,900 employees. BCPS has over 31,000 students with disabilities, and more than 1,600 exceptional education teachers.

This chapter is organized into the following sections:

- 1.1 Scope of the Evaluation
- 1.2 Methodology
- 1.3 Overview of the Final Report

1.1 SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

The independent review of ESE services included an analysis of the following 13 specific task areas as presented in the district's Request for Proposal (RFP):

- District and School Staffing and Support to Schools
- ESE Support and Related Services
- Use of Funds
- Communication with Stakeholders
- Professional Development
- Parent Engagement
- Community Engagement/Partnerships
- Review Child Find – Birth through Age 5
- Referral, Evaluation, and Eligibility – Ages 6-21
- Individualized Educational Plans (IEPs)
- Transition/Matriculation
- Inclusionary Practices
- Performance and Instruction of Students

For each task area, Evergreen was charged with conducting an analysis of program effectiveness through careful review of available data, benchmarking, interviews, and survey feedback.

*Of these, there are about 95 charter schools which are not included in this study.



To ensure that each item in the scope of work was appropriately addressed during the evaluation, Evergreen developed a comprehensive work plan for the evaluation. **Exhibit 1-1** provides an overview of Evergreen’s work plan for this study. As can be seen, the work plan includes four phases and 20 work tasks. Evergreen’s proposal included a more detailed work plan further broken down into 122 specific task activities and 33 unique deliverables.

1.2 METHODOLOGY

Evergreen’s approach and methodology for conducting this study had the following components:

- collecting and reviewing existing reports and data sources—including organizational charts, staffing ratios, training modules, board policies and procedures, student achievement data, annual reports, and annual budget and expenditure information;
- generating comparisons to and benchmarking BCPS against six peer school districts in Florida, including:
 - Duval County Public Schools
 - Hillsborough County Public Schools
 - Miami-Dade County Public Schools
 - Orange County Public Schools
 - School District of Palm Beach County
 - Pinellas County Schools
- generating comparisons to and benchmarking against five peer school districts in other states:
 - Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools
 - Fairfax County Public Schools
 - Gwinnett County Public Schools
 - Houston Independent School District
 - Montgomery County Public Schools
- conducting a diagnostic review and interviews with central office and school administrators, general education and ESE teachers, and ESE staff;
- conducting a comprehensive BCPS ESE Evaluation survey of all staff and parents;
- visiting 32 schools in the school district;
- conducting focus groups of elementary, middle, and high school teachers;
- conducting two parent public hearings;
- conducting interviews with approximately 200 parents;



Exhibit 1-1
Work Plan for the Independent Review of ESE Services
for Broward County Public Schools

Phase I: Project Initiation	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 10px; background-color: #4F7942; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center; width: 30%;"> TASK 1: Initiate Project </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 10px; background-color: #4F7942; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center; width: 30%;"> TASK 2: Develop Preliminary Profile of the SBBC Exceptional Student Education Department </div> </div>
Phase II: Diagnostic Review	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 10px; background-color: #4F7942; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center; width: 30%;"> TASK 3: Conduct Diagnostic Review of the SBBC Exceptional Student Education Department </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 10px; background-color: #4F7942; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center; width: 30%;"> TASK 4: Conduct Benchmarking and Best Practices Analyses </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 10px; background-color: #4F7942; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center; width: 30%;"> TASK 5: Conduct Employee Surveys </div> </div>
Phase III: Comprehensive Review of the SBBC Exceptional Student Education Department	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 10px; background-color: #4F7942; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center; width: 30%;"> TASK 6: Review District and School Staffing and Support to Schools </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 10px; background-color: #4F7942; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center; width: 30%;"> TASK 7: Review ESE Support and Related Services </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 10px; background-color: #4F7942; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center; width: 30%;"> TASK 8: Review Use of Federal, Local and State Funds </div> </div>
	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 10px; background-color: #4F7942; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center; width: 30%;"> TASK 9: Review Communication </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 10px; background-color: #4F7942; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center; width: 30%;"> TASK 10: Review Professional Development </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 10px; background-color: #4F7942; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center; width: 30%;"> TASK 11: Review Parent Engagement </div> </div>
	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 10px; background-color: #4F7942; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center; width: 30%;"> TASK 12: Review Community Engagement/Partnerships </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 10px; background-color: #4F7942; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center; width: 30%;"> TASK 13: Review Child Find – Birth to Age 5 </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 10px; background-color: #4F7942; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center; width: 30%;"> TASK 14: Review Referral, Evaluation, and Eligibility – Ages 6-21 </div> </div>
	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 10px; background-color: #4F7942; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center; width: 30%;"> TASK 15: Review Individualized Education Plans (IEP) </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 10px; background-color: #4F7942; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center; width: 30%;"> TASK 16: Review Transition/ Matriculation </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 10px; background-color: #4F7942; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center; width: 30%;"> TASK 17: Review Instructional Technology (IT) * </div> </div>
	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 10px; background-color: #4F7942; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center; width: 30%;"> TASK 18: Review Inclusionary Practices </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 10px; background-color: #4F7942; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center; width: 30%;"> TASK 19: Review Performance and Instruction of Students </div> </div>
Phase IV: Project Reporting	<div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 10px; background-color: #4F7942; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center; width: 100%;"> TASK 20: Prepare Draft and Final Reports </div>

Source: Created by Evergreen Solutions, 2013.

*Included with Task 7 in the final report



- collecting additional reports and data from sources inside the school district;
- conducting the formal onsite review with a team of six consultants; and
- preparing draft and final reports.

The major components of the study include:

Data Collection

The evaluation involved both off-site and onsite data collection activities. At the onset of the evaluation, Evergreen gathered existing information available electronically or online, including but not limited to: indicators for students with disabilities (e.g., graduation and dropout rates; participation and performance on statewide assessments and preschool outcomes; suspension/expulsion rates; placement/educational environment); records and supporting documentation of professional development provided by the district; recent monitoring and/or audit reports; and district survey results (e.g., ESE Parent Survey). These data were reviewed off-site by the Evergreen Evaluation Team. Additional ongoing data collection was conducted onsite, such as student record reviews and case studies.

Benchmarking and Comparisons

Evergreen conducted benchmarking and comparison of ESE programs and operations in other school districts to the ESE program and related services in Broward County Public Schools. **Chapter 2** provides a more extensive overview of the benchmarking and comparison process; however, as an example, **Exhibit 1-2** provides a brief comparison of the peer school districts used in the program evaluation for benchmarking purposes. Size-alike enrollment group peer districts (i.e., total PreK-12 enrollment >100,000) include the six largest urban school districts in Florida. Selected large urban school districts in other states were benchmarked as well. The exhibit includes high-level comparators on school district demographics, populations, and staffing. The following can be determined when comparing the BCPS to its peer school districts:

- **State Peer School Districts** – Broward County Public Schools is similar to the state peer district average across all points of comparison. BCPS has 10 special education schools and 1,637 full-time exceptional education teachers, compared to the peer average of 10 special education schools and 1,820 full-time exceptional education teachers. BCPS has 25,830 full-time staff and 260,234 students, compared to the peer average of 21,876 full-time staff and 191,049 students—for an average student-per-employee ratio of 10:1 in BCPS and 9:1, on average, in state peer school districts. Of the total student population, about 12.1 percent are disabled in the BCPS, compared to an average among state peers of 12.5 percent.
- **National Peer School Districts** – There are slight differences between Broward County Public Schools and national peer district averages across all points of comparison. State databases for national peer school districts did not provide a breakdown of ESE Teachers like Florida’s database provides. As mentioned previously, BCPS has 25,830 full-time staff and 260,234 students, compared to the peer average of 21,005 full-time staff and 167,577 students—for an average student-per-employee ratio of 10:1 in BCPS and 8:1, on average, in national peer districts. Of the total student population, a larger percentage of BCPS students are disabled (12.1 percent) than the average among peer districts (10.7 percent).



Exhibit 1-2
Peer Comparisons of ESE Programs in Large Urban School Districts
2012-13 School Year

Florida Peer School District	Number of Special Education Schools ¹	Total Full-Time Staff ²	Total Full-Time Exceptional Education Teachers ²	Total Student Membership ³	Free/Reduced Lunch Eligible ³		ELL Students ³		ESE Students - Total Disabled ³	
					Total	Percent	Total	Percent	Total	Percent
Broward County Public Schools	10	25,830	1,637	260,234	147,489	56.7%	25,723	9.9%	31,388	12.1%
Duval County Public Schools	5	12,326	1,039	125,662	65,882	52.4%	4,185	3.3%	15,769	12.5%
Hillsborough County Public Schools	16	25,645	1,865	200,287	111,851	55.8%	24,768	12.4%	28,173	14.1%
Miami-Dade County Public Schools	7	36,462	3,534	354,236	251,967	71.1%	74,039	20.9%	35,534	10.0%
Orange County Public Schools	10	22,478	1,256	183,021	97,691	53.4%	24,968	13.6%	20,813	11.4%
School District of Palm Beach County	12	21,076	1,923	179,494	94,614	52.7%	20,242	11.3%	25,966	14.5%
Pinellas County Public Schools	10	13,268	1,301	103,596	55,638	53.7%	5,236	5.1%	12,764	12.3%
Peer Average	10	21,876	1,820	191,049	112,941	56.5%	25,573	11.1%	23,170	12.5%

Source: Florida Department of Education, 2013.

National Peer School District	Number of Special Education Schools	Total Full-Time Staff	Total Full-Time Exceptional Education Teachers ²	Total Student Membership	Free/Reduced Lunch Eligible		ELL Students		ESE Students – Total Disabled	
					Total	Percent	Total	Percent	Total	Percent
Broward County Public Schools	10	25,830	1,637	260,234	147,489	56.7%	25,723	9.9%	31,388	12.1
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	NA	16,747	NA	140,161	79,636	56.8%	NA	NA	13,551	9.7%
Fairfax County Public Schools	NA	23,528	NA	180,616	38,843	21.5%	48,455	26.8%	24,819	13.7
Gwinnett County Public Schools	4	20,000	NA	164,976	93,817	56.9%	NA	NA	18,729	11.4
Houston Independent School District	NA	22,152	NA	203,354	85,047	41.8%	60,586	29.8%	15,997	7.9%
Montgomery County Public Schools	5	22,597	NA	148,780	51,551	34.6%	23,805	16.0%	16,742	11.3
Peer Average	5	21,005	NA	167,577	69,779	41.6%	44,282	26.4%	17,968	10.7

Source: Peer State Databases, 2014.

1: Source: <http://www.fldoe.org/eias/eiaspubs/pubschool.asp>

2: Source: <http://www.fldoe.org/eias/eiaspubs/pubstaff.asp>

3: Source: <http://www.fldoe.org/eias/eiaspubs/pubstudent.asp>



Diagnostic Review

A diagnostic review of ESE services was conducted during the week of February 3 – 7, 2014. Evergreen consultants interviewed central office administrators concerning the management and operations of the Office of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services. The diagnostic review allowed Evergreen’s team to assess ESE operations, further develop possible information and data needs for the study, capture perceptions and input from key district staff, and evaluate current operations to identify preliminary areas for potential improvements in efficiency or effectiveness. The diagnostic review served as a starting point for the comprehensive onsite review.

Online Surveys

To secure the involvement of employees in the study, a comprehensive ESE Online Evaluation Survey was prepared by Evergreen. Through the use of this anonymous survey, administrators, teachers, and other staff were given the opportunity to express their views about the management and operations of the ESE program. Survey items were similar in format and content to provide a database for determining how the opinions and perceptions of these groups vary.

The survey was disseminated to BCPS staff on February 24, 2014. Stakeholders were given until March 11, 2014 (16 days) to participate in the 51-item survey. The survey included 14 specific topics and targeted nine unique stakeholder groups (general education teachers, special education teachers, school administrators, support staff, etc.). The survey was sent to over 16,980 stakeholders. In total, 5,024 stakeholders participated, for a total completion rate of 29.6 percent. **Chapter 3** provides an in-depth overview of Evergreen’s survey and survey results.

In addition, parent surveys were disseminated to over 30,000 parents. A total of 1,029 surveys were returned. More detail on the parent survey methodology and results can be found in **Chapter 3** and **Section 4.6 - Parent Engagement**.

Onsite Review

A team of six consultants conducted the formal onsite review of Broward County Public Schools during the weeks of March 3 and March 10, 2014. Prior to conducting the onsite review, each team member was provided with an extensive set of information about ESE operations available from the initial data collection and diagnostic review. During the onsite work, team members conducted a detailed review of the structure and operations in their assigned functional areas.

In addition to central office locations, Evergreen visited 32 BCPS schools in March 2014, including:

- Castle Hill Elementary School
- Central Park Elementary School
- Cypress Elementary School
- Griffin Elementary School
- Heron Heights Elementary School
- Horizon Elementary School
- Maplewood Elementary School



- Norcrest Elementary School
- Parkside Elementary School
- Silver Ridge Elementary School
- Silver Shores Elementary School
- Stephen Foster Elementary School
- Apollo Middle School
- Falcon Cove Middle School
- James S. Rickards Middle School
- Lauderdale Lakes Middle School
- Margate Middle School
- New Renaissance Middle School
- New River Middle School
- Olsen Middle School
- Seminole Middle School
- Westglades Middle School
- Westpine Middle School
- Boyd H. Anderson High School
- Coconut Creek High School
- Cypress Bay High School
- McArthur High School
- M. Stoneman Douglas High School
- Bright Horizons
- Cross Creek School
- Cypress Run Al./ESE
- Wingate Oaks Center

The schools were selected based on the following criteria:

- demographically and geographic diversity;
- representation from as many of the district's 28 innovation zones as possible;
- feeder zones for students matriculating from elementary school to middle school to high school;
- representation from all grade levels, including PreK ESE;
- school start/end times and driving distance between schools;
- access to as many categories of disabilities as possible; and
- a combination of regular school sites, center school sites, and separate schools.



1.3 OVERVIEW OF THE REPORT

This Final Report for this evaluation consists of the following sections:

- Chapter 1: Introduction
- Chapter 2: Comparisons of ESE in Peer School Districts
- Chapter 3: ESE Survey Results
- Chapter 4: Findings, Commendations, and Recommendations



***CHAPTER 2:
COMPARISONS OF ESE
IN PEER SCHOOL DISTRICTS***



2.0 COMPARISONS OF ESE IN PEER SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Chapter 2 provides a brief comparison between Broward County Public Schools (BCPS) and peer school systems on select measures—number of schools, overall enrollment, enrollment in exceptional student education programs for students with disabilities, student demographics, student indicators, staffing levels, and parent involvement. In comparing data on these factors, evaluators are able to assess BCPS programs and services against operations in other similar school districts. In many cases, data reveal strengths and weaknesses of BCPS when compared to peer districts.

The creation of the comparison charts began in January 2014 and was completed in February 2014. Evergreen created a database of 34 comparison charts with various select data elements available from the Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) and state-level databases for national peer schools districts. Generally, using a state or federal database provides data that are valid, collected using the same methodology or approach, and standardized across all districts. However, not all states collect school district data using the same methodology, let alone the same types of data, so collecting comparison data for school districts across different states is challenging.

While organizations such as the National Center for Education Statistics collect many data sets that allow state to state school district comparisons to be made, it is generally high level data that does not yield the detail needed to conduct a study of this nature. Evergreen attempted to identify common threads of data available across all peers, and based comparison charts created on commonalities identified.

For this study, BCPS was compared to two groups of peer school districts at the district's request. The first group, the "state group," is composed of the six largest school districts in Florida. The second group, the "national group," is composed of school districts similar to the BCPS across the nation.

An overview of data sources used for each of these peer groups is shown below:

- **State Group** – Data related to ESE service delivery are sourced from the Florida Department of Education. The FLDOE has implemented tools and procedures accepted and understood by Florida school districts. Specifically, FLDOE's Division of Accountability, Research, and Measurements' Bureau of Education Information and Accountability Services (EIAS) provides a robust set of data on ESE programs and services in each Florida school district. These which were used to create the comparison charts in this report, and a template for the data that would be sought for each national comparison district. For all comparison charts created, Evergreen used the most recent data available at the time. In some cases this is 2012-13 data, whereas for other comparison charts the most recent data available are from the 2010-11 school year. The state group includes the following school districts:



- Duval County Public Schools
 - Hillsborough County Public Schools
 - Miami-Dade County Public Schools
 - Orange County Public Schools
 - School District of Palm Beach County
 - Pinellas County Schools
- **National Group** – Collecting data for national peer school districts was a progressive four-step process. First, Evergreen searched state level databases in which each district is located. Generally, state level databases yielded the data needed. If data were not located at the state level, Evergreen visited the school district website, then the ESE Department website, and finally external sites such as state associations or organizations related to delivery of ESE services in school districts. The majority of the time, state-level databases provided the data needed, or district or external websites yielded web links to state reports containing the data needed that were not easy to locate on the state website. For the most part, the IDEA Indicators required by the USDOE from all state departments of education for each school district acted as the framework for Evergreen’s comparison charts. The national group includes the following school districts:
 - Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, NC
 - Fairfax County Public Schools, VA
 - Gwinnett County Public Schools, GA
 - Houston ISD, TX
 - Montgomery County Public Schools, MD

Exhibit 2-1 displays an overview of the websites visited during our data collection process.

Selection of peer school districts was based on overall similarities (such as enrollment and staffing levels) and student demographics (such as the percentage of the student population eligible for free and reduced lunch, the percentage of students who are English language learners (ELL), and the percentage of ESE students). As BCPS is the second largest district in the State of Florida (sixth largest in the U.S.), and most of the 67 districts in the State are significantly smaller than BCPS, selection of appropriate state peers for this evaluation was based solely on size. As a result, the six largest districts in the State, each of which is an urban district like BCPS, were established as peer districts. Nationally, districts with similar characteristics to BCPS were selected.

Exhibit 1-2 in **Section 1** displays the initial comparison completed for selection of peer districts. The exhibit includes high-level points of comparison on school district demographics, populations, and staffing.

The remaining comparison exhibits include various data aimed at analyzing other aspects of BCPS and peer district ESE operations. In this chapter, we include some of the comparison charts used to study and compare ESE services in BCPS and peer districts.



Exhibit 2-1

Overview of Data Sources for Comparison Data

Peer	State	Web Data Sources
Six Florida School Districts	FL	http://www.fldoe.org/ease/datapage.asp http://www.fldoe.org/fefp/profile.asp
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	NC	http://accrpt.ncpublicschools.org/app/2013/disag/ http://apps.schools.nc.gov/pls/apex/f?p=1:109:0::NO:: http://ec.ncpublicschools.gov/reports-data http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/fbs/resources/data/ http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/fbs/accounting/data/ http://apps.schools.nc.gov/pls/apex/f?p=1:163:979283370678101::NO:: http://ec.ncpublicschools.gov/reports-data/child-count http://www.ncschoolreportcard.org/src/ http://www.cms.k12.nc.us/cmsdepartments/accountability/Pages/Resources.aspx http://www.ncpublicschools.org/data/reports/ http://www.nccecas.org/
Fairfax County Public Schools	VA	http://www.doe.virginia.gov/statistics_reports/index.shtml http://www.doe.virginia.gov/info_management/data_collection/index.shtml http://www.doe.virginia.gov/info_management/data_collection/special_education/index.shtml https://p1pe.doe.virginia.gov/reportcard/ http://bi.vita.virginia.gov/doe_bi/rdPage.aspx?rdReport=Main&subRptName=Dropout http://bi.vita.virginia.gov/doe_bi/rdPage.aspx?rdReport=Main&subRptName=Fallmembership http://www.doe.virginia.gov/special_ed/reports_plans_stats/child_count/index.shtml http://www.doe.virginia.gov/special_ed/reports_plans_stats/special_ed_performance/index.shtml http://www.doe.virginia.gov/special_ed/reports_plans_stats/index.shtml http://www.fcps.edu/index.shtml
Gwinnett County	GA	http://www.gadoe.org/Pages/By-School.aspx http://www.gadoe.org/Technology-Services/Data-Collections/Pages/Home.aspx http://publish.gwinnett.k12.ga.us/gcps/wcm/connect/aa221350-bdc1-4cbc-8fb0-6b08564abd3a/2013-14_Fast_Facts-FINAL-6-18-13.pdf?MOD=AJPERES
Houston ISD	TX	http://loving1.tea.state.tx.us/lonestar/Home.aspx http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/adhocrpt/Standard_Reports.html http://www.tea.state.tx.us/acctres/dropcomp_index.html http://www.tea.state.tx.us/acctres/dropcomp/years.html#campsum http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index2.aspx?id=2147497643
Montgomery County Public Schools	MD	http://www.msde.maryland.gov/MSDE/divisions/bus_svcs/fb.html http://msp.msde.state.md.us/Entity.aspx?K=15AAAA https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/sharedaccountability/ http://marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/divisions/planningresultstest/2012+-+2013+Staff+Publications.htm http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/Tables/4467-dropout-rate?loc=22&loct=2#detailed/5/3300-3323/false/1124,1021,909,857,105/any/10051,10050 http://msp.msde.state.md.us/Entity.aspx?k=15AAAA http://mdideareport.org/ https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/regulatoryaccountability/SafetyGlance/ http://mdideareport.org/special_main.aspx https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/regulatoryaccountability/SpEdglance/ http://mdideareport.org/Indicators.aspx?IndicatorType=2&County=15

Source: Created by Evergreen Solutions, 2014.



This chapter is divided into the following sections:

- 2.1 Staffing
- 2.2 Schools
- 2.3 Student Demographics
- 2.4 Student Indicators
- 2.5 Parent Involvement
- 2.6 Conclusion

2.1 STAFFING

Exhibit 2-2 displays a comparison of total full-time staff, by category, in BCPS and peer districts. Overall, 923 (3.6 percent) BCPS staff are administrative, 16,019 (62.0 percent) are instructional, and 8,888 (34.4 percent) are support staff. Comparatively, the state peer average is 782 (3.6 percent) administrative, 13,771 (63.0 percent) instructional, and 7,323 (33.5 percent) support staff. Further, across the two national peers where data were available, the peer average is 561 (2.9 percent) administrative, 10,455 (53.8 percent) instructional, and 8,434 (43.4 percent) support staff. Taken together, the staffing breakdown in BCPS is similar to the average across the state peer school districts, but it appears that relatively more resources are devoted to support staff and less to instructional staffing in national peer school districts.

Exhibit 2-2
Comparison of Total Full-Time Staff by Type
2012-13 School Year

Florida Peer School District	Administrative		Instructional		Support		Total
	#	%	#	%	#	%	
Broward County Public Schools	923	3.6%	16,019	62.0%	8,888	34.4%	25,830
Duval County Public Schools	674	5.5%	8,618	69.9%	3,034	24.6%	12,326
Hillsborough County Public Schools	809	3.2%	15,757	61.4%	9,079	35.4%	25,645
Miami-Dade County Public Schools	1,323	3.6%	23,516	64.5%	11,623	31.9%	36,462
Orange County Public Schools	717	3.2%	13,440	59.8%	8,321	37.0%	22,478
School District of Palm Beach County	735	3.5%	13,327	63.2%	7,014	33.3%	21,076
Pinellas County Public Schools	431	3.2%	7,969	60.1%	4,868	36.7%	13,268
Peer Average	782	3.6%	13,771	63.0%	7,323	33.5%	21,876

Source: Florida Department of Education, 2013.

National Peer School District	Administrative		Instructional		Support		Total
	#	%	#	%	#	%	
Broward County Public Schools	923	3.6%	16,019	62.0%	8,888	34.4%	25,830
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	543	3.2%	9,204	55.0%	7,000	41.8%	16,747
Fairfax County Public Schools	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Gwinnett County Public Schools	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Houston Independent School District	578	2.6%	11,706	52.8%	9,868	44.5%	22,152
Montgomery County Public Schools	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Peer Average	561	2.9%	10,455	53.8%	8,434	43.4%	19,450

Source: Peer State Databases, 2014.



Exhibits 2-3 through **2-5** display the administrative, instructional, and support staffing categories), disaggregated by position type. **Exhibit 2-3** shows total instructional positions by function. As can be seen, BCPS has 1,637 ESE teachers, accounting for 10.2 percent of total instructional staff; compared to the peer average of 13.2 percent across state peers. Data for the total number of ESE teachers in national peer school districts was not available. One significant difference between BCPS and state peers is the percentage of other professional staff— instructional in BCPS (2.9 percent) compared to that of the peer average (6.7 percent).

Compared to national peer averages, BCPS has a nine percent lower percentage of elementary teachers than the peer districts, and a 3.8 percent higher percentage of secondary teachers than the peer districts.

Exhibit 2-4 shows that of total administrators in BCPS (923), 17.6 percent are officials, administrators, and managers; 1.4 percent are consultants/supervisors; 29.0 percent are principals; 48.8 percent are assistant principals; and 3.3 percent are deans/curriculum coordinators. Administrative staffing levels at BCPS are in line with those of the state peer averages for all but deans/curriculum coordinators. Meanwhile, when compared to national peer averages, the biggest disparity is in the consultants/supervisors of instruction, where this category represents 21.7 percent of all administrative staff among national peers, and only 1.4 percent at BCPS. Further, assistant principals represent 48.8 percent of all administrative staff at BCPS, and only 36.9 percent, on average, across national peer districts.

Exhibit 2-5 displays total support staff by function. As can be seen, at BCPS 6.1 percent of support staff are other professional staff – non instructional; 17.7 percent are aides; 3.0 percent are technicians; 25.0 percent are clerical/secretarial; 39.3 percent are service workers; 7.2 percent are skilled crafts workers; and 1.7 percent are unskilled laborers.

In comparing this breakdown to state and national peer averages, the following can be determined:

- the percentage of aides at BCPS is 5.2 percent under the state peer average of 22.8 percent;
- the percentage of clerical/secretarial at BCPS is 4.0 percent above the state peer average of 21.0 percent;
- it appears that Houston ISD does not disaggregate other professional staff –non instructional as other states do, as the percentage reported for this category by Houston ISD is 86.9 percent;
- the percentage of clerical/secretarial at BCPS is 4.0 percent above the state peer average of 21.0 percent;
- the percentage of aides at BCPS is 6.1 percent under the national peer average of 23.7 percent; and
- the percentage of clerical/secretarial at BCPS is 11.6 percent above the national peer average of 13.4 percent.



Exhibit 2-3
Total Instructional Staff by Function
2012-13 School Year

Florida Peer School District	Elementary (PK, K-5 or 6)		Secondary (6-12)		Exceptional Ed Teachers		Other Teachers		Guidance Counselors	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Broward County Public Schools	6,246	39.0%	6,051	37.8%	1,637	10.2%	756	4.7%	485	3.0%
Duval County Public Schools	3,497	40.6%	2,842	33.0%	1,039	12.1%	218	2.5%	257	3.0%
Hillsborough County Public Schools	6,828	43.3%	4,688	29.8%	1,865	11.8%	253	1.6%	413	2.6%
Miami-Dade County Public Schools	9,575	40.7%	7,117	30.3%	3,534	15.0%	981	4.2%	729	3.1%
Orange County Public Schools	5,031	37.4%	4,577	34.1%	1,256	9.3%	548	4.1%	286	2.1%
School District of Palm Beach County	5,042	37.8%	4,729	35.5%	1,923	14.4%	103	0.8%	367	2.8%
Pinellas County Public Schools	2,746	34.5%	2,685	33.7%	1,301	16.3%	240	3.0%	220	2.8%
Peer Average	5,453	39.6%	4,440	32.2%	1,820	13.2%	391	2.8%	379	2.7%

Florida Peer School District	Social Workers		School Psychologists		Librarians/ Audio-Visual Workers		Other Professional Staff - Instructional		Total
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
Broward County Public Schools	109	0.7%	133	0.8%	142	0.9%	460	2.9%	16,019
Orange County Public Schools	51	0.4%	94	0.7%	149	1.1%	1,448	10.8%	13,440
Duval County Public Schools	43	0.5%	53	0.6%	101	1.2%	568	6.6%	8,618
Hillsborough County Public Schools	145	0.9%	175	1.1%	215	1.4%	1,175	7.5%	15,757
Miami-Dade County Public Schools	152	0.6%	222	0.9%	254	1.1%	952	4.0%	23,516
School District of Palm Beach County	66	0.5%	83	0.6%	131	1.0%	883	6.6%	13,327
Pinellas County Public Schools	99	1.2%	72	0.9%	118	1.5%	488	6.1%	7,969
Peer Average	93	0.7%	117	0.8%	161	1.2%	919	6.7%	13,771

Source: Florida Department of Education, 2013.



Exhibit 2-3 (Continued)
Total Instructional Staff by Function
2012-13 School Year

National Peer School District	Elementary (PK, K-5 or 6)		Secondary (6-12)		Exceptional Ed Teachers		Other Teachers		Guidance Counselors	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Broward County Public Schools	6,246	39.0%	6,051	37.8%	1,637	10.2%	756	4.7%	485	3.0%
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	4,056	39.0%	3,802	36.6%	NA	NA	1,346	13.0%	355	3.4%
Fairfax County Public Schools	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Gwinnett County Public Schools	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Houston Independent School District	6,556	56.0%	3,725	31.8%	NA	NA	677	5.8%	123	1.1%
Montgomery County Public Schools	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Peer Average	5,306	48.0%	3,763	34.0%	NA	NA	1,012	9.1%	239	2.2%

National Peer School District	Social Workers		School Psychologists		Librarians/ Audio-Visual Workers		Other Professional Staff - Instructional		Total
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
Broward County Public Schools	109	0.7%	133	0.8%	142	0.9%	460	2.9%	16,019
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	NA	NA	67	0.6%	152	1.5%	613	5.9%	10,391
Fairfax County Public Schools	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Gwinnett County Public Schools	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Houston Independent School District	21	0.2%	12	0.1%	100	0.9%	493	4.2%	11,706
Montgomery County Public Schools	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Peer Average	21	0.2%	39	0.4%	126	1.1%	553	5.0%	11,059

Source: Peer School District State Databases, 2014.



Exhibit 2-4
Total Administrators by Function
2012-13 School Year

Florida Peer School District	Officials, Administrators and Managers		Consultants/ Supervisors of Instruction		Principals		Assistant Principals		Community Education Coordinators		Deans/ Curriculum Coordinators		Total
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
Broward County Public Schools	162	17.6%	13	1.4%	268	29.0%	450	48.8%	0	0.0%	30	3.3%	923
Duval County Public Schools	223	33.1%	19	2.8%	176	26.1%	252	37.4%	0	0.0%	4	0.6%	674
Hillsborough County Public Schools	109	13.5%	7	0.9%	267	33.0%	425	52.5%	0	0.0%	1	0.1%	809
Miami-Dade County Public Schools	211	15.9%	26	2.0%	428	32.4%	658	49.7%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1323
Orange County Public Schools	150	20.9%	70	9.8%	228	31.8%	259	36.1%	3	0.4%	7	1.0%	717
School District of Palm Beach County	140	19.0%	10	1.4%	213	29.0%	372	50.6%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	735
Pinellas County Public Schools	91	21.1%	6	1.4%	127	29.5%	191	44.3%	3	0.7%	13	3.0%	431
Peer Average	154	19.7%	23	2.9%	240	30.7%	360	46.0%	1	0.1%	4	0.5%	782

Source: Florida Department of Education, 2013.

National Peer School District	Officials, Administrators and Managers		Consultants/ Supervisors of Instruction		Principals		Assistant Principals		Community Education Coordinators		Deans/ Curriculum Coordinators		Total
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
Broward County Public Schools	162	17.6%	13	1.4%	268	29.0%	450	48.8%	0	0.0%	30	3.3%	923
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	100	12.4%	264	32.7%	171	21.2%	272	33.7%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	807
Fairfax County Public Schools	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Gwinnett County Public Schools	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Houston Independent School District	79	13.6%	36	6.2%	225	38.9%	239	41.3%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	578
Montgomery County Public Schools	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Peer Average	89	12.9%	150	21.7%	198	28.6%	255	36.9%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	693

Source: Peer State Databases, 2014.



Exhibit 2-5
Total Support Staff by Function
2012-13 School Year

Florida Peer School District	Other Professional Staff - Noninstructional		Aides		Technicians		Clerical/Secretarial		Service Workers		Skilled Crafts Workers		Unskilled Laborers		Total
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
Broward County Public Schools	542	6.1%	1,572	17.7%	267	3.0%	2,221	25.0%	3,491	39.3%	644	7.2%	151	1.7%	8,888
Duval County Public Schools	231	7.6%	1,012	33.4%	102	3.4%	1,056	34.8%	416	13.7%	171	5.6%	46	1.5%	3,034
Hillsborough County Public Schools	724	8.0%	1,932	21.3%	289	3.2%	1,630	18.0%	4,152	45.7%	330	3.6%	22	0.2%	9,079
Miami-Dade County Public Schools	1,695	14.6%	1,951	16.8%	84	0.7%	2,210	19.0%	4,570	39.3%	959	8.3%	154	1.3%	11,623
Orange County Public Schools	506	6.1%	1,951	23.4%	70	0.8%	1,965	23.6%	3,477	41.8%	206	2.5%	146	1.8%	8,321
School District of Palm Beach County	703	10.0%	1,547	22.1%	269	3.8%	1,417	20.2%	2,795	39.8%	240	3.4%	43	0.6%	7,014
Pinellas County Public Schools	319	6.6%	1,643	33.8%	105	2.2%	951	19.5%	1,571	32.3%	224	4.6%	55	1.1%	4,868
Peer Average	696	9.5%	1,673	22.8%	153	2.1%	1,538	21.0%	2,830	38.6%	355	4.8%	78	1.1%	7,323

Source: Florida Department of Education, 2013.

National Peer School District	Other Professional Staff - Noninstructional		Aides		Technicians		Clerical/Secretarial		Service Workers		Skilled Crafts Workers		Unskilled Laborers		Total
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
Broward County Public Schools	542	6.1%	1,572	17.7%	267	3.0%	2,221	25.0%	3,491	39.3%	644	7.2%	151	1.7%	8,888
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	NA	NA	1,908	34.4%	227	4.1%	743	13.4%	2,418	43.6%	199	3.6%	54	1.0%	5,549
Fairfax County Public Schools	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Gwinnett County Public Schools	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Houston Independent School District	8,576	86.9%	1,292	13.1%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	9,868
Montgomery County Public Schools	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Peer Average	8,576	86.9%	1,600	23.7%	227	4.1%	743	13.4%	2,418	43.6%	199	3.6%	54	1.0%	7,708

Source: Peer School District State Databases, 2014.



Taken together, the data indicate that BCPS staffing is similar to peer staffing across the three categories, with small pockets of differences across certain position categories. For instance, it appears that peer school districts utilize a relatively more aides and relatively fewer clerical staff when compared to BCPS. While only partial data were available for national peers, the data that were collected provide background information on the peers selected for comparison purposes.

2.2 SCHOOLS

Analyzing the number of schools available to serve special education students, in relation to the total number of schools, provides another comparator on overall ESE operations in peer districts.

Exhibit 2-6 displays a breakdown of total schools by type for BCPS and each peer district.

Exhibit 2-6
Comparison of School Types
2012-13 School Year

Florida Peer School District	Regular Education		Special Education		Alternative Education		Vocational/ Technical		Adult Education		Total
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
Broward County Public Schools	301	89.3%	10	3.0%	20	5.9%	3	0.9%	3	0.9%	337
Duval County Public Schools	174	88.3%	5	2.5%	18	9.1%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	197
Hillsborough County Public Schools	257	82.6%	16	5.1%	24	7.7%	4	1.3%	10	3.2%	311
Miami-Dade County Public Schools	465	87.9%	7	1.3%	36	6.8%	3	0.6%	18	3.4%	529
Orange County Public Schools	205	82.7%	10	4.0%	28	11.3%	4	1.6%	1	0.4%	248
School District of Palm Beach County	196	76.0%	12	4.7%	20	7.8%	3	1.2%	27	10.5%	258
Pinellas County Public Schools	133	77.3%	10	5.8%	20	11.6%	3	1.7%	6	3.5%	172
Peer Average	238	83.4%	10	3.5%	24	8.5%	3	1.0%	10	3.6%	286

Source: Florida Department of Education, 2013.

National Peer School District	Regular Education		Special Education		Alternative Education		Vocational/ Technical		Adult Education		Total
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
Broward County Public Schools	301	89.3%	10	3.0%	20	5.9%	3	0.9%	3	0.9%	337
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Fairfax County Public Schools	213	96.4%	7	3.2%	1	0.4%	NA	NA	NA	NA	221
Gwinnett County Public Schools	126	95.5%	4	3.0%	2	1.5%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	132
Houston Independent School District	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Montgomery County Public Schools	196	97.0%	5	2.5%	0	0.0%	1	0.5%	0	0.0%	202
Peer Average	178	96.3%	5.3	2.9%	1	0.6%	1	0.2%	0	0.0%	167

Source: Peer School District State Databases, 2014.

As can be seen, BCPS special education schools account for three percent (10) of the 337 total schools in the district. This is in alignment with the state peer average of 3.5 percent and the national peer average of 2.9 percent. Across state peers, Miami-Dade and Duval have a lower percentage of special education schools than BCPS; whereas Hillsborough, Orange, Palm Beach, and Pinellas each have a higher percentage of special education schools than BCPS. Further, BCPS has a similar ratio of regular education and vocational/technical schools to total schools as the state peer average, and deviates from the state peer average percentage for other school types (alternative education and adult education).



Across national peers, BCPS has the highest percentage of special education schools, similar to Gwinnett County at 3.0 percent and Fairfax at 3.2 percent; whereas Montgomery County Public Schools has a lower percentage at 2.5 percent. The percentage of regular education schools in BCPS is 6.9 percent below the national peer average and the percentage of alternative education schools at BCPS is 5.3 percent higher than the national peer average.

2.3 STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

Understanding student demographics is essential in assessing the operations and delivery models of a department. Without an understanding of student enrollment levels and other characteristics of the population being served, it is difficult to determine adequacy or effectiveness of service. Therefore, this section analyzes characteristics of BCPS and the peer district student populations

Exhibit 2-7 displays a three-year comparison of student membership in BCPS and in the peer districts, where student membership is an annual headcount of students enrolled in school on October 1 or the school day closest to that date. A student can only be reported for a single school or agency. As can be seen, total membership in BCPS was 260,234 in 2012-13; compared to the state peer average membership of 191,049. All but one state peer district experienced an increase in total membership—Pinellas County Schools. Among state peers, the average percentage increase in membership was 2.3 percent, compared to a 1.5 percent increase at BCPS over the same time period.

Exhibit 2-7
Three-Year Comparison of Membership
2010-11 through 2012-13 School Years

Florida Peer School District	Membership			Change
	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	
Broward County Public Schools	256,474	258,454	260,234	1.5%
Duval County Public Schools	123,995	125,464	125,662	1.3%
Hillsborough County Public Schools	194,353	197,001	200,287	3.1%
Miami-Dade County Public Schools	347,406	350,227	354,236	2.0%
Orange County Public Schools	175,986	179,989	183,021	4.0%
School District of Palm Beach County	174,659	176,901	179,494	2.8%
Pinellas County Public Schools	104,001	103,705	103,596	-0.4%
Peer Average	186,733	188,881	191,049	2.3%

Source: Florida Department of Education, 2013.

National Peer School District	Membership			Change
	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	
Broward County Public Schools	256,474	258,454	260,234	1.5%
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	134,598	137,016	140,161	4.1%
Fairfax County Public Schools	174,479	177,606	180,616	3.5%
Gwinnett County Public Schools	160,744	162,370	164,976	2.6%
Houston Independent School District	204,245	203,066	203,354	-0.4%
Montgomery County Public Schools	144,023	146,459	148,780	3.3%
Peer Average	163,618	165,303	167,577	2.4%

Source: Peer School District State Databases, 2014.



As can be seen from the comparison to national peers, the national peer average membership is 167,577. All but one national peer district (Houston ISD) experienced an increase in total membership. Among national peers, the average percentage increase in membership was 2.4 percent, with a high of 4.1 percent at Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools and a low of -0.4 percent at Houston ISD.

Exhibit 2-8 provides student population by race/ethnicity in BCPS and the peer districts. As can be seen, the student population in BCPS is 29.0 percent Hispanic/Latino, 24.9 percent White, 39.5 percent Black/African American, and 6.5 percent Other. State peer districts have a race/ethnicity composition of 34.7 percent White, 31.2 percent Hispanic/Latino, 27.4 percent Black/African American, and 6.7 percent Other. National peer districts have a race/ethnicity make up of 28.7 percent White, 31.5 percent Hispanic/Latino, 25.8 percent Black/African American, and 14.1 percent Other.

Exhibit 2-8
Comparison of Student Race/Ethnicity
2012-13 School Year

Florida Peer School District	White		Black/African American		Hispanic/Latino		Other	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Broward County Public Schools	64,918	24.9%	102,767	39.5%	75,525	29.0%	17,024	6.5%
Duval County Public Schools	48,428	38.5%	55,440	44.1%	11,159	8.9%	10,635	8.5%
Hillsborough County Public Schools	75,450	37.7%	43,009	21.5%	66,341	33.1%	15,487	7.7%
Miami-Dade County Public Schools	28,471	8.0%	83,649	23.6%	235,803	66.6%	6,313	1.8%
Orange County Public Schools	55,820	30.5%	50,132	27.4%	63,541	34.7%	13,528	7.4%
School District of Palm Beach County	62,843	35.0%	51,804	28.9%	53,398	29.7%	11,449	6.4%
Pinellas County Public Schools	60,812	58.7%	19,671	19.0%	14,378	13.9%	8,735	8.4%
Peer Average	55,304	34.7%	50,618	27.4%	74,103	31.2%	11,025	6.7%

Source: Florida Department of Education, 2013.

National Peer School District	White		Black/African American		Hispanic/Latino		Other	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Broward County Public Schools	64,918	24.9%	102,767	39.5%	75,525	29.0%	17,024	6.5%
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	44,618	31.6%	58,840	41.7%	26,020	18.4%	11,583	8.2%
Fairfax County Public Schools	76,788	42.5%	18,705	10.4%	40,864	22.6%	44,259	24.5%
Gwinnett County Public Schools	47,628	28.2%	52,270	30.9%	45,450	26.9%	23,802	14.1%
Houston Independent School District	16,739	8.2%	49,936	24.6%	127,428	62.7%	9,251	4.5%
Montgomery County Public Schools	49,043	33.0%	31,713	21.3%	39,647	26.6%	28,377	19.1%
Peer Average	46,963	28.7%	42,293	25.8%	55,882	31.5%	23,454	14.1%

Source: Peer School District State Databases, 2014.



Exhibit 2-9 displays a comparison of total ESE students, by program, as a percentage of total district enrollment for BCPS and peer districts. Based on the state peer data, the following data figures compare the percent total for each program type in BCPS and in peer districts (Note: all figures displayed are calculated as a percentage of “District Enrollment”):

- Orthopedic Impairment: 0.1 percent in BCPS and in peer districts;
- Speech Impairment: 2.1 percent in BCPS compared to 1.4 percent in peer districts;
- Language Impairment: 1.4 percent in BCPS compared to 1.3 percent in peer districts;
- Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing: 0.1 percent in BCPS and 0.2 percent in peer districts;
- Visual Impairment: 0.03 percent in BCPS and 0.04 percent in peer districts;
- Emotional/Behavioral Disability: 0.5 percent in BCPS compared to 0.7 percent in peer districts;
- Specific Learning Disability: 3.4 percent in BCPS compared to 5.0 percent in peer districts;
- Hospital/Homebound: 0.1 percent in BCPS and in peer districts;
- Dual-Sensory Impairment: 0.0 percent in BCPS and in peer districts;
- Autism Spectrum Disorder: 1.3 percent in BCPS compared to 0.9 percent in peer districts;
- Traumatic Brain Injury: <0.1 percent in BCPS and in peer districts;
- Developmental Delay: 0.8 percent in BCPS compared to 0.6 percent in peer districts;
- Established Conditions: <0.1 percent in BCPS and in peer districts;
- Other Health Impairment: 1.4 percent in BCPS compared to 0.8 percent in peer districts;
- Intellectual Disability: 0.7 percent in BCPS compared to 1.0 percent in peer districts; and
- Total Disabled: 12.1 percent in BCPS compared to 12.1 percent in peer districts.



Exhibit 2-9
Comparison of Membership in Exceptional Student Education Programs
as a Percent of Total Enrollment
2012-13 School Year

Florida Peer School District	Orthopedically Impaired		Speech Impaired		Language Impaired		Deaf or Hard of Hearing		Visually Impaired		Emotional/ Behavioral Disability		Specific Learning Disability		Gifted		Hospital/ Homebound	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Broward County Public Schools	301	0.1%	5,517	2.1%	3,670	1.4%	338	0.1%	68	0.03%	1,335	0.5%	8,857	3.4%	10,887	4.2%	230	0.1%
Duval County Public Schools	172	0.1%	2,799	2.2%	1,105	0.9%	227	0.2%	69	0.05%	993	0.8%	4,770	3.8%	3,788	3.0%	118	0.1%
Hillsborough County Public Schools	253	0.1%	4,087	2.0%	3,765	1.9%	390	0.2%	120	0.06%	1,367	0.7%	12,141	6.1%	9,412	4.7%	133	0.1%
Miami-Dade County Public Schools	371	0.1%	2,309	0.7%	1,229	0.3%	455	0.1%	133	0.04%	3,038	0.9%	16,622	4.7%	36,709	10.4%	339	0.1%
Orange County Public Schools	266	0.1%	980	0.5%	1,846	1.0%	309	0.2%	43	0.02%	773	0.4%	9,890	5.4%	11,169	6.1%	131	0.1%
School District of Palm Beach County	146	0.1%	3,679	2.0%	4,479	2.5%	309	0.2%	50	0.03%	810	0.5%	10,934	6.1%	9,206	5.1%	61	0.0%
Pinellas County Public Schools	107	0.1%	2,056	2.0%	2,212	2.1%	142	0.1%	43	0.04%	1,229	1.2%	3,345	3.2%	5,997	5.8%	59	0.1%
Peer Average	219	0.1%	2,652	1.4%	2,439	1.3%	305	0.2%	76	0.04%	1,368	0.7%	9,617	5.0%	12,714	6.7%	140	0.1%

Florida Peer School District	Dual-Sensory Impaired		Autism Spectrum Disorder		Traumatic Brain Injured		Developmentally Delayed		Established Conditions		Other Health Impaired		Intellectual Disabilities		All Exceptionalities		Total Disabled		District Enrollment
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
Broward County Public Schools	2	0.0%	3,435	1.3%	46	0.0%	1,999	0.8%	40	0.0%	3,664	1.4%	1,886	0.7%	42,275	16.2%	31,388	12.1%	260,234
Duval County Public Schools	0	0.0%	1,127	0.9%	36	0.0%	854	0.7%	NA	NA	1,461	1.2%	2,038	1.6%	19,557	15.6%	15,769	12.5%	125,662
Hillsborough County Public Schools	4	0.0%	1,679	0.8%	47	0.0%	936	0.5%	NA	NA	1,020	0.5%	2,231	1.1%	37,585	18.8%	28,173	14.1%	200,287
Miami-Dade County Public Schools	12	0.0%	3,231	0.9%	61	0.0%	2,012	0.6%	59	0.0%	3,176	0.9%	2,487	0.7%	72,243	20.4%	35,534	10.0%	354,236
Orange County Public Schools	3	0.0%	1,665	0.9%	29	0.0%	1,192	0.7%	10	0.0%	1,845	1.0%	1,841	1.0%	31,982	17.5%	20,813	11.4%	183,021
School District of Palm Beach County	2	0.0%	2,058	1.1%	48	0.0%	772	0.4%	NA	NA	999	0.6%	1,619	0.9%	35,172	19.6%	25,966	14.5%	179,494
Pinellas County Public Schools	3	0.0%	820	0.8%	22	0.0%	560	0.5%	NA	NA	957	0.9%	1,209	1.2%	18,761	18.1%	12,764	12.3%	103,596
Peer Average	4	0.0%	1,763	0.9%	41	0.0%	1,054	0.6%	35	0.0%	1,576	0.8%	1,904	1.0%	35,883	18.8%	23,170	12.1%	191,049

Source: Florida Department of Education, 2013.



Exhibit 2-9 (Continued)
Comparison of Membership in Exceptional Student Education Programs
as a Percent of Total Enrollment
2012-13 School Year

National Peer School District	Orthopedically Impaired		Speech Impaired		Language Impaired		Speech or Language Impaired		Deaf or Hard of Hearing		Visually Impaired		Emotional/ Behavioral Disability		Specific Learning Disability		Gifted		Hospital/ Homebound		Dual-Sensory Impaired	
	#	%	#	%	#	%			#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Broward County Public Schools	301	0.1%	5,517	2.1%	3,670	1.4%	NA	NA	338	0.1%	68	0.0%	1,335	0.5%	8,857	3.4%	10,887	4.2%	230	0.1%	2	0.0%
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	118	0.1%	NA	NA	NA	NA	1,669	1.2%	208	0.1%	75	0.1%	503	0.4%	5,179	3.7%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Fairfax County Public Schools	113	0.1%	NA	NA	NA	NA	1,973	1.1%	115	0.1%	39	0.0%	1,302	0.7%	9,316	5.2%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Gwinnett County Public Schools	60	0.0%	NA	NA	NA	NA	3,135	1.9%	176	0.1%	69	0.0%	1,169	0.7%	6,805	4.1%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Houston Independent School District	201	0.1%	2,227	1.1%	NA	NA	NA	NA	315	0.2%	128	0.1%	659	0.3%	7,307	3.6%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Montgomery County Public Schools	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	
Peer Average	123	0.1%	2,227	1.3%	NA	NA	2,259	1.3%	204	0.1%	78	0.0%	908	0.5%	7,152	4.3%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

National Peer School District	Autism Spectrum Disorder		Traumatic Brain Injured		Developmentally Delayed		Established Conditions		Other Health Impaired		Intellectual Disabilities		Deaf-Blindness		Multiple Disabilities		Non Categorical Early Childhood		All Exceptionalities		Total Disabled		District Enrollment
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
Broward County Public Schools	3,435	1.3%	46	0.0%	1,999	0.8%	40	0.0%	3,664	1.4%	1,886	0.7%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	42,275	16.2%	31,388	12.1%	260,234
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	982	0.7%	16	0.0%	1,046	0.7%	NA	NA	2,155	1.5%	1,403	1.0%	2	0.0%	195	0.1%	NA	NA	NA	NA	13,551	9.7%	140,161
Fairfax County Public Schools	2,283	1.3%	14	0.0%	2,058	1.1%	NA	NA	3,587	2.0%	808	0.4%	NA	NA	317.00	0.2%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	180,616
Gwinnett County Public Schools	1,829	1.1%	43	0.0%	1,723	1.0%	NA	NA	2,500	1.5%	1,102	0.7%	0.00	0.0%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	164,976
Houston Independent School District	1,292	0.6%	30	0.0%	NA	NA	NA	NA	1,591	0.8%	1,993	1.0%	NA	NA	NA	NA	254.00	0.1%	NA	NA	NA	NA	203,354
Montgomery County Public Schools	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	148,780
Peer Average	1,597	1.0%	26	0.0%	1,609	1.0%	NA	NA	2,458	1.5%	1,327	0.8%	1	0.0%	256	0.2%	254	0.2%	NA	NA	13,551	8.1%	167,577

Source: Peer School District State Databases, 2014.



The following data compare the percent total for each program type in BCPS and its national peer districts (Note: all figures displayed are calculated as a percentage of “District Enrollment”):

- Orthopedic Impairment: 0.1 percent in BCPS and in peer districts;
- Speech Impairment: 2.1 percent in BCPS compared to 1.3 percent in peer districts;
- Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing: 0.1 percent in BCPS and in peer districts;
- Visual Impairment: >0.1 percent in BCPS and in peer districts;
- Emotional/Behavioral Disability: 0.5 percent in BCPS and in peer districts;
- Specific Learning Disability: 3.4 percent in BCPS and 4.3 percent in peer districts;
- Autism Spectrum Disorder: 1.3 percent in BCPS and 1.0 percent in peer districts;
- Traumatic Brain Injury: <0.1 percent in BCPS and in peer districts;
- Developmental Delay: 0.8 percent in BCPS compared to 1.0 percent in peer districts;
- Other Health Impairment: 1.4 percent in BCPS compared to 1.5 percent in peer districts;
- Intellectual Disability: 0.7 percent in BCPS compared to 0.8 percent in peer districts; and
- Total Disabled: 12.1 percent in BCPS compared to 8.1 percent in peer districts.

Exhibit 2-10 provides a three-year comparison of the percentage of students with disabilities by educational placement. Definitions for each of the placement categories are as follows:

- regular classroom – inside the general education for 80 percent or more of the school day;
- resource room – inside the regular classroom for 40 to 79 percent of the school day;
- separate class – inside the regular class for less than 40 percent of the school day; and
- other separate environment – public or private separate schools, residential placements or hospital/homebound placements.

The following can be determined when comparing BCPS and state peers:

- BCPS has increased regular class placement of students with disabilities by four percent over the three-year period, more so than any other state peer district. The average across is 0.3 percent for state peers and -7.0 percent for national peers.



Exhibit 2-10
Three-Year Comparison of Educational Environments
Percentage of Students with Disabilities (Ages 6-21) in Regular Class, Resource Room,
Separate Class, and Other Separate Environments
2010-11 through 2012-13 School Years*

Florida Peer School District	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	Change
Regular Class				
Broward County Public Schools	75.0%	77.0%	79.0%	4.0%
Duval County Public Schools	82.0%	79.0%	79.0%	-3.0%
Hillsborough County Public Schools	67.0%	66.0%	68.0%	1.0%
Miami-Dade County Public Schools	51.0%	50.0%	52.0%	1.0%
Orange County Public Schools	74.0%	76.0%	77.0%	3.0%
School District of Palm Beach County	71.0%	70.0%	71.0%	0.0%
Pinellas County Public Schools	69.0%	69.0%	69.0%	0.0%
Peer Average	69.0%	68.3%	69.3%	0.3%
Resource Room				
Broward County Public Schools	9.0%	8.0%	7.0%	-2.0%
Duval County Public Schools	7.0%	5.0%	4.0%	-3.0%
Hillsborough County Public Schools	15.0%	16.0%	15.0%	0.0%
Miami-Dade County Public Schools	26.0%	25.0%	24.0%	-2.0%
Orange County Public Schools	9.0%	8.0%	7.0%	-2.0%
School District of Palm Beach County	15.0%	15.0%	13.0%	-2.0%
Pinellas County Public Schools	9.0%	9.0%	9.0%	0.0%
Peer Average	13.5%	13.0%	12.0%	-1.5%
Separate Class				
Broward County Public Schools	12.0%	12.0%	11.0%	-1.0%
Duval County Public Schools	7.0%	12.0%	14.0%	7.0%
Hillsborough County Public Schools	16.0%	15.0%	14.0%	-2.0%
Miami-Dade County Public Schools	20.0%	21.0%	20.0%	0.0%
Orange County Public Schools	14.0%	12.0%	12.0%	-2.0%
School District of Palm Beach County	10.0%	10.0%	11.0%	1.0%
Pinellas County Public Schools	15.0%	15.0%	13.0%	-2.0%
Peer Average	13.7%	14.2%	14.0%	0.3%
Other Separate Environment				
Broward County Public Schools	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	0.0%
Duval County Public Schools	4.0%	4.0%	4.0%	0.0%
Hillsborough County Public Schools	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	0.0%
Miami-Dade County Public Schools	3.0%	3.0%	4.0%	1.0%
Orange County Public Schools	3.0%	4.0%	5.0%	2.0%
School District of Palm Beach County	4.0%	4.0%	5.0%	1.0%
Pinellas County Public Schools	7.0%	8.0%	9.0%	2.0%
Peer Average	4.0%	4.3%	5.0%	1.0%

Source: Florida Department of Education, 2013.

*Note: Percentages represents the proportion of total ESE students ages 6-21.



Exhibit 2-10 (Continued)
Three-Year Comparison of Educational Environments
Percentage of Students with Disabilities (Ages 6-21) in Regular Class, Resource Room,
Separate Class, and Other Separate Environments
2010-11 through 2012-13 School Years*

National Peer School District	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	Change
Regular Class				
Broward County Public Schools	75.0%	77.0%	79.0%	4.0%
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	67.9%	70.0%	NA	NA
Fairfax County Public Schools	49.0%	54.8%	NA	NA
Gwinnett County Public Schools	52.6%	50.7%	48.9%	-3.7%
Houston Independent School District	54.0%	53.0%	NA	NA
Montgomery County Public Schools	NA	NA	NA	NA
Peer Average	55.9%	57.1%	48.9%	-7.0%
Resource Room				
Broward County Public Schools	9.0%	8.0%	7.0%	-2.0%
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	12.4%	13.1%	NA	NA
Fairfax County Public Schools	35.0%	25.8%	NA	NA
Gwinnett County Public Schools	22.8%	22.9%	25.0%	2.2%
Houston Independent School District	26.0%	25.0%	NA	NA
Montgomery County Public Schools	NA	NA	NA	NA
Peer Average	24.1%	21.7%	25.0%	0.9%
Separate Class				
Broward County Public Schools	12.0%	12.0%	11.0%	-1.0%
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	16.7%	13.9%	NA	NA
Fairfax County Public Schools	14.0%	16.9%	NA	NA
Gwinnett County Public Schools	23.0%	24.8%	24.7%	1.7%
Houston Independent School District	19.0%	20.0%	NA	NA
Montgomery County Public Schools	NA	NA	NA	NA
Peer Average	18.2%	18.9%	24.7%	6.5%
Other Separate Environment				
Broward County Public Schools	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	0.0%
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	3.0%	3.0%	NA	NA
Fairfax County Public Schools	2.0%	2.5%	NA	NA
Gwinnett County Public Schools	1.6%	1.6%	1.4%	-0.2%
Houston Independent School District	1.0%	2.0%	NA	NA
Montgomery County Public Schools	NA	NA	NA	NA
Peer Average	1.9%	2.3%	1.4%	-0.5%

Source: Peer State Databases, 2014.

*Note: Percentages represents the proportion of total ESE students ages 6-21.



- Placement of students in resource rooms has declined by two percent in the district, which is slightly more than the 1.5 percent average decrease experienced across state peer districts. The national peer average was 0.9 percent.
- BCPS has decreased by one percent the number of students placed in separate classrooms; however, state peers experienced an average increase of 0.3 percent. National peers experienced an average increase of 6.5 percent.
- Finally, the district has experienced no change in the percentage of students with disabilities placed in other separate environments, compared to an average increase of one percent among state peers and an average decrease of 0.5 percent among national peers.

Exhibits 2-11 through 2-14 provide an overview of placements for children with disabilities in regular early childhood education programs or kindergarten. Percentages in these exhibits display the number of children with disabilities ages 3-5:

- attending a regular early childhood program or kindergarten and receiving the majority of special education and related services inside the regular early childhood program;
- attending a regular early childhood program or kindergarten and receiving the majority of special education and related services outside the regular early childhood program;
- attending a special education program (separate class, separate school, or residential facility); or
- served in another separate environment (home or service provider location) divided by the total number of students with disabilities ages 3-5 reported in October to FLDOE (survey 2).

Exhibit 2-11 shows a three-year comparison of children with disabilities (ages 3-5) in regular early childhood programs or kindergarten receiving services inside the classroom. Children attending a regular early childhood program or kindergarten are those who spend any time in a program that includes at least 50 percent nondisabled children. The percentage decreases by six percent at BCPS over the three-year period, which is in line with the average decrease of 5.2 percent among state peer districts and the average decrease of 5.6 percent across national peer districts. As shown, specifically in 2012-13, 46 percent of children with disabilities (age 3-5) in regular early childhood programs or kindergarten received services inside the classroom, compared to an average of 27.8 percent among state peers and 19.5 percent for national peers; for a total variance of 18.2 percent and 26.5 percent, respectively.

Exhibit 2-12 displays a three-year comparison of children with disabilities (ages 3-5) in regular early childhood programs or kindergarten receiving services outside the classroom. The exhibit shows that, in 2012-13, 1.0 percent of BCPS children with disabilities (ages 3-5) in regular early childhood programs or kindergarten receive services outside the classroom. This is significant in that the peer average is 21.1 percent for state peer and 31.2 percent for national peers. While the percent of ESE children receiving services outside the classroom has increased slightly among peers, BCPS has maintained at 1.0 percent over the three-year period.



Exhibit 2-11
Three-Year Comparison of Children with Disabilities (Ages 3-5)
in Regular Early Childhood Program or Kindergarten Receiving Services
Inside the Classroom
2010-11 through 2012-13 School Years

Florida Peer School District	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	Change
Broward County Public Schools	52.0%	50.0%	46.0%	-6.0%
Duval County Public Schools	24.0%	28.0%	27.0%	3.0%
Hillsborough County Public Schools	16.0%	11.0%	9.0%	-7.0%
Miami-Dade County Public Schools	76.0%	47.0%	35.0%	-41.0%
Orange County Public Schools	5.0%	9.0%	17.0%	12.0%
School District of Palm Beach County	1.0%	5.0%	2.0%	1.0%
Pinellas County Public Schools	76.0%	78.0%	77.0%	1.0%
Peer Average	33.0%	29.7%	27.8%	-5.2%

Source: Florida Department of Education, 2013.

National Peer School District	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	Change
Broward County Public Schools	52.0%	50.0%	46.0%	-6.0%
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	NA	NA	NA	NA
Fairfax County Public Schools	NA	33.9%	NA	NA
Gwinnett County Public Schools	25.1%	19.2%	19.5%	-5.6%
Houston Independent School District	NA	NA	NA	NA
Montgomery County Public Schools	NA	NA	NA	NA
Peer Average	25.1%	26.6%	19.5%	-5.6%

Source: Peer State Databases, 2014.

Exhibit 2-12
Three-Year Comparison of Children with Disabilities (Ages 3-5)
in Regular Early Childhood Program or Kindergarten
Receiving Services Outside the Classroom
2010-11 through 2012-13 School Years

Florida Peer School District	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	Change
Broward County Public Schools	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	0.0%
Duval County Public Schools	23.0%	25.0%	25.0%	2.0%
Hillsborough County Public Schools	40.0%	53.0%	61.0%	21.0%
Miami-Dade County Public Schools	12.0%	15.0%	20.0%	8.0%
Orange County Public Schools	46.0%	24.0%	14.0%	-32.0%
School District of Palm Beach County	2.0%	1.0%	1.0%	-1.0%
Pinellas County Public Schools	3.0%	3.0%	6.0%	3.0%
Peer Average	21.0%	20.2%	21.2%	0.2%

Source: Florida Department of Education, 2013.

National Peer School District	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	Change
Broward County Public Schools	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	0.0%
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	NA	NA	NA	NA
Fairfax County Public Schools	NA	31.5%	NA	NA
Gwinnett County Public Schools	18.1%	29.5%	31.2%	13.1%
Houston Independent School District	NA	NA	NA	NA
Montgomery County Public Schools	NA	NA	NA	NA
Peer Average	18.1%	30.5%	31.2%	13.1%

Source: Peer State Databases, 2014.



Exhibit 2-13 displays a three-year comparison of children with disabilities (ages 3-5) attending a special education program (separate class, separate school, or residential facility). In 2012-13, 48.0 percent of BCPS children with disabilities (ages 3-5) attended a special education program, compared to an average of 48.8 percent across state peer districts and 34.5 percent across national peers. Miami-Dade and Orange County experienced the largest increase in the percent of children with disabilities (ages 3-5) attending a special education program, followed by BCPS at six percent. Data were only available for this exhibit for one national peer; Gwinnett County Public Schools.

Exhibit 2-13
Three-Year Comparison of Children with Disabilities (Ages 3-5)
Attending a Special Education Program (Separate Class,
Separate School, or Residential Facility)
2010-11 through 2012-13 School Years

Florida Peer School District	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	Change
Broward County Public Schools	42.0%	43.0%	48.0%	6.0%
Duval County Public Schools	47.0%	41.0%	43.0%	-4.0%
Hillsborough County Public Schools	37.0%	31.0%	27.0%	-10.0%
Miami-Dade County Public Schools	8.0%	34.0%	41.0%	33.0%
Orange County Public Schools	43.0%	64.0%	68.0%	25.0%
School District of Palm Beach County	98.0%	91.0%	97.0%	-1.0%
Pinellas County Public Schools	21.0%	18.0%	17.0%	-4.0%
Peer Average	42.3%	46.5%	48.8%	6.5%

Source: Florida Department of Education, 2013.

National Peer School District	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	Change
Broward County Public Schools	42.0%	43.0%	48.0%	6.0%
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	NA	NA	NA	NA
Fairfax County Public Schools	NA	NA	NA	NA
Gwinnett County Public Schools	38.4%	37.3%	34.5%	-3.9%
Houston Independent School District	NA	NA	NA	NA
Montgomery County Public Schools	NA	NA	NA	NA
Peer Average	38.4%	37.3%	34.5%	-3.9%

Source: Peer State Databases, 2014.

Exhibit 2-14 is the last in the series of four exhibits that explores placement of children with disabilities in BCPS and peer districts, and displays a three-year comparison of children with disabilities (ages 3-5) served in another separate environment (home or service provider location). The percent of children with disabilities (ages 3-5) served in another separate environment did not change in BCPS from 2010-11 to 2012-13.



Exhibit 2-14
Three-Year Comparison of Children with Disabilities (Ages 3-5)
Served in Another Separate Environment (Home or Service Provider Location)
2010-11 through 2012-13 School Years

Florida Peer School District	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	Change
Broward County Public Schools	5.0%	6.0%	5.0%	0.0%
Duval County Public Schools	6.0%	5.0%	5.0%	-1.0%
Hillsborough County Public Schools	7.0%	5.0%	4.0%	-3.0%
Miami-Dade County Public Schools	3.0%	4.0%	4.0%	1.0%
Orange County Public Schools	6.0%	4.0%	2.0%	-4.0%
School District of Palm Beach County	1.0%	3.0%	1.0%	0.0%
Pinellas County Public Schools	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	0.0%
Peer Average	4.0%	3.7%	2.8%	-1.2%

Source: Florida Department of Education, 2013.

National Peer School District	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	Change
Broward County Public Schools	5.0%	6.0%	5.0%	0.0%
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	NA	NA	NA	NA
Fairfax County Public Schools	NA	NA	NA	NA
Gwinnett County Public Schools	10.5%	14.0%	14.8%	4.3%
Houston Independent School District	NA	NA	NA	NA
Montgomery County Public Schools	NA	NA	NA	NA
Peer Average	10.5%	14.0%	14.8%	4.3%

Source: Peer State Databases, 2014.

For 2012-13, the BCPS rate of 5.0 percent was nearly double the in-state peer average of 2.8 percent. For national peers, data were only available for Gwinnett County Public Schools. As can be seen, Gwinnett County Public Schools had a total percentage of 14.8 percent; approximately three times greater than the percentage for BCPS.

2.4 STUDENT INDICATORS

In addition to staffing levels, types of schools, student enrollment, and student placement, student indicators provide a unique look into BCPS and each peer school district. The following exhibits highlight specific student indicators available for comparison between BCPS and peer districts (such as graduation rate, dropout rate, and postsecondary and employment rates).

Exhibit 2-15 provides a three-year comparison of standard diploma graduation rates for students with disabilities. Note that these rates are calculated as a percentage of the number of students with disabilities who completed their education (received either a standard diploma, GED, special diploma, certificate of completion or special certificate of completion) or dropped out. This graduation rate is calculated based on the total number of students with disabilities who exited school in a given year, rather than using the four-year cohort model described in the NCLB graduation rate.



Exhibit 2-15
Three-Year Comparison of Standard Diploma Graduation Rate
for Students with Disabilities
2009-10 through 2011-12 School Years

Florida Peer School District	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	Change
Broward County Public Schools	54.0%	57.0%	51.0%	-3.0%
Duval County Public Schools	35.0%	38.0%	42.0%	7.0%
Hillsborough County Public Schools	53.0%	53.0%	54.0%	1.0%
Miami-Dade County Public Schools	54.0%	57.0%	52.0%	-2.0%
Orange County Public Schools	82.0%	65.0%	64.0%	-18.0%
School District of Palm Beach County	51.0%	56.0%	55.0%	4.0%
Pinellas County Public Schools	48.0%	50.0%	47.0%	-1.0%
Peer Average	53.8%	53.2%	52.3%	-1.5%

Source: Florida Department of Education, 2013.

National Peer School District	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	Change
Broward County Public Schools	54.0%	57.0%	51.0%	-3.0%
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	NA	43.3%	41.6%	NA
Fairfax County Public Schools	NA	65.0%	66.6%	NA
Gwinnett County Public Schools	50.9%	47.7%	32.5%	-18.4%
Houston Independent School District	53.1%	57.4%	65.0%	11.9%
Montgomery County Public Schools	80.4%	81.0%	62.5%	-17.9%
Peer Average	61.5%	58.9%	53.6%	-7.8%

Source: Peer State Databases, 2014.

The exhibit shows that the standard diploma graduation rate for students with disabilities in BCPS has declined by 3.0 percent over the three-year period. This is slightly different from the state peer average decrease of one percent and the national peer average decrease of 7.8 percent. It can also be determined that the 2011-12 BCPS graduation rate of 51.0 percent remains approximately equal to the state peer graduation rate of 52.3 percent and the national peer graduation rate of 53.6 percent.

Exhibits 2-16 and **2-17** display the federal uniform high school graduation rate for BCPS and peer districts—for students with disabilities and all students, respectively. These rates are calculated differently than the standard diploma graduation rates displayed above. Specifically, beginning with the 2010-11 school year, the U.S. Department of Education adopted a new graduation rate calculation.

This calculation uses the number of first-time ninth graders from four years ago, plus incoming transfer students on the same schedule to graduate, minus students from this population who transferred out or left to enroll in a private school or home education divided into the number of standard diploma graduates [does not include Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) students who are not standard diploma recipients] from the same group.

Based on **Exhibit 2-16**, it can be determined that BCPS exceeds the peer average by approximately six percent in 2011-12. BCPS experienced a nine percent increase in graduation rate, compared to the peer average of 3.3 percent. Only one peer district (Miami-Dade County Public Schools) experienced a decrease in graduation rate. Note that federal uniform graduation rate data were not available for national peer school districts.



Exhibit 2-16
Two-Year Comparison of Federal High School Graduation Rate
for Students with Disabilities
2010-11 through 2011-12 School Years

Florida Peer School District	2010-11	2011-12	Change
Broward County Public Schools	43.0%	52.0%	9.0%
Duval County Public Schools	29.0%	36.0%	7.0%
Hillsborough County Public Schools	41.0%	44.0%	3.0%
Miami-Dade County Public Schools	54.0%	52.0%	-2.0%
Orange County Public Schools	46.0%	49.0%	3.0%
School District of Palm Beach County	53.0%	55.0%	2.0%
Pinellas County Public Schools	35.0%	42.0%	7.0%
Peer Average	43.0%	46.3%	3.3%

Source: Florida Department of Education, 2013.

Exhibit 2-17 shows that BCPS exceeded the state peer average rate of 68.8 percent by 3.2 percent in 2010-11, and exceeded the state peer average rate of 73.3 percent by 2.7 percent in 2011-12. However, BCPS was below the national peer average graduation by 7.5 percent in 2010-11 and by 5.0 percent in 2011-12. BCPS experienced a 4.0 percent increase in graduation rate over the two-year period; whereas the state peer average increase was 4.5 percent and the national peer average increase was 1.5 percent.

Exhibit 2-17
Two-Year Comparison of Federal High School Graduation Rate
for all Students
2010-11 through 2011-12 School Years

Florida Peer School District	2010-11	2011-12	Change
Broward County Public Schools	72.0%	76.0%	4.0%
Duval County Public Schools	63.0%	68.0%	5.0%
Hillsborough County Public Schools	69.0%	73.0%	4.0%
Miami-Dade County Public Schools	71.0%	76.0%	5.0%
Orange County Public Schools	71.0%	74.0%	3.0%
School District of Palm Beach County	74.0%	77.0%	3.0%
Pinellas County Public Schools	65.0%	72.0%	7.0%
Peer Average	68.8%	73.3%	4.5%

Source: Florida Department of Education, 2013.

National Peer School District	2010-11	2011-12	Change
Broward County Public Schools	72.0%	76.0%	4.0%
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	73.5%	76.4%	2.9%
Fairfax County Public Schools	91.4%	91.4%	0.0%
Gwinnett County Public Schools	67.6%	71.0%	3.4%
Houston Independent School District	78.5%	78.8%	0.3%
Montgomery County Public Schools	86.8%	87.4%	0.6%
Peer Average	79.5%	81.0%	1.5%

Source: Peer State Databases, 2014.



Exhibits 2-18 through 2-21 display dropout rates for students with disabilities, all students, students identified as having an emotional or behavioral disability (E/BD), and students identified as having a specific learning disability (SLD) for the 2009-10 through 2011-12 school years. The rates displayed are calculated as the number of students grades 9-12 for whom a dropout withdrawal reason (DNE, W05, W11, W13-W23) was reported, divided by the total enrollment of grades 9-12 students and students who did not enter school as expected (DNEs) as reported at the end of the school year. DNE is defined as any PK-12 student who was expected to attend a school but did not enter as expected for unknown reasons.

Exhibit 2-18 displays a three-year comparison of dropout rates for all students. The BCPS dropout rate for all students stayed the same from 2009-10 to 2011-12, while the state peer average dropout rate decreased by 0.6 percent and the national peer average dropout rate increased by 0.2 percent over the same time period. The BCPS dropout rate is historically lower than both state and national peer averages.

Exhibit 2-18
Three-Year Comparison of Dropout Rate
for all Students
2009-10 through 2011-12 School Years

Florida Peer School District	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	Change
Broward County Public Schools	2.0%	1.0%	2.0%	0.0%
Duval County Public Schools	2.0%	2.0%	3.0%	1.0%
Hillsborough County Public Schools	<1%	<1%	<1%	NA
Miami-Dade County Public Schools	4.0%	4.0%	3.0%	-1.0%
Orange County Public Schools	<1%	1.0%	2.0%	NA
School District of Palm Beach County	3.0%	3.0%	2.0%	-1.0%
Pinellas County Public Schools	2.0%	2.0%	1.0%	-1.0%
Peer Average	2.8%	2.4%	2.2%	-0.6%

Source: Florida Department of Education, 2013.

National Peer School District	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	Change
Broward County Public Schools	2.0%	1.0%	2.0%	0.0%
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	2.8%	2.4%	2.1%	-0.7%
Fairfax County Public Schools	1.9%	1.9%	1.8%	-0.1%
Gwinnett County Public Schools	1.9%	2.3%	NA	NA
Houston Independent School District	2.6%	3.0%	3.3%	0.7%
Montgomery County Public Schools	1.7%	2.1%	2.2%	0.5%
Peer Average	2.2%	2.4%	2.4%	0.2%

Source: Peer State Databases, 2014.

Exhibit 2-19 provides a three-year comparison of dropout rates for students with disabilities. BCPS dropout rates remained below the state and national peer average for all three years. Overall, state and national peer districts experienced a slight decline in dropout rates of 1.2 percent and 0.9 percent, respectively, over the three-year period.

Exhibit 2-20 shows a three-year comparison of dropout rates for E/BD students. The BCPS dropout rate is slightly lower than the peer average rates across all three years. The BCPS rate increased by one percent over the three-year period, in line with the 0.7 percent average increase experienced across state peers. Data for national peer districts were not available for this comparison.



Exhibit 2-19
Three-Year Comparison of Dropout Rate
for Students with Disabilities
2009-10 through 2011-12 School Years

Florida Peer School District	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	Change
Broward County Public Schools	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	0.0%
Duval County Public Schools	4.0%	4.0%	4.0%	0.0%
Hillsborough County Public Schools	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	0.0%
Miami-Dade County Public Schools	7.0%	6.0%	4.0%	-3.0%
Orange County Public Schools	2.0%	2.0%	3.0%	1.0%
School District of Palm Beach County	6.0%	5.0%	4.0%	-2.0%
Pinellas County Public Schools	6.0%	4.0%	3.0%	-3.0%
Peer Average	4.5%	3.8%	3.3%	-1.2%

Source: Florida Department of Education, 2013.

National Peer School District	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	Change
Broward County Public Schools	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	0.0%
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	NA	7.8%	6.0%	NA
Fairfax County Public Schools	1.5%	1.6%	2.4%	0.9%
Gwinnett County Public Schools	3.9%	4.8%	4.3%	0.4%
Houston Independent School District	23.5%	20.6%	20.0%	-3.5%
Montgomery County Public Schools	3.9%	3.0%	3.6%	-0.3%
Peer Average	8.2%	7.6%	7.2%	-0.9%

Source: Peer State Databases, 2014.

Exhibit 2-20
Three-Year Comparison of Dropout Rate
for E/BD Students
2009-10 through 2011-12 School Years

Florida Peer School District	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	Change
Broward County Public Schools	6.0%	6.0%	7.0%	1.0%
Duval County Public Schools	5.0%	5.0%	6.0%	1.0%
Hillsborough County Public Schools	4.0%	4.0%	4.0%	0.0%
Miami-Dade County Public Schools	10.0%	11.0%	8.0%	-2.0%
Orange County Public Schools	3.0%	4.0%	9.0%	6.0%
School District of Palm Beach County	8.0%	8.0%	9.0%	1.0%
Pinellas County Public Schools	9.0%	8.0%	7.0%	-2.0%
Peer Average	6.5%	6.7%	7.2%	0.7%

Source: Florida Department of Education, 2013.

Exhibit 2-21 displays a three-year comparison of dropout rates for SLD students. Like the dropout rate for BCPS E/BD students, the dropout rate for BCPS SLD students increased over the three-year period, although not as drastically. Specifically, the BCPS dropout rate for this group of students increased one percentage point—from two percent to three percent—over the three-year period. Meanwhile, the state peer average dropout rate declined from 4.5 percent to 3.5 percent between 2009-10 and 2011-12. Data for national peer districts were not available for this comparison.



Exhibit 2-21
Three-Year Comparison of Dropout Rate
for SLD Students
2009-10 through 2011-12 School Years

Florida Peer School District	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	Change
Broward County Public Schools	2.0%	2.0%	3.0%	1.0%
Duval County Public Schools	4.0%	4.0%	5.0%	1.0%
Hillsborough County Public Schools	2.0%	1.0%	2.0%	0.0%
Miami-Dade County Public Schools	7.0%	6.0%	3.0%	-4.0%
Orange County Public Schools	1.0%	2.0%	3.0%	2.0%
School District of Palm Beach County	6.0%	6.0%	5.0%	-1.0%
Pinellas County Public Schools	7.0%	3.0%	3.0%	-4.0%
Peer Average	4.5%	3.7%	3.5%	-1.0%

Source: Florida Department of Education, 2013.

A comparison of post school outcomes is provided in **Exhibits 2-22 through 2-24**. The data in these exhibits are from the Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program (FETPIP), which is an interagency data collection system that obtains follow-up data on former students. The most recent FETPIP data available reports on students who exited Florida public schools during the 2010-11 school year. The exhibits display the percentage of students with disabilities exiting school in 2008-09 through 2010-11 who were found during the fall/winter following the school year and were:

- enrolled in higher education;
- enrolled in higher education or competitively employed; and
- enrolled in higher education or some other postsecondary education or training program or competitively employed or employed in some other employment.

Exhibit 2-22 displays the three-year comparison of the percentage of students with disabilities in higher education. BCPS realized a rate higher than the state peer average across all three years. While BCPS experienced a three-year change of 6.0 percent, state peer districts averaged a three-year change of one percent. Additionally, compared to the average across the three national peers where data were available, the BCPS lags behind by 12.6 percent in 2010-11.

Exhibit 2-23 shows the three-year comparison of the percentage of students with disabilities in higher education or competitively employed. As can be seen, 47.0 percent of BCPS students with disabilities continued to higher education or were competitively employed in 2010-11. This represents an increase of six percent since 2008-09. Notably, the BCPS rate has remained between approximately four to nine percent higher than the state peer average across the three years. However, BCPS lags behind the national peer average by between 7.5 percent and nearly 20 percent in 2009-10 and 2010-11, respectively.



Exhibit 2-22
Three-Year Comparison of Students with Disabilities
in Higher Education
2008-09 through 2010-11 School Years

Florida Peer School District	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	Change
Broward County Public Schools	32.0%	34.0%	38.0%	6.0%
Duval County Public Schools	18.0%	26.0%	21.0%	3.0%
Hillsborough County Public Schools	27.0%	28.0%	24.0%	-3.0%
Miami-Dade County Public Schools	34.0%	34.0%	38.0%	4.0%
Orange County Public Schools	29.0%	30.0%	29.0%	0.0%
School District of Palm Beach County	26.0%	27.0%	32.0%	6.0%
Pinellas County Public Schools	27.0%	22.0%	23.0%	-4.0%
Peer Average	26.8%	27.8%	27.8%	1.0%

Source: Florida Department of Education, 2013.

National Peer School District	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	Change
Broward County Public Schools	32.0%	34.0%	38.0%	6.0%
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	NA	NA	60.0%	NA
Fairfax County Public Schools	NA	NA	60.6%	NA
Gwinnett County Public Schools	NA	27.2%	31.1%	NA
Houston Independent School District	NA	NA	NA	NA
Montgomery County Public Schools	NA	NA	NA	NA
Peer Average	NA	27.2%	50.6%	NA

Source: Peer State Databases, 2014.

Exhibit 2-23
Three-Year Comparison of Students with Disabilities
in Higher Education or Competitively Employed
2008-09 through 2010-11 School Years

Florida Peer School District	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	Change
Broward County Public Schools	41.0%	44.0%	47.0%	6.0%
Duval County Public Schools	30.0%	37.0%	32.0%	2.0%
Hillsborough County Public Schools	37.0%	38.0%	35.0%	-2.0%
Miami-Dade County Public Schools	41.0%	42.0%	44.0%	3.0%
Orange County Public Schools	38.0%	42.0%	42.0%	4.0%
School District of Palm Beach County	38.0%	39.0%	42.0%	4.0%
Pinellas County Public Schools	40.0%	34.0%	34.0%	-6.0%
Peer Average	37.3%	38.7%	38.2%	0.8%

National Peer School District	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	Change
Broward County Public Schools	41.0%	44.0%	47.0%	6.0%
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	NA	NA	66.7%	NA
Fairfax County Public Schools	NA	NA	74.8%	NA
Gwinnett County Public Schools	NA	51.5%	59.7%	NA
Houston Independent School District	NA	NA	NA	NA
Montgomery County Public Schools	NA	NA	NA	NA
Peer Average	NA	51.5%	67.1%	NA

Source: Florida Department of Education, 2013 and Peer State Databases, 2014.



Exhibit 2-24 shows a three-year comparison of the percentage of students with disabilities in any employment or continuing education. As shown, BCPS exceeded the state peer average rate across all three years, and experienced an increase of 5.0 percent over time. The national peer average rate of 79.4 percent exceeds the BCPS rate by 21.4 percent in 2010-11. Only limited data were available for this exhibit for national comparison districts.

In addition to graduation rate, dropout rate, and postsecondary outcomes for students with disabilities, the state provides data on discipline for students with disabilities. Discipline rates for students with disabilities and nondisabled students are calculated by dividing the number of students who received out- of-school suspensions or expulsions totaling more than 10 days by total-year enrollment as reported at the end of the school year (survey 5).

Exhibit 2-24
Three-Year Comparison of Students with Disabilities
in any Employment or Continuing Education
2008-09 through 2010-11 School Years

Florida Peer School District	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	Change
Broward County Public Schools	53.0%	55.0%	58.0%	5.0%
Duval County Public Schools	38.0%	46.0%	41.0%	3.0%
Hillsborough County Public Schools	51.0%	50.0%	46.0%	-5.0%
Miami-Dade County Public Schools	57.0%	61.0%	62.0%	5.0%
Orange County Public Schools	54.0%	57.0%	56.0%	2.0%
School District of Palm Beach County	50.0%	50.0%	56.0%	6.0%
Pinellas County Public Schools	53.0%	44.0%	52.0%	-1.0%
Peer Average	50.5%	51.3%	52.2%	1.7%

Source: Florida Department of Education, 2013.

National Peer School District	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	Change
Broward County Public Schools	53.0%	55.0%	58.0%	5.0%
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	NA	NA	80.0%	NA
Fairfax County Public Schools	NA	NA	82.1%	NA
Gwinnett County Public Schools	NA	77.1%	75.1%	NA
Houston Independent School District	NA	NA	NA	NA
Montgomery County Public Schools	95.0%	78.5%	80.4%	-14.5%
Peer Average	95.0%	77.8%	79.4%	-15.5%

Source: Peer State Databases, 2014.

Exhibit 2-25 shows a three-year comparison of the percentage of students with disabilities suspended/expelled for greater than ten days at BCPS and peer districts. As can be seen, the percentage in BCPS is just slightly lower than the state peer average, and slightly higher than the national peer average. In BCPS the suspension/expulsion rate remained at 1.0 percent—unchanged across all three years.

Exhibit 2-26 shows a three-year comparison of nondisabled students suspended/expelled for greater than ten days. The BCPS suspension/expulsion rate for nondisabled students was also one percent across all three years. BCPS rates are similar to both state and national peers.



Exhibit 2-25
Three-Year Comparison of Students with Disabilities
Suspended/Expelled for Greater than 10 Days
2009-10 through 2011-12 School Years

Florida Peer School District	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	Change
Broward County Public Schools	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	0.0%
Duval County Public Schools	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	0.0%
Hillsborough County Public Schools	2.0%	2.0%	1.0%	-1.0%
Miami-Dade County Public Schools	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	0.0%
Orange County Public Schools	2.0%	2.0%	1.0%	-1.0%
School District of Palm Beach County	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	0.0%
Pinellas County Public Schools	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	0.0%
Peer Average	1.7%	1.7%	1.3%	-0.3%

Source: Florida Department of Education, 2013.

National Peer School District	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	Change
Broward County Public Schools	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	0.0%
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	NA	0.1%	0.2%	NA
Fairfax County Public Schools	NA	NA	NA	NA
Gwinnett County Public Schools	0.0%	*	NA	NA
Houston Independent School District	NA	NA	NA	NA
Montgomery County Public Schools	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
Peer Average	0.0%	0.1%	0.2%	0.2%

Source: Peer State Databases, 2014.

Exhibit 2-26
Three-Year Comparison of Nondisabled Students
Suspended/Expelled for Greater than 10 Days
2009-10 through 2011-12 School Years

Florida Peer School District	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	Change
Broward County Public Schools	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	0.0%
Duval County Public Schools	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	0.0%
Hillsborough County Public Schools	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	0.0%
Miami-Dade County Public Schools	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	0.0%
Orange County Public Schools	2.0%	2.0%	1.0%	-1.0%
School District of Palm Beach County	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	0.0%
Pinellas County Public Schools	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	0.0%
Peer Average	1.2%	1.2%	1.0%	-0.2%

Source: Florida Department of Education, 2013.

National Peer School District	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	Change
Broward County Public Schools	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	0.0%
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	NA	NA	NA	NA
Fairfax County Public Schools	NA	NA	NA	NA
Gwinnett County Public Schools	NA	NA	NA	NA
Houston Independent School District	NA	NA	NA	NA
Montgomery County Public Schools	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
Peer Average	NA	NA	NA	NA

Source: Peer State Databases, 2014.



The following three exhibits provide information related to the evaluation and IEP processes, and provide additional data from the Florida Department of Education's LEA Profile. **Exhibit 2-27** shows a three-year comparison of the percentage of students evaluated within 60 days of receipt of parent consent. The percentage displayed is calculated by dividing the number of students who were evaluated within 60 days of receipt of parent consent by the total number of students with parental consent to be evaluated in a given school year. In 2011-12, BCPS evaluated 99 percent of students—in line with the 98 percent state and 99.2 percent national average.

Exhibit 2-27
Three-Year Comparison of Students Evaluated
within 60 Days of Receipt of Parent Consent
2009-10 through 2011-12 School Years

Florida Peer School District	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	Change
Broward County Public Schools	98.0%	98.0%	99.0%	1.0%
Duval County Public Schools	99.0%	100.0%	100.0%	1.0%
Hillsborough County Public Schools	96.0%	96.0%	96.0%	0.0%
Miami-Dade County Public Schools	96.0%	97.0%	96.0%	0.0%
Orange County Public Schools	97.0%	99.0%	100.0%	3.0%
School District of Palm Beach County	98.0%	98.0%	98.0%	0.0%
Pinellas County Public Schools	99.0%	97.0%	98.0%	-1.0%
Peer Average	97.5%	97.8%	98.0%	0.5%

Source: Florida Department of Education, 2013.

National Peer School District	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	Change
Broward County Public Schools	98.0%	98.0%	99.0%	1.0%
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	NA	NA	NA	NA
Fairfax County Public Schools	NA	NA	NA	NA
Gwinnett County Public Schools	97.7%	97.8%	98.9%	1.2%
Houston Independent School District	NA	NA	NA	NA
Montgomery County Public Schools	96.0%	97.6%	99.4%	3.4%
Peer Average	96.9%	97.7%	99.2%	2.3%

Source: Peer State Databases, 2014.

2.5 PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parent involvement is one of the areas of service that Evergreen was tasked with evaluating. This brief section provides comparison data on the parent involvement rate in BCPS and in peer districts based on data collected and distributed by the Florida Department of Education and other state departments of education. Specifically, **Exhibit 2-28** shows a three-year comparison, by grade, of the parent involvement rate. The parent involvement rate is the number of parents who perceive that schools facilitated parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities, divided by the total number of responding parents. These data are reported for parents of preschool children with disabilities and parents of children with disabilities in grades K-12.



At the preschool level, the parent involvement rate in BCPS was higher than the state peer average across all three years, with the most significant positive variance of nine percent occurring in 2011-12. Preschool data were not available for national peer school districts, and therefore a comparison could not be made.

Exhibit 2-28
Comparison of Parent Involvement Rate
2009-10 through 2011-12 School Years

Florida Peer School District	Preschool			Change	Grades K-12			Change
	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12		2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	
Broward County Public Schools	53.0%	59.0%	57.0%	4.0%	35.0%	38.0%	39.0%	4.0%
Duval County Public Schools	39.0%	47.0%	39.0%	0.0%	28.0%	38.0%	32.0%	4.0%
Hillsborough County Public Schools	64.0%	64.0%	56.0%	-8.0%	43.0%	32.0%	31.0%	-12.0%
Miami-Dade County Public Schools	50.0%	57.0%	54.0%	4.0%	39.0%	35.0%	38.0%	-1.0%
Orange County Public Schools	42.0%	51.0%	46.0%	4.0%	30.0%	29.0%	48.0%	18.0%
School District of Palm Beach County	49.0%	<1%	39.0%	-10.0%	28.0%	21.0%	42.0%	14.0%
Pinellas County Public Schools	50.0%	53.0%	58.0%	8.0%	41.0%	27.0%	45.0%	4.0%
Peer Average	49.0%	54.4%	48.7%	-0.3%	34.8%	30.3%	39.3%	4.5%

Source: Florida Department of Education, 2013.

National Peer School District	Preschool			Change	Grades K-12			Change
	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12		2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	
Broward County Public Schools	53.0%	59.0%	57.0%	4.0%	35.0%	38.0%	39.0%	4.0%
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	44.0%	NA	NA
Fairfax County Public Schools	NA	NA	NA	NA	79.0%	84.0%	69.4%	-9.6%
Gwinnett County Public Schools	NA	NA	NA	NA	32.0%	32.0%	44.0%	12.0%
Houston Independent School District	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Montgomery County Public Schools	NA	NA	NA	NA	35.0%	41.0%	43.0%	8.0%
Peer Average	NA	NA	NA	NA	48.7%	50.3%	52.1%	3.5%

Source: Peer State Databases, 2014.

At the K-12 level, the parent involvement rate in BCPS was slightly higher than the state peer average across two of the three years (2009-10 and 2010-11), and just below the state peer average rate in 2011-12. Meanwhile, the national peer average was 52.1 percent in 2011-12, 13.1 percent higher than the rate in BCPS. Dating back to 2009-10, there has been a significant negative variance between the BCPS rates and the average national peer district rates.

2.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter presents a variety of available data on BCPS and peer districts. In some cases, data were not available on areas of interest for this study. Therefore, Evergreen reached out to peer districts to collect additional data. Evergreen carefully collected these additional data to ensure validity and accuracy, and presents the data as appropriate throughout the remainder of the report. Comparison data are used throughout this report to support findings, commendations, and recommendations.



Evergreen intends this chapter of the report to provide a cursory overview of the process for collecting and using peer comparison data, and not a comprehensive comparison of all ESE operations in BCPS and in peer districts.



CHAPTER 3: ESE SURVEY RESULTS



3.0 ESE SURVEY RESULTS

Evergreen Solutions designed and administered two stakeholder surveys as part of the External Independent Review of ESE Services for the Broward County Public Schools—one for BCPS staff (e.g. administrators, teachers, support staff) and one for parents of students with disabilities. These comprehensive evaluation surveys were developed to obtain perceptions of stakeholders regarding ESE services in BCPS. The surveys were aimed at gathering feedback on ESE services overall, as well as feedback on more specific aspects of ESE services provided.

Appendices A and B to this report provide Evergreen’s survey results.

Specific topics covered by the surveys include:

- equity and expectations for ESE students with disabilities;
- IEP planning, accommodations, and participation;
- continuum of services and placements;
- least restrictive environment;
- teacher collaborative planning and resources;
- ESE training and professional development;
- ESE instruction and interventions;
- fidelity and availability of ESE services;
- behavioral supports;
- ESE student progress monitoring;
- response to Intervention;
- parent and community engagement;
- ESE communications;
- transportation of students with disabilities;
- instructional and assistive technology;
- ESE student referrals;
- postsecondary preparation;
- curriculum; and
- quality and effectiveness of ESE services.

The remainder of this chapter discusses in more detail the development, timing, and results of each of the two surveys administered as part of this study. Survey results are also used throughout the this report to support findings, commendations, and recommendations, as well as to provide background and context in explaining ESE programs and services delivered by BCPS.

This chapter is divided into the following subsections:

- 3.1 BCPS Staff Evaluation Survey
- 3.2 BCPS Parent Evaluation Survey
- 3.3 Free-Response Results



3.1 BCPS STAFF EVALUATION SURVEY

The development of the BCPS Staff Evaluation Survey, as well as creation of the methodology for survey dissemination, started in late December 2013 and finalized in early January 2014. Survey questions were pulled from Evergreen's survey database or developed to address specific components of the BCPS ESE program. The draft survey was sent to the BCPS for review and approval as part of the development process. Upon approval, the evaluation survey was finalized and delivered via email to stakeholders on January 24, 2014, with an extended closure date of March 11, 2014. Thus, staff had a total of 46 days to participate in the survey.

The BCPS staff online evaluation survey targeted a number of district stakeholder groups to ensure that feedback was diverse and not skewed based on the perceptions of any one particular group. The survey groups targeted included:

- district and area administrators;
- district and area program specialists, behavior analysts, and other similar positions providing direct support to schools;
- school administrators;
- non-instructional student support services staff (e.g., guidance counselors, social workers, and psychologists);
- special education teachers;
- other special education service providers/therapists (e.g., Speech-Language Pathologist, Occupational Therapist, Physical Therapist, Orientation and Mobility Instructor);
- general education teachers;
- paraprofessionals; and
- other BCPS staff.

In order to access the survey, stakeholders were sent an invitation email with a web link to the survey website. Evergreen uses QuestionPro (<http://questionpro.com>) survey software as a platform to design, distribute, and collect survey responses. District-level employees were routed to a slightly different set of survey statements than school-based staff; the only difference being the wording of the statements to account for either school-based or district level assignment. For example, for school-based staff, Survey Statement #6 stated "My school's administration promotes equal opportunities for all students and clearly communicates the expectation that all students will learn and succeed." In contrast, the comparable district-level staff survey statement read "BCPS promotes equal opportunities for all students and clearly communicates the expectation that all students will learn and succeed."



The first four questions of the staff survey were demographic, and served to provide data that would allow Evergreen to disaggregate survey results by position, primary grade level, and number of ESE students served. Overall, the staff survey included these four demographic questions, 39 survey statements rated on a six-point agree/disagree Likert scale, 6 questions rated on a four point scale (“Improving,” “Staying the Same,” “Declining,” and “No Opinion”), and one question for free response feedback; for a total of 50 survey items. The online evaluation survey was sent to approximately 16,970 staff. In total, 5,024 stakeholders participated in the ESE online staff evaluation survey, for a total completion rate of 29.6 percent.

Evergreen provides survey results disaggregated by position in **Appendix A** to allow more specific conclusions to be drawn from the results. Reporting in this manner strengthens Evergreen’s findings, recommendations, and commendations. Results of the survey were available to Evergreen’s Evaluation Team in real-time throughout the survey period, and were compiled and shared with Evergreen’s Evaluation Team once the survey closed.

Below we provide a high-level analysis of survey results, followed by a more granular analysis of results by stakeholder group. It should be noted that when “levels of agreement” or “agreement” with a statement is discussed, Evergreen is referring to the sum of the percentages of respondents who indicated either “agree” or “strongly agree.” Similarly, when “levels of disagreement” or “disagreement” with a statement is discussed, Evergreen is referring to the sum of the percentages of respondents who indicated either “disagree” or “strongly disagree.”

General highlights from the district-level staff (district administrators and district program specialists) survey results include the following:

- The majority of survey respondents indicated positive feedback (agree/strongly agree) in the following areas:
 - promotion of equal opportunities for all students and communication of expectations (63.6 percent of district administrators and 76.1 percent of district program specialists);
 - encouragement of students with disabilities to participate in all activities (81.8 percent of district administrators and 64.2 percent of district program specialists);
 - ease of use of the EasyIEP system (45.5 percent of district administrators and 69.2 percent of district program specialists); and
 - parent outreach (55.5 percent of district administrators and 77.2 percent of district program specialists).
- Indications of possible weaknesses in BCPS ESE services were identified in the following areas:
 - training available to general education teachers to support ESE students (44.4 percent of district administrators and 51.7 percent of district program specialists); and



- cultivation of community partnerships benefiting students with disabilities (55.5 percent of district administrators and 55.8 percent of district program specialists indicated “Neutral” or “Not Applicable,” indicating possible weaknesses in awareness or existence of these types of partnerships).

General highlights from the school-based staff survey results include the following:

- The majority of survey respondents overwhelmingly indicated positive feedback (agree/strongly agree) in the following areas:
 - promotion of equal opportunity and clarity of related communication for all students by school administrators (76.1 percent or more across all stakeholder groups);
 - encouragement of students with disabilities to participate in all activities (79.4 percent or more across all stakeholder groups);
 - general education curriculum supports provided to students with disabilities placed in the regular classroom (57.8 percent or more across all stakeholder groups);
 - training received on how to work collaboratively with other teachers to serve shared students with disabilities (58.0 percent or more across all stakeholder groups);
 - skills and knowledge of staff in providing effective services to students with disabilities (66.9 percent or more across all stakeholder groups); and
 - delivery of all ESE services required by IEPs (57.7 percent or more across all stakeholder groups).
- Indications of possible weaknesses in BCPS ESE services were identified in the following areas:
 - preparation of middle and high school students with disabilities for postsecondary employment and education or training when they graduate or age out (56.4 percent or more indicated “Neutral” or “No Opinion,” indicating possible weaknesses in awareness of BCPS transition programs); and
 - participation of middle and high school students with disabilities in their IEP team meetings (53.8 percent or more indicated “Neutral” or “No Opinion,” including special education providers and ESE teachers).

Disaggregated survey results provide for a closer examination of perceptions by survey respondent group, and allow evaluators to identify strengths or weaknesses of BCPS from the perspective of these unique groups. Many of the survey results are used throughout this report to support specific findings and recommendations. The following exhibits provide a sampling of the disaggregated survey results.



Exhibit 3-1 displays survey results regarding effectiveness of collaboration between ESE central office staff and school administrators in delivering special education services. As can be seen, across the nine stakeholder groups, two experienced agreement levels among respondents of greater than 60 percent and six groups experienced agreement levels of between 41.7 percent and 47.8 percent. Notably, 41.7 percent of district administrators disagreed with this survey statement, compared to 33.4 percent that agreed.

Exhibit 3-1
Evergreen Survey Statement on
District to School Relationships

Survey Statement: ESE central office staff work effectively with school administrators to ensure delivery of special education services.						
Survey Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
District Staff						
District Administrator	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%	25.0%	16.7%	8.3%
District Program Specialist	17.6%	42.6%	13.2%	13.2%	1.5%	11.8%
School-based Staff						
School Administrator	16.7%	53.7%	17.6%	8.3%	3.2%	0.5%
Non-Instructional Support	10.2%	33.5%	20.5%	9.7%	5.0%	21.1%
Special Education Teacher	13.7%	34.1%	23.5%	14.1%	7.3%	7.3%
Special Education Provider	9.1%	38.0%	33.2%	11.8%	3.7%	4.3%
General Education Teacher	13.0%	28.7%	26.3%	7.7%	4.8%	19.6%
Paraprofessional	16.6%	30.6%	20.8%	6.8%	3.3%	21.8%
Other	14.2%	31.5%	22.7%	8.8%	6.0%	16.7%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.

Exhibit 3-2 displays survey results regarding student participation in school activities (elective courses, extracurricular clubs, field trips, and other special activities). Notably, the majority of all survey groups agreed with this survey statement. Specifically, all survey groups had agreement levels of 64.2 percent or more, with seven of the survey groups experiencing agreement levels of 80 percent or more. Overall, school administrators display the highest percentage of agreement with this statement, at 100 percent agreement, followed by 91.6 percent of general education teachers who agreed with this statement.

Exhibit 3-3 shows results for the survey statement “I am an active participant and provide valuable input during the IEP team meetings I attend.” Low levels of agreement exist across the district administrator and paraprofessional groups, where only 36.4 percent of district administrators and 18.3 percent of paraprofessionals agreed with the statement. However, it should be noted that a high percentage of respondents in these groups responded Neutral/Not Applicable (63.6 percent and 70.0 percent, respectively) and disagreement was very low. This is most likely due to the fact that these stakeholder groups do not participate in IEP meetings. The remaining seven survey groups displayed agreement levels of 62.3 percent or more, with a high of 96.2 percent for the special education provider survey group, followed by 95.4 percent for special education teachers.



Exhibit 3-2 Evergreen Survey Statement on Student Participation

Survey Statement: Students with disabilities in my school are welcomed and encouraged to participate in all activities, including elective courses, extracurricular clubs, field trips, and other special activities. [For district staff, students across the district are welcomed and encouraged...]						
Survey Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
District Staff						
District Administrator	27.3%	54.5%	0.0%	9.1%	0.0%	9.1%
District Program Specialist	20.9%	43.3%	14.9%	10.4%	1.5%	9.0%
School-based Staff						
School Administrator	86.6%	13.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Non-Instructional Support	59.4%	30.4%	5.0%	0.3%	0.6%	4.4%
Special Education Teacher	47.0%	36.7%	6.8%	5.9%	1.3%	2.4%
Special Education Provider	48.1%	39.6%	4.8%	2.7%	1.1%	3.7%
General Education Teacher	51.6%	40.0%	5.3%	1.2%	1.0%	0.9%
Paraprofessional	43.5%	35.9%	8.5%	3.9%	2.9%	5.2%
Other	57.9%	30.8%	4.4%	1.6%	1.3%	4.1%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.

Exhibit 3-3 Evergreen Survey Statement on IEP Meeting Participation

Survey Statement: I am an active participant and provide valuable input during the IEP team meetings I attend.						
Survey Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
District Staff						
District Administrator	18.2%	18.2%	9.1%	0.0%	0.0%	54.5%
District Program Specialist	32.8%	37.3%	9.0%	0.0%	0.0%	20.9%
School-based Staff						
School Administrator	28.8%	33.5%	10.2%	2.8%	0.9%	23.7%
Non-Instructional Support	46.1%	26.2%	6.4%	1.7%	1.7%	18.0%
Special Education Teacher	71.2%	24.2%	2.1%	0.6%	0.6%	1.3%
Special Education Provider	80.1%	16.1%	1.1%	0.0%	1.1%	1.6%
General Education Teacher	27.7%	48.1%	12.1%	3.7%	2.1%	6.3%
Paraprofessional	8.8%	9.5%	9.5%	3.7%	8.1%	60.5%
Other	44.5%	19.1%	7.5%	4.1%	3.1%	21.6%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.

Exhibit 3-4 displays survey results regarding dismissal of students from ESE services. Specifically, when presented with the statement “Students with disabilities who no longer need direct special education services are dismissed from ESE,” the majority of respondents in four survey groups agreed with this statement. These four groups include school administrators (71.0 percent agree/strongly agree); special education providers (72.0 percent agree/strongly agree); non-instructional support staff (53.0 percent agree/strongly agree); and special education teachers (55.2 percent agree/strongly agree). Across four survey groups (district administrators, district specialists, general education teachers, and paraprofessionals), the majority of respondents responded Neutral/Not Applicable, indicating that these groups may not be aware of the process for or timeliness of dismissal of students from ESE services.



Exhibit 3-4
Evergreen Survey Statement on
Dismissal from ESE Services

Survey Statement: Students with disabilities who no longer need direct special education services are dismissed from ESE.						
Survey Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
District Staff						
District Administrator	11.1%	11.1%	55.6%	0.0%	0.0%	22.2%
District Program Specialist	6.2%	32.3%	27.7%	10.8%	3.1%	20.0%
School-based Staff						
School Administrator	28.4%	42.6%	10.8%	6.9%	2.0%	9.3%
Non-Instructional Support	19.0%	34.0%	20.5%	8.1%	4.6%	13.8%
Special Education Teacher	18.9%	36.3%	21.7%	7.6%	2.5%	12.9%
Special Education Provider	25.1%	46.9%	12.8%	7.8%	1.7%	5.6%
General Education Teacher	12.3%	32.7%	32.5%	4.0%	1.5%	17.1%
Paraprofessional	7.2%	18.5%	21.9%	4.5%	4.5%	43.4%
Other	16.6%	30.8%	21.5%	6.6%	3.8%	20.8%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.

Exhibit 3-5 provides Evergreen’s survey results for the survey statement “My school provides outreach to encourage parents of students with disabilities to participate in school programs, IEP team meetings, and/or other activities. [For district staff, BCPS provides outreach to parents...].” As can be seen, across all survey groups the majority of stakeholders agree with this statement. Agreement levels ranged from a low of 55.5 percent for district administrators to a high of 93.7 percent for school administrators.

Exhibit 3-5
Evergreen Survey Statement on
Parent Outreach

Survey Statement: My school provides outreach to encourage parents of students with disabilities to participate in school programs, IEP team meetings, and/or other activities. [For district staff, BCPS provides outreach to parents...]						
Survey Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
District Staff						
District Administrator	33.3%	22.2%	11.1%	11.1%	11.1%	11.1%
District Program Specialist	13.6%	63.6%	7.6%	7.6%	0.0%	7.6%
School-based Staff						
School Administrator	48.1%	45.6%	3.4%	1.5%	0.0%	1.5%
Non-Instructional Support	36.6%	40.4%	12.5%	4.4%	0.6%	5.5%
Special Education Teacher	33.9%	46.0%	11.2%	6.0%	2.0%	1.0%
Special Education Provider	40.2%	41.3%	10.6%	4.5%	1.1%	2.2%
General Education Teacher	24.2%	43.7%	19.0%	3.8%	1.9%	7.3%
Paraprofessional	22.6%	44.0%	12.4%	2.6%	2.3%	16.2%
Other	37.4%	36.3%	11.1%	2.8%	1.7%	10.7%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.



Exhibit 3-6 discusses transportation services for students with disabilities. For this statement, respondents provided feedback on whether or not BCPS ensures that delays do not occur in providing transportation as a related service once an IEP team determines it is needed. Feedback was mixed among survey groups, but in all cases a higher percentage of respondents agreed with the survey statement than disagreed with the statement. Agreement levels ranged from a high of 55.4 percent for school administrators to a low of 30.3 percent for general education teachers. Conversely, levels of disagreement ranged from a high of 24.5 percent for school administrators to a low of 4.5 percent for general education teachers. It should be noted that a high percentage (65.1 percent) of general education teachers responded Neutral/Not Applicable.

Exhibit 3-6
Evergreen Survey Statement on
Transportation Services

Survey Statement: BCPS ensures that there is no delay in providing transportation as a related service once an IEP team determines it is needed.						
Survey Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
District Staff						
District Administrator	11.1%	33.3%	22.2%	11.1%	11.1%	11.1%
District Program Specialist	0.0%	37.9%	25.8%	15.2%	6.1%	15.2%
School-based Staff						
School Administrator	16.7%	38.7%	17.2%	19.1%	5.4%	2.9%
Non-Instructional Support	15.2%	31.2%	20.4%	9.9%	4.7%	18.7%
Special Education Teacher	14.7%	35.1%	21.2%	11.2%	5.8%	12.0%
Special Education Provider	8.5%	23.7%	26.6%	12.4%	2.3%	26.6%
General Education Teacher	9.3%	21.0%	29.0%	2.6%	1.9%	36.1%
Paraprofessional	17.3%	28.6%	16.2%	3.8%	2.6%	31.6%
Other	13.1%	26.2%	20.3%	11.0%	5.5%	23.8%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.

Similar to the previous exhibit, **Exhibit 3-7** provides feedback on transportation services for students with disabilities. The exhibit provides survey results for the statement “BCPS ensures that bus rides for students placed in other schools for specialized services (e.g., InD, ASD, DHH, E/BD cluster sites) are of reasonable length.” The majority of survey respondents responded Neutral/Not Applicable across six of the nine survey groups. When Neutral/Not Applicable responses are not considered, eight of the nine survey groups display higher levels of agreement than disagreement; the only group where this is not the case is for district administrators, where the level of agreement (22.2 percent) was equal to the level of disagreement (22.2 percent).

Exhibit 3-8 provides survey results on training for school and district leaders on meeting the needs of students with disabilities. As can be seen, 33.3 percent of district administrators agreed with the survey statement, compared to 22.2 percent that disagreed; 32.8 percent of district program specialists agreed with this statement and 34.5 disagreed; 55.9 percent of school administrators agreed with this statement and 22.4 percent disagreed; 37.5 percent of non-instructional support staff agreed with this statement and 21.4 disagreed; 36.0 percent of special education teachers agreed with this statement and 29.6 percent disagreed; 31.3 percent of special



education teachers agreed with this statement and 32.5 percent disagreed; 35.3 percent of general education teachers agreed with this statement and 20.0 percent disagreed; 33.7 percent of paraprofessionals agreed with this statement and 10.9 percent disagreed; and 43.7 percent of other staff agreed with this statement and 22.4 percent disagreed.

Exhibit 3-7
Evergreen Survey Statement on
Bus Ride Times

Survey Statement: BCPS ensures that bus rides for students placed in other schools for specialized services (e.g., InD, ASD, DHH, E/BD cluster sites) are of reasonable length.						
Survey Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
District Staff						
District Administrator	11.1%	11.1%	44.4%	11.1%	11.1%	11.1%
District Program Specialist	1.5%	32.3%	30.8%	13.8%	7.7%	13.8%
School-based Staff						
School Administrator	18.4%	35.9%	19.4%	11.2%	7.3%	7.8%
Non-Instructional Support	11.8%	25.4%	25.4%	4.9%	4.6%	27.7%
Special Education Teacher	12.6%	31.1%	25.5%	6.8%	4.5%	19.7%
Special Education Provider	6.2%	19.8%	28.8%	5.1%	2.8%	37.3%
General Education Teacher	8.7%	19.4%	30.2%	1.4%	1.4%	38.8%
Paraprofessional	13.2%	23.0%	17.7%	3.8%	1.9%	40.4%
Other	10.5%	23.7%	24.4%	5.2%	5.2%	31.0%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.

Exhibit 3-8
Evergreen Survey Statement on
Leadership Training

Survey Statement: School and district leaders receive sufficient training to support teachers in meeting the needs of students with disabilities.						
Survey Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
District Staff						
District Administrator	22.2%	11.1%	33.3%	22.2%	0.0%	11.1%
District Program Specialist	4.9%	27.9%	31.1%	27.9%	6.6%	1.6%
School-based Staff						
School Administrator	16.8%	39.1%	19.3%	18.8%	3.6%	2.5%
Non-Instructional Support	10.0%	27.5%	29.9%	16.0%	5.4%	11.2%
Special Education Teacher	10.3%	25.7%	26.8%	17.8%	11.8%	7.5%
Special Education Provider	4.1%	27.2%	28.4%	27.2%	5.3%	7.7%
General Education Teacher	8.8%	26.5%	27.1%	12.7%	7.3%	17.7%
Paraprofessional	12.6%	21.1%	26.7%	7.3%	3.6%	28.7%
Other	11.6%	32.1%	23.5%	13.0%	9.4%	10.5%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.



Exhibit 3-9 displays results for the survey statement “Teachers and administrators in my school receive sufficient support regarding curriculum for students with disabilities. [For district staff, schools and staff across the district....]” Of the nine stakeholder groups, two groups indicated higher levels of disagreement than agreement with this statement. Specifically, 22.2 percent of district administrators agreed with this statement, compared to 33.3 percent that disagreed; and 33.8 percent of district program specialists agreed with this statement, compared to 37.1 percent that disagreed. Across all other groups, the percentage of respondents agreeing with this statement was nearly double, or more, than the percentage that disagreed. For instance, 67.2 percent of school administrators agreed with the statement, compared to just 18.0 percent that disagreed. Further, 50.6 percent of special education teachers agreed with this statement, compared to 27.1 percent that disagreed.

Exhibit 3-9
Evergreen Survey Statement on
Support for Teachers and Administrators

Survey Statement: Teachers and administrators in my school receive sufficient support regarding curriculum for students with disabilities. [For district staff, schools and staff across the district....]						
Survey Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
District Staff						
District Administrator	11.1%	11.1%	33.3%	33.3%	0.0%	11.1%
District Program Specialist	4.8%	29.0%	25.8%	32.3%	4.8%	3.2%
School-based Staff						
School Administrator	22.6%	44.6%	14.9%	14.9%	3.1%	0.0%
Non-Instructional Support	14.8%	32.9%	24.8%	13.6%	6.6%	7.3%
Special Education Teacher	15.2%	35.4%	20.2%	17.5%	9.6%	2.1%
Special Education Provider	7.7%	35.5%	25.4%	19.5%	4.7%	7.1%
General Education Teacher	11.2%	33.5%	25.5%	16.1%	9.2%	4.4%
Paraprofessional	14.5%	32.1%	19.7%	6.8%	4.4%	22.5%
Other	14.9%	36.7%	18.9%	13.8%	7.6%	8.0%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.

The next survey statement explored staff perceptions on parent satisfaction with special education services provided by BCPS. **Exhibit 3-10** displays the results for this survey statement. Five of the nine survey groups had a high percentage of respondents that indicated Neutral or Not Applicable, while four survey groups – school administrators, non-instructional support staff, special education teachers, and special education providers – all display agreement levels of 50.0 percent or more. None of the nine survey groups display disagreement levels higher than 22.2 percent (district administrators). The lowest level of disagreement among all survey groups for this statement was in the special education provider survey group (6.0 percent), the school administrator survey group (7.1 percent), and the district program specialist survey group (8.0 percent).



Exhibit 3-10
Evergreen Survey Statement on
Overall Parent Satisfaction

Survey Statement: Parents of students with disabilities are satisfied with the special education services provided by BCPS.						
Survey Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
District Staff						
District Administrator	0.0%	11.1%	55.6%	22.2%	0.0%	11.1%
District Program Specialist	3.2%	37.1%	35.5%	4.8%	3.2%	16.1%
School-based Staff						
School Administrator	14.2%	49.7%	25.4%	6.1%	1.0%	3.6%
Non-Instructional Support	12.2%	38.9%	28.6%	7.0%	3.6%	9.7%
Special Education Teacher	14.3%	42.1%	27.1%	8.3%	3.1%	5.2%
Special Education Provider	9.0%	51.5%	28.7%	4.2%	1.8%	4.8%
General Education Teacher	9.4%	25.0%	35.6%	5.5%	3.7%	20.8%
Paraprofessional	9.2%	30.9%	22.9%	9.2%	3.6%	24.1%
Other	13.8%	30.8%	31.5%	5.8%	4.0%	14.1%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.

The survey statement displayed in **Exhibit 3-11** presented respondents with the statement “Strong partnerships exist between school staff and parents of students with disabilities.” A majority of survey respondents indicated agreement with this statement. Specifically, high levels of agreement were found across the school administrator survey group (83.3 percent), the non-instructional support and special education teacher survey group (68.1 percent), the special education provider survey group (70.3 percent), the general education teacher survey group (51.5 percent), the paraprofessional survey group (58.5 percent), and other staff survey group (66.2 percent). While the district program specialist and school administrator survey groups display agreement levels of less than 50.0 percent (44.4 percent and 45.9 percent, respectively), disagreement levels are much lower (22.2 percent and 9.8 percent, respectively).

Exhibit 3-11
Evergreen Survey Statement on
Parent Partnerships

Survey Statement: Strong partnerships exist between school staff and parents of students with disabilities.						
Survey Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
District Staff						
District Administrator	0.0%	44.4%	22.2%	22.2%	0.0%	11.1%
District Program Specialist	4.9%	41.0%	36.1%	9.8%	0.0%	8.2%
School-based Staff						
School Administrator	37.6%	45.7%	12.7%	2.5%	0.5%	1.0%
Non-Instructional Support	22.8%	45.3%	19.1%	5.8%	2.1%	4.9%
Special Education Teacher	24.9%	43.2%	18.5%	8.2%	4.3%	0.9%
Special Education Provider	24.2%	46.1%	24.2%	2.4%	3.0%	0.0%
General Education Teacher	16.0%	35.5%	28.3%	7.1%	3.9%	9.1%
Paraprofessional	20.6%	37.9%	16.5%	6.9%	5.2%	12.9%
Other	26.9%	39.3%	16.4%	6.9%	2.5%	8.0%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.



Results for survey statements related to assistive technology (AT) were less positive than results for many other areas of the survey; however, this is mostly due to the high number of respondents that indicated Neutral or Not Applicable. **Exhibit 3-12** displays the results for the survey statement “The assistive technology (AT) assessment, recommendation, trial, and implementation process occurs in a timely manner.” Only one survey group (school administrators), had agreement levels of more than 50.0 percent (59.8 percent). Levels of agreement among other survey groups ranged from a low of 25.5 percent for general education teachers, to a high of 49.2 percent for district program specialists. Meanwhile, disagreement with this survey statement ranged from a low of 7.7 percent (school administrators) to a high of 12.0 percent (paraprofessionals).

Exhibit 3-12
Evergreen Survey Statement on
Assistive Technology Processes

Survey Statement: The assistive technology (AT) assessment, recommendation, trial, and implementation process occurs in a timely manner.						
Survey Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
District Staff						
District Administrator	11.1%	33.3%	22.2%	11.1%	0.0%	22.2%
District Program Specialist	6.6%	42.6%	26.2%	6.6%	1.6%	16.4%
School-based Staff						
School Administrator	14.4%	45.4%	23.2%	6.2%	1.5%	9.3%
Non-Instructional Support	8.2%	26.8%	27.7%	8.8%	2.7%	25.6%
Special Education Teacher	12.3%	33.3%	25.1%	9.5%	7.8%	12.0%
Special Education Provider	8.8%	37.1%	22.6%	8.8%	3.1%	19.5%
General Education Teacher	6.2%	19.3%	34.8%	6.7%	5.0%	28.0%
Paraprofessional	10.7%	26.6%	21.5%	6.0%	6.0%	29.2%
Other	10.8%	24.5%	29.7%	8.2%	3.7%	23.0%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.

Exhibit 3-13 displays survey results for the statement “Assistive technology devices are kept up-to-date and removed from service if no longer useful.” As with the last survey statement (also related to AT), school administrators display the highest level of agreement (62.8 percent). Across five of the nine survey groups, 52.5 percent (district program specialists) or more of respondents responded Neutral or Not Applicable. However, across all survey groups none display disagreement levels higher than agreement levels. Aside from school administrators, agreement levels range from a low of 22.2 percent for district administrators, to a high of 43.0 percent for special education teachers.

Exhibit 3-14 displays a final survey statement on assistive technology. Again, school administrators are the only group displaying exceptionally high levels of agreement with this survey statement (74.4 percent). Two other groups, special education teachers and special education providers, display levels of agreement of more than 50.0 percent; 53.8 percent and 55.0 percent, respectively. The highest levels of disagreement are displayed in the district administrator (33.3 percent), paraprofessional (18.7 percent), and special education teacher (18.5 percent) survey groups.



Exhibit 3-13
Evergreen Survey Statement on
Assistive Technology Devices

Survey Statement: Assistive technology devices are kept up-to-date and removed from service if no longer useful.						
Survey Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
District Staff						
District Administrator	11.1%	11.1%	33.3%	0.0%	11.1%	33.3%
District Program Specialist	8.2%	26.2%	36.1%	9.8%	3.3%	16.4%
School-based Staff						
School Administrator	18.0%	44.8%	20.6%	5.2%	1.5%	9.8%
Non-Instructional Support	7.9%	28.7%	27.7%	6.7%	2.7%	26.2%
Special Education Teacher	11.2%	31.8%	24.4%	11.4%	8.5%	12.6%
Special Education Provider	10.7%	31.4%	27.7%	6.3%	3.8%	20.1%
General Education Teacher	6.3%	17.6%	34.0%	7.5%	6.2%	28.4%
Paraprofessional	10.8%	26.3%	21.6%	8.2%	10.3%	22.8%
Other	11.7%	22.9%	32.0%	7.1%	4.5%	21.8%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.

Exhibit 3-14
Evergreen Survey Statement on
Assistive Technology Delivery

Survey Statement: Students who could benefit from assistive technology devices receive them.						
Survey Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
District Staff						
District Administrator	11.1%	22.2%	22.2%	11.1%	22.2%	11.1%
District Program Specialist	4.9%	41.0%	29.5%	11.5%	1.6%	11.5%
School-based Staff						
School Administrator	23.6%	50.8%	13.3%	5.1%	1.0%	6.2%
Non-Instructional Support	12.2%	33.2%	23.5%	8.2%	1.2%	21.6%
Special Education Teacher	15.5%	38.3%	19.0%	12.3%	6.2%	8.6%
Special Education Provider	11.9%	43.1%	23.8%	4.4%	3.1%	13.8%
General Education Teacher	8.0%	24.9%	32.0%	6.1%	5.0%	24.1%
Paraprofessional	14.3%	33.0%	17.8%	10.0%	8.7%	16.1%
Other	13.5%	35.6%	22.8%	8.2%	3.7%	16.1%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.

The remainder of survey responses displayed in this section (**Exhibit 3-15** through **Exhibit 3-18**) asked survey participants to respond to questions using a four-point scale (Improving, Staying the Same, Declining, or No Opinion) designed to assess trends in specific types or areas of ESE services.

Exhibit 3-15 displays survey results for the question “Overall, the quality and effectiveness of core academic instruction for students with disabilities in BCPS is...” As can be seen, the highest percentage of respondents indicated either “Improving” or “Staying the Same” across all survey groups. Specifically, five of the nine survey groups display higher percentages for Improving while four survey groups display higher percentages for “Staying the Same.” Most notably, 40.0 percent of district program specialists indicated “Staying the Same,” while 48.3 percent of school administrators indicated “Improving.”



Exhibit 3-15
Evergreen Survey Statement on
Core Academic Instruction

Survey Statement: Overall, the quality and effectiveness of core academic instruction for students with disabilities in BCPS is:				
Survey Group	Improving	Staying the Same	Declining	No Opinion
District Staff				
District Administrator	37.5%	25.0%	12.5%	25.0%
District Program Specialist	31.7%	40.0%	11.7%	16.7%
School-based Staff				
School Administrator	48.3%	34.5%	13.8%	3.4%
Non-Instructional Support	29.2%	38.5%	15.7%	16.6%
Special Education Teacher	36.6%	34.5%	21.0%	8.0%
Special Education Provider	32.3%	34.8%	17.7%	15.2%
General Education Teacher	30.7%	32.4%	19.0%	17.9%
Paraprofessional	30.4%	20.7%	14.5%	34.4%
Other	40.2%	25.6%	16.2%	18.0%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.

The survey question displayed in **Exhibit 3-16** asked respondents about the quality and effectiveness of positive behavioral supports and interventions. Like the former survey statement, no survey group indicated overwhelming consensus for this survey statement. For instance, 31.9 percent of non-instructional support staff indicated “Staying the Same,” compared to 26.1 percent that indicated “Improving” and 27.0 percent that indicated “Declining.” Likewise, 38.6 percent of special education providers indicated “Staying the Same,” compared to 28.5 percent that indicated “Improving” and 20.3 percent that indicated “Declining.”

Exhibit 3-16
Evergreen Survey Statement on
Positive Behavioral Supports and Interventions

Survey Statement: Overall, the quality and effectiveness of positive behavioral supports and interventions implemented in BCPS are:				
Survey Group	Improving	Staying the Same	Declining	No Opinion
District Staff				
District Administrator	33.3%	22.2%	22.2%	22.2%
District Program Specialist	27.9%	32.8%	31.1%	8.2%
School-based Staff				
School Administrator	44.8%	34.5%	17.2%	3.4%
Non-Instructional Support	26.1%	31.9%	27.0%	15.0%
Special Education Teacher	31.0 %	34.0%	27.8%	7.2%
Special Education Provider	28.5%	38.6%	20.3%	12.7%
General Education Teacher	28.5%	30.5%	23.9%	17.1%
Paraprofessional	27.4%	26.5%	16.8%	29.2%
Other	34.7%	27.2%	23.4%	14.7%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.



Perceptions on secondary transition planning were probed using the survey question displayed in **Exhibit 3-17**. Across eight of the nine survey groups, stakeholders selected “No Opinion” 40.6 percent or more of the time. Analyzing results without consideration for “No Opinion” responses reveals that the majority of remaining respondents agree that services in this area are “Improving” or “Staying the Same,” with higher levels of respondents selecting “Staying the Same.” Conversely, 22.2 percent of district administrators indicated “Staying the Same” or “Declining” for this survey statement.

Exhibit 3-17
Evergreen Survey Statement on
Secondary Transition Planning and Services

Survey Statement: Overall, the quality and effectiveness of secondary transition planning and services provided by BCPS are:				
Survey Group	Improving	Staying the Same	Declining	No Opinion
District Staff				
District Administrator	11.1%	22.2%	22.2%	44.4%
District Program Specialist	27.9%	32.8%	16.4%	23.0%
School-based Staff				
School Administrator	24.1%	17.2%	12.1%	46.6%
Non-Instructional Support	20.6%	23.7%	12.3%	43.4%
Special Education Teacher	20.1%	22.9%	14.8%	42.3%
Special Education Provider	15.8%	23.4%	9.5%	51.3%
General Education Teacher	19.9%	24.2%	11.6%	44.3%
Paraprofessional	22.8%	24.6%	12.1%	40.6%
Other	23.7%	19.5%	10.3%	46.6%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.

Exhibit 3-18 displays results for the survey statement “Opportunities for ESE parent involvement/ engagement in BCPS are...” Based on the results, it is apparent that the majority of respondents agree that opportunities for parent involvement are “Improving” or “Staying the Same.” Notably, a higher percentage of district administrators, school administrators, paraprofessionals, and other staff indicated that parent involvement and engagement activities are “Improving.”

Results from the Evergreen staff survey provided evaluators with information on how district- and school-level respondents view different ESE services provided by BCPS. This insight allowed Evergreen to identify areas of weakness and strength for additional exploration. However, survey results were not used in isolation by evaluators to make final value judgments on any BCPS ESE services.

While additional context and data are needed to draw conclusions on many of the survey results included in this chapter, high-level trends that emerge in reviewing staff survey results include:

- school administrators are more likely to respond favorably to inquiries regarding BCPS ESE services than other stakeholder groups; and
- district administrators tend to provide less positive feedback on BCPS ESE services than other survey groups.



Exhibit 3-18
Evergreen Survey Statement on
Opportunities for Parent Involvement

Survey Statement: Opportunities for ESE parent involvement/ engagement in BCPS are:				
Survey Group	Improving	Staying the Same	Declining	No Opinion
District Staff				
District Administrator	37.5%	25.0%	12.5%	25.0%
District Program Specialist	37.7%	44.3%	4.9%	13.1%
School-based Staff				
School Administrator	44.8%	34.5%	8.6%	12.1%
Non-Instructional Support	36.6%	37.2%	4.9%	21.2%
Special Education Teacher	34.8%	40.3%	11.7%	13.3%
Special Education Provider	32.3 %	41.8%	6.3%	19.6%
General Education Teacher	28.8%	33.8%	7.2%	30.2%
Paraprofessional	29.8%	25.3%	8.9%	36.0%
Other	41.0%	31.0%	6.1%	21.8%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.

There are many areas (e.g. transportation, assistive technology, secondary transition planning) of ESE services that certain survey groups (e.g. non-instructional support, general education teachers, and paraprofessionals) seem to lack knowledge of the subject or feel indifferent, as indicated by high levels of neutral or no opinion responses.

3.2 BCPS PARENT EVALUATION SURVEY

In addition to the staff survey, Evergreen created and administered a parent survey during the course of this study (February 19 – March 14, 2014). This survey provided Evergreen with quantitative and qualitative feedback from parents of students with disabilities receiving ESE Services in Broward County Public Schools. The survey was sent out via email, announced via the districts ParentLink phone system, and posted on the district website. In total, the survey targeted the over 30,000 parents of students with disabilities enrolled in BCPS. It included 23 questions, including a free response item for participants to provide narrative feedback on any aspect of ESE services they deemed significant.

Exhibit 3-19 compares responses by student grade level. As can be seen, the survey received 1,029 responses from parents, for a total completion rate of approximately 3.4 percent. The largest percentage (51.7 percent) of parents responding to the survey has elementary school level students. The second largest grouping is middle school and high school parents, at 16.7 percent and 16.5 percent of total respondents. Prekindergarten and Adult (18-21) were the fourth and fifth largest groups, at 12.4 percent and 2.7 percent, respectively.

A sampling of responses to the parent survey is shared throughout the remainder of this section. Many are results from the parent survey that are not used in other areas of this report. Similar questions are grouped for easier analysis. A complete listing of the results of the parent survey can be found in **Appendix B**.



Exhibit 3-19
Total Parent Survey Responses
Disaggregated by Student's Grade Level

Survey Question: Indicate the current level of your student.		
Grade Level	Percent	Count
Prekindergarten	12.4%	128
Elementary school	51.7%	532
Middle school	16.7%	172
High school	16.5%	170
Adult/18-21	2.7%	28
Total	100.0%	1,029

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.

Exhibit 3-20 displays results for the survey statement “My child’s school promotes equal opportunities for all students and clearly communicates the expectation that all students will learn and succeed.” As can be seen, a majority (70.3 percent) of respondents indicated agreement with this statement. Only 15.2 percent of respondents disagreed with this statement.

Exhibit 3-20
Evergreen Survey Statement on
Promotion of Equal Opportunities and Communication of Expectations

Survey Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
My child’s school promotes equal opportunities for all students and clearly communicates the expectation that all students will learn and succeed.	35.4%	34.9%	12.8%	10.5%	4.7%	1.6%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.

Exhibit 3-21 displays results for the survey statement “Students with disabilities in my child’s school are welcomed and encouraged to participate in all activities, including elective courses, extracurricular clubs, field trips, and other special activities.” As with the previous survey statement, the majority of survey respondents (68.8 percent) agreed with this survey statement. Only 13.9 percent of survey respondents disagreed with this survey statement.

Exhibit 3-21
Evergreen Survey Statement on
Student Participation

Survey Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
Students with disabilities in my child’s school are welcomed and encouraged to participate in all activities, including elective courses, extracurricular clubs, field trips, and other special activities.	36.3%	32.5%	11.5%	8.2%	5.7%	5.7%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.



Many survey statements presented to parents delved into specific areas of ESE services at BCPS. For instance, **Exhibit 3-22** presented respondents with the survey statement “The continuum of services across all school levels (i.e., preK, elementary, middle, high) meets the needs of my child.” Overall, 50.7 percent of survey respondents agreed with this statement. A minority of respondents (26.8 percent) disagreed that continuum of services available in BCPS meet the needs of their student.

Exhibit 3-22
Evergreen Survey Statement on
Continuum of Services

Survey Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
The continuum of services across all school levels (i.e., preK, elementary, middle, high) meets the needs of my child.	25.1%	25.6%	17.1%	14.7%	12.1%	5.4%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.

Parent participation in the IEP process is known to be a contributing factor to a student’s success in learning and growing through services provided. **Exhibit 3-23** presented respondents with the statement “I am an active participant and provide valuable input during my child’s IEP meetings.” A large majority of parents (82.4 percent) agreed that they actively participate and provide valuable input during their child’s IEP meetings. This is a positive outcome for the BCPS community as a whole, indicating that the district and parents view parent participation and input during IEP meetings as important to student success.

Exhibit 3-23
Evergreen Survey Statement on
IEP Meeting Participation

Survey Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
I am an active participant and provide valuable input during my child’s IEP meetings.	59.7%	22.7%	8.3%	1.8%	1.4%	6.1%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.

Exhibit 3-24 provides results for the survey statement “Middle and high school BCPS students with disabilities are adequately prepared for postsecondary employment and education or training when they graduate or age out.” As can be seen, 51.5 percent of parents indicated “Not Applicable,” which is most likely representative of the large percentage of parents responding with children in grades where this is not yet a consideration. Approximately the same number of parents agreed (17.0 percent) and disagreed (16.3 percent) with this survey statement.



Exhibit 3-24
Evergreen Survey Statement on
Transition Services

Survey Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
Middle and high school BCPS students with disabilities are adequately prepared for postsecondary employment and education or training when they graduate or age out.	8.5%	8.5%	15.1%	6.9%	9.4%	51.5%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.

Exhibit 3-25 provides results for two survey statements related to transportation of students with disabilities. As can be seen, 33.0 percent of parents agreed that there is no delay in providing transportation as a related service once an IEP team determines it is needed, compared to 11.8 percent that disagreed with this statement. A high percentage (55.2 percent) of respondents responded “Neutral” or “No Opinion” to this statement. When asked about bus ride times, 25.0 percent of parents agreed that “BCPS ensures that bus rides for students placed in other schools for specialized services (e.g., InD, ASD, DHH, E/BD cluster sites) are of reasonable length,” compared to 10.5 percent of parents that disagreed.

Exhibit 3-25
Evergreen Survey Statement on
Student Transportation

Survey Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
BCPS ensures that there is no delay in providing transportation as a related service once an IEP team determines it is needed.	15.2%	17.8%	15.3%	5.2%	6.5%	39.9%
BCPS ensures that bus rides for students placed in other schools for specialized services (e.g., InD, ASD, DHH, E/BD cluster sites) are of reasonable length.	12.1%	12.9%	16.5%	4.2%	6.3%	48.0%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.

Exhibit 3-26 provides results for the final parent survey statement not used in other sections of this report. Specifically, the survey statement is “Overall, I am satisfied with the special education services provided by BCPS.” As can be seen, 49.5 percent of parents agreed with this statement, compared to 30.8 percent of parents that disagreed.



Exhibit 3-26
Evergreen Survey Statement on
Overall Parent Satisfaction

Survey Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
Overall, I am satisfied with the special education services provided by BCPS.	20.9%	28.6%	13.7%	16.7%	14.1%	6.0%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.

3.3 FREE-RESPONSE RESULTS

Both the staff and parent survey also offered an avenue to provide free response feedback. This feedback was collected and aggregated, and shared with the Evaluation Team to identify trends or issues for further investigation while onsite. The free response section of the survey yielded 1,508 comments related to the BCPS ESE Program. These comments were reviewed by the Evaluation Team and used to support findings made by the Evergreen Team while onsite, as well as to identify additional areas of focus for further research.

This chapter provides a detailed summary of results for Evergreen's ESE Evaluation Survey. The remainder of results from this survey are discussed in further sections of this report to support specific findings and recommendations. Complete survey results can be found in **Appendix A** and **Appendix B**.



***CHAPTER 4:
FINDINGS, COMMENDATIONS, AND
RECOMMENDATIONS***



4.0 FINDINGS, COMMENDATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The foundation of exceptional student education (ESE) is the idea that all students have the right to a free appropriate public education (FAPE) provided in the least restrictive environment (LRE) in which their needs can be met, and that the decision regarding what constitutes FAPE in the LRE is made individually for each student by a team composed of professionals who teach or otherwise have knowledge of the student and the student's parents. This relatively basic concept requires the school district to establish an effective and efficient framework for its ESE services while also ensuring sufficient flexibility to meet a very wide range of student needs.

As described previously in this report, Evergreen's independent review focused on multiple components of BCPS ESE program that are directly or indirectly related to providing FAPE in the LRE to students with disabilities. Each of these components is governed by specific rules or regulations and guided by its own particular set of promising practices. Meeting the individually unique needs of exceptional students can be a complex and challenging process. When implementing ESE programs, districts must attend to the ways in which these inter-related components work in concert with each other. For example, any discussion of inclusionary practices will include consideration of: district and school staffing models; how funds are used to support students with disabilities; how individual educational plan (IEP) teams determine appropriate goals, services, and placement for individual students; the type and quality of ESE supports and related services that are available; the nature of instruction provided to students with disabilities in different settings; and, ultimately, student performance.

The definitions for terms or phrases used throughout this report are provided here for clarity. Sources include:

- the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part B Data Dictionary, 2013 (retrieved at https://www.ideadata.org/docs/bdatadictionary_final_1-23-13.pdf);
- the Florida Course Code Directory 2013-14, Section 1, pages 41-45 (retrieved at <https://www.fldoe.org/articulation/CCD/files/CCDNarrative1314.pdf>);
- Section 1003.03(5)(c), Florida Statutes;
- Section 1003.57, F.S., as amended under Senate Bill 1108;
- Data Element: Scheduling Method, FLDOE Automated Student Information System 2013-14 (retrieved at http://www.fldoe.org/eias/dataweb/database_1314/171525.pdf); and
- the Exceptional Student Education/Florida Education Finance Program (ESE/FEFP) Matrix of Services Handbook 2012 Edition (retrieved at http://www.fldoe.org/board/meetings/2012_11_05-2/matrix.pdf).



Definitions for selected terms and phrases used in this report include:

Courses

- **Access Courses** –The Next Generation Sunshine State Standards (NGSSS) include access points for students with significant cognitive disabilities, which are organized into the access courses. The access points allow students with significant cognitive disabilities to access the general education curriculum. Access points reflect the core intent of the standards with reduced levels of complexity. The three levels of complexity include participatory, supported and independent, with the participatory level being the least complex. Only students with significant cognitive disabilities may take access courses. In addition, access courses in both mathematics and English/language arts are being revised to include the Core Content Connectors (CCCs). Core Content Connectors allow students with significant cognitive disabilities to access the Florida Standards.
- **Fundamental Courses** – Students with disabilities may earn elective credit toward a standard diploma for the successful completion of fundamental academic skill-building courses that support a student’s participation in general education classes by allowing them more time to build the necessary skills for success. Fundamental courses do not replace the core academic courses required for a standard diploma. Additionally, a student for whom the IEP team has determined the general education curriculum, with accommodations and supports, is not appropriate may take fundamental courses to earn credit toward a special diploma, in accordance with the district’s student progression plan. These courses are appropriate for students working towards a special diploma as general education courses may not be modified for this purpose.
- **Special Skills Courses** – These courses are designed to meet the specialized needs of students with disabilities. Some are tailored to meet the specific needs of a particular disability (e.g., Orientation and Mobility for students with visual impairments; Skills for Students with Autism) while others are used to meet the needs of any student with a disability (e.g., Unique Skills; Learning Strategies; Social Personal Skills; Self-Determination).
- **Career and Technical Education (CTE) Courses** – Students with disabilities may enroll in regular or ESE CTE courses. Districts are encouraged to use allowable accommodations and modifications, or modified occupational completion points (MOCPs), to enable students with disabilities to participate in regular CTE programs.

Placement/Educational Environment

- **Regular Class** –The student with a disability spends 80 percent or more of the school week with nondisabled peers.
- **Resource Room** – The student with a disability spends 40-79 percent of the school week with nondisabled peers.



- **Separate Class** – The student with a disability spends less than 40 percent of the school week with nondisabled peers.
- **Special Program or Cluster Site** – Term used by BCPS to describe a traditional school campus that houses a specialized ESE program for students with more significant or unique needs (i.e., deaf or hard-of-hearing (DHH); intellectual disability (InD); autism spectrum disorder (ASD); or emotional/behavioral disability (E/BD)). In lieu of services at their home-zoned school or an ESE center, students who need the specialized program are placed at the cluster site based on a feeder pattern and classroom capacity.
- **Exceptional Student Education Center** – A public or private separate day school for students with disabilities whose needs cannot be met on a traditional school campus and to which nondisabled peers do not have access.
- **Special Day School** – Same as Exceptional Student Education Center
- **Other Separate Environment** – A separate private school, residential facility, or hospital or homebound program.

Service Delivery Models

- **Consultation** – ESE teacher and general education teacher meet face-to-face or via conference call or virtual technologies on a regular basis to plan, implement, and monitor instructional alternatives designed to ensure that the student with a disability is successful in the general education classroom. When determining the level of involvement required to meet the threshold for consultation, it is important to note that guidance provided in the Matrix of Services Handbook states that “students with a disability who are being monitored in regular education but who are not receiving special education services” are not to be funded under an ESE cost factor program.
- **Support Facilitation** – Two or more teachers are assigned to a group of students, but one of the teachers is responsible for only one student or a small group of students in the classroom; also referred to as “inclusion teaching” or “in class one-on-one”. The ESE teacher meets with individual or small groups of students on an individualized basis within a traditional classroom, but not as a co-teacher. The general education teacher must meet certification requirements in accordance with the kindergarten (K) through grade 12 general education course number; the ESE teacher must meet certification requirements for any ESE area.
- **Co-teaching** – Two or more teachers are assigned to a group of students; each teacher is responsible for planning, delivering, and evaluating instruction for all students in the class or subject for the entire class period. Both teachers must meet certification requirements in accordance with the grades K through 12 general education course code number as described in the Florida Course Code Directory (CCD). If one co-teacher also provides the specially-designed instruction as indicated on a student’s IEP, that teacher must meet certification requirements for any ESE area as well as the general education certification.



- **Dual Certification** – One teacher serves as both the general education teacher and the ESE teacher to provide the specially-designed instruction as identified on the student's IEP.

The findings, commendations, and recommendations in this chapter are included in the following 13 sections:

- 4.1 District and School Staffing and Support to Schools
- 4.2 ESE Support and Related Services
- 4.3 Use of Funds
- 4.4 Communication with Stakeholders
- 4.5 Professional Development
- 4.6 Parent Engagement
- 4.7 Community Engagement/Partnerships
- 4.8 Review Child Find – Birth to Age 5
- 4.9 Referral, Evaluation, and Eligibility – Ages 6-21
- 4.10 Individualized Education Plans (IEP)
- 4.11 Transition/Matriculation
- 4.12 Inclusionary Practices
- 4.13 Performance and Instruction of Students



4.1 DISTRICT AND SCHOOL STAFFING AND SUPPORT TO SCHOOLS



4.1 DISTRICT AND SCHOOL STAFFING AND SUPPORT

This section discusses practices related to district and school staffing and human resources support to schools that either enhance or encumber the provision of education to the students with disabilities in Broward County Public Schools. **Section 4.1** is divided into the following three subsections:

- 4.1.1 District Organization and Management
- 4.1.2 School Staffing
- 4.1.3 Support to Schools

The educational service delivery of a school district depends on central office staff to serve as the support system, and provide leadership and coordination for education that is provided in the district schools. The effectiveness of instructional delivery depends on factors such as organization, staffing, and procedures that have been created and are monitored in order to assure consistency of instruction and student assessment across the school district. The way in which these central office factors are designed can either support or prevent progress towards high achievement for students.

Central office managers must have expertise in their area of responsibility. Processes that allow managers time to direct that knowledge towards improved student achievement must be in place. Effective districts identify key educational elements on which to focus actions and resources, and use them as filters for decision making. Sufficient staff members must be employed to ensure that time can be devoted to functions the district has determined essential. School and central office personnel systematically analyze available sources of data for information they can provide relating to curricular and instructional adjustments. Data analysis also informs managers about individuals and groups of students who require either additional enrichment or remediation to achieve at their highest capability. Clear and frequent communication between schools and the central office enable district leaders to ensure consistency of policies and procedures. Ongoing communications also help the district focus on core activities it has identified as critical for high levels of student achievement.

Personnel comprise the vast majority of school district expenses—usually more than 80 percent. Beyond normal expenses for operations, materials, and other resources, special education departments are often hampered more than other departments in the effort to contain costs. This necessitates maintaining a balance between cost and quality.

Federal laws related to special education which impact the bottom line of special education spending require that:

- districts provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to students with disabilities;
- students be served in the least restrictive environment (LRE) such that, as much as is feasible and meets their needs, they are included in general educational experiences and classes;



- students be evaluated regarding their needs and, together with parents, a team of educators and other specialists develop an individualized educational plan (IEP) for each student served in the special education program;
- at each annual review, the team considers the student's needs with regard to a specific set of factors (e.g., assistive technology); and
- students have access to the general curriculum and state frameworks.

Other factors increasing the need for and concomitant costs of special education and early intervention include:

- a rise in advocacy for students with disabilities and related attorney intervention;
- students who had birth weights below 3.3 pounds have increasingly higher survival rates to age 5, but often require special school services;
- alternative privatized services for those students;
- a significant increase in the number of students identified as autistic;
- consequences related to a higher percentage of students in poverty; and
- an increase in the number of families experiencing social and economic stress.

4.1.1 District Organization and Management

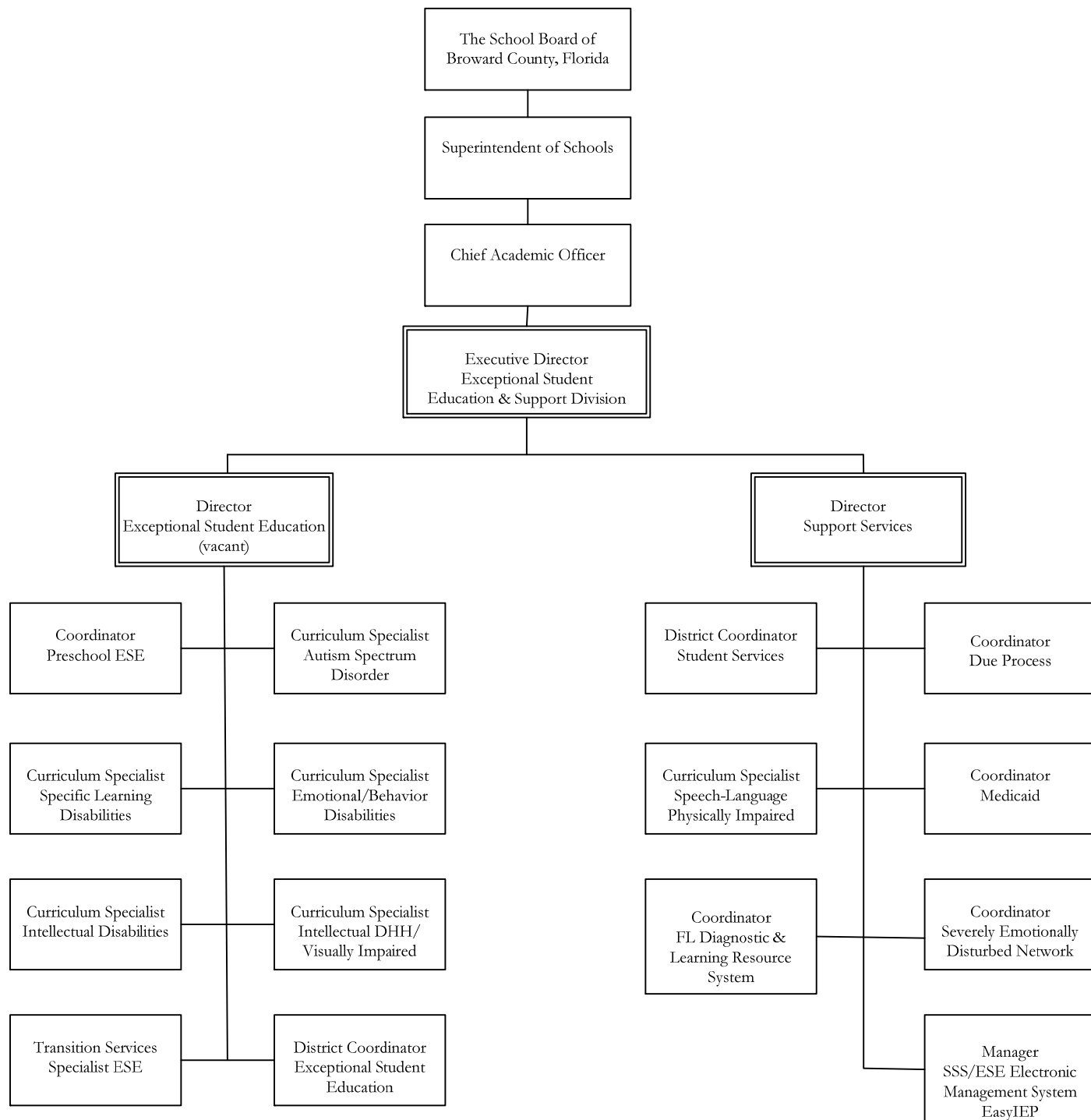
An effective central office organization structure is essential to the efficient delivery of services in a school district. Central office structures must have the appropriate spans of control for effective leadership. Lines of authority should be clearly defined and shown in the district's organizational charts. Effective central office structures encourage communication at all levels.

The BCPS Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services has undergone significant reorganization over the past two years. **Exhibit 4.1-1** shows the current organizational structure of the Division. In the current year, all ESE central office staff were centralized in the Arthur Ashe building.

As can be seen, the Executive Director for Exceptional Student Education and Support Services reports directly to the Chief Academic Officer (CAO). This reporting structure ensures that the heads of the two departments in the Division communicate effectively about ESE issues impacting the education of all students. The structure also lends itself to collaboration among key decision makers. The Director for Exceptional Student Education and Director of Support Services report to the Executive Director of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services. This structure provides her a narrow span of control that facilitates communications and alignment of activities and initiatives in both departments.



Exhibit 4.1-1
Exceptional Student Education and Support Division
Organizational Chart
2013-2014 School Year



Source: *Exceptional Student Education and Support Division, 2014.*
 (as approved by Broward County School Board on 5/21/13).



There are two units in the Division. The Exceptional Student Education Unit is primarily responsible for programmatic services and supports, including:

- Curriculum and Instruction
- Accommodations
- Alternative Assessments
- Assistive Technology
- Discipline/Behavior
- Extended School Year
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Grant
- Itinerant Services
- Preschool
- Private School Services
- School-based Support
- Transition Services

The Support Services Unit is primarily responsible for more procedural or organizational components of the Division, including:

- Evaluations
- Professional Development
- Related Services
- Compliance (including Charter Schools)
- Crisis Support
- Dispute Resolution
- Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System
- Florida Inclusion Network
- McKay
- Medicaid
- Psychological Services
- Section 504
- Severely Emotionally Disturbed Network

The vision of the Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services is:

Students with disabilities will achieve to their highest potential.

The mission of the Division is:

To create a framework upon which schools and families build a collaborative support structure that promotes academic achievement and personal growth.

The goals of Broward County Public Schools are to provide high quality instruction, continuous improvement, and effective communication. Consistent with these three BCPS goals, the Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services is building a structure which emphasizes:

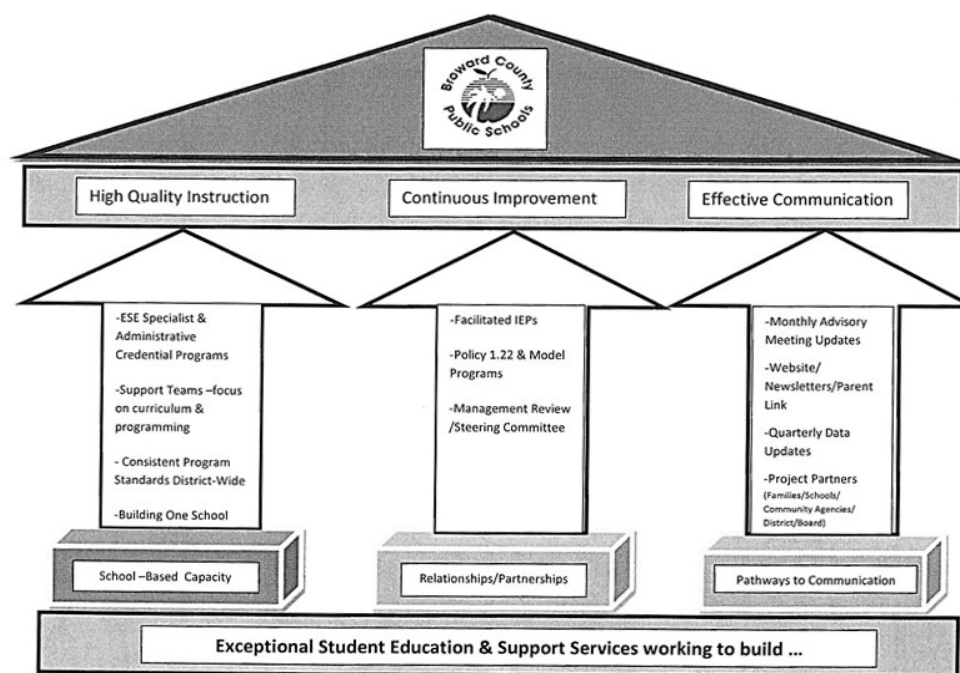
- school-based capacity;



- relationship and partnerships; and
- pathways to communication.

Exhibit 4-1.2 reflects this structure.

Exhibit 4-1.2
Exceptional Student Education and Support Service Division
“Building a Future with You!”



Source: BCPS Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services, 2014.

Exhibit 4-1.3 provides an historical perspective of the Division for Exceptional Student Education and Support Services between the 2009-10 and 2012-13 school years. As can be seen, the central office has fluctuated between 17 to 20 employees over this four-year period.

FINDING

At the time of the onsite review the position of the Director of Exceptional Student Education was vacant. The incumbent in this position left the Division in May 2013. Despite being advertised three different times, the position remains unfilled at the time of this report.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.1-1:

Expedite filling the position of Director of Exceptional Student Education.

The extended delay in filling this critical position has placed an undue burden on both the Executive Director and the Director of Support Services.



Exhibit 4-1.3
Exceptional Student Education and Support Services Division
Historical Perspective
2009-10 through 2012-13 School Years

Year	2009-10	2010-11 ¹	2011-12 ²	2012-13
Area Offices	3 Area Offices ESE & SS Services	3 Area Offices ESE & SS Services	3 Area Offices SS Services ESE Services Centralized	No Areas and Support Service Centralized
District Office	1 ESE/SS Executive Director 1 ESE Director 1 Psych. Director 1 S.W. Director 6 Supervisors 7 Coordinators 1 Manager	1 ESE/SS Executive Director 1 ESE Director 1 Director Student Services 6 Supervisors 9 Coordinators 1 Manager	1 ESE/SS Executive Director 1 ESE Director Services 6 Supervisors 8 Coordinators 1 Manager	1 ESE/SS Executive Director 1 ESE Director 1 Director Support Services 6 Supervisors 10 Coordinators 1 Manager
Total District	18	19	17	20

Source: Executive Director's Presentation to Leadership Team, May 13, 2013.

¹In 2010-11 the Division consisted of the following additional departments: Guidance, Office of Prevention, Health Education Services, Data and Fiscal Operations, Instructional Technology, Medicaid, and SEDNET.

²In 2011-12 the Division removed Guidance and Instructional Departments and added Diversity.

FINDING

At a minimum, the five Curriculum and Support Specialists each supervise:

- one assistive technology specialist;
- one speech and language program specialist (one of the five does not have this direct report);
- two instructional program specialists;
- two or three behavioral program specialists; and
- one behavior technician.

The title of 'specialist' does not reflect the responsibility associated with the supervision of a minimum of seven employees.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.1-2:

Reclassify the position of Curriculum Specialist to Curriculum Coordinator.

The Executive Director of Exceptional Student Education and Support Division should work with the Director of Human Resources to initiate the reclassification process. The Director of Human Resources should advise if a pay grade adjustment is needed.

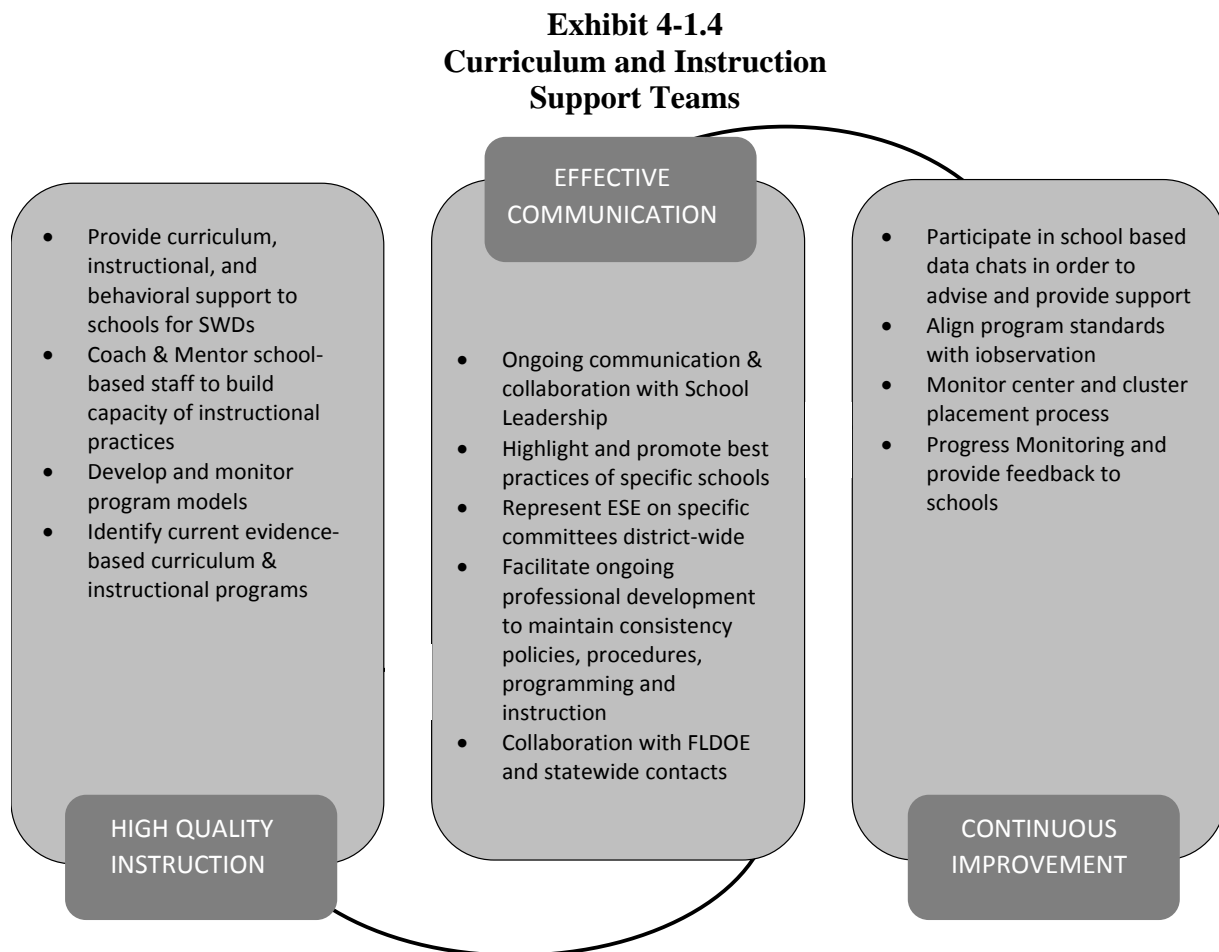
Also see Recommendation 4.2-2 related to positions in the Division.



FINDING

As indicated in the Executive Director's Report to the Leadership Team in May 2013 relating to Performance Management, the Division is shifting its efforts to be more focused on curriculum and instruction (e.g., data analysis, program design, instructional support and monitoring) and less focused on operations (e.g., budget assistance, compliance, dispute resolution, and transportation). It is estimated that, in 2012-13, 80 percent of the Division's attention was operational as compared to a goal for the 2013-14 school year of being 20 percent operational and 80 percent focusing on curriculum and instruction.

Exhibit 4-1.4 shows the areas of emphasis of the Curriculum and Instruction Support Teams to promote this change in focus.



Source: Executive Director's Presentation to Leadership Team, May 13, 2013.

COMMENDATION

The Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services is commended for shifting its focus to curriculum and instruction, while continuing to address issues related to procedural compliance and policies.



RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.1-3:

Monitor the Division's goal of shifting its focus to curriculum and instruction.

The 2013-14 goal to extensively focus on curriculum and instruction, while laudable, is far reaching and extensive. The Executive Director must set benchmarks for achieving this goal and continue to monitor implementation and successes.

4.1.2 School Staffing

In order for a school district and its departments to fulfill their educational responsibilities to its students, parents, staff, and community, they must be properly staffed. Proper staffing means:

- providing sufficient personnel to enable the district to educate its students;
- ensuring that teachers and administrators have the capacity to meet the needs of all sectors of students and the individual needs of specific students;
- providing sufficient staff to focus on the roles and responsibilities for which they were hired; and
- ensuring that staff are equitably distributed in the positions so all students are receiving similar levels of support.

FINDING

BCPS maintains staffing ratios for its specialized exceptional student education programs (i.e., those programs associated with more restrictive settings such as separate class placement). While the Florida Department of Education recognizes class size caps that apply to all classes, there are no program-specific staffing ratios nor formal recommendations for how districts should assign staff. BCPS has been proactive in identifying the specific needs of students based on their disabilities and has developed programs, models, and staffing ratios necessary to deliver special education services.

Exhibit 4.1-5 shows BCPS ESE special programs staff allocations. As shown, instructional and support staff are designated for each special program including autistic spectrum disorder, deaf hard/hearing for elementary and secondary, emotional behavior disability, intellectual disability, language learning disability, specialized varying exceptionalities, the Access Program, and career placement. It should be noted that the allocations include substitute staff to avoid the disruption of instruction when teaching staff are absent.

While Florida does not regulate staffing allocations for special education programs, BCPS has created staffing allocations based on the services and supports required for students with varying disabilities. **Exhibits 4.1-6 through 4.1-8** show the ESE special allocation requirements as mandated by state regulations in Virginia, North Carolina, and Maryland. When compared to the allocation requirements of BCPS national peers, BCPS staff support for special programs meets or exceeds the peer school districts.



Exhibit 4.1-5 ESE Special Programs Allocations

Special Program	Allocation
Elementary DHH – Deaf Hard/ Hearing	
Students	5 Elementary/ 10 Secondary
Teacher	1.0 FTE
Audiologist	Based on student need
Para	1.0 FTE (186/7.5)
Specials (art, music, PE)	Based on school staffing
Sub Para	1.0 FTE per cluster
Sub Teacher	1.0 FTE per cluster
SLP	.5 FTE per cluster
Job Coach	1.0 FTE (high school only)
EBD-Emotional Behavior Disability	
Students	8
Teacher	1.0 FTE
Para	1.0 FTE (186/7.5)
Sub Teacher	1.0 FTE per cluster
Specials (art, music, PE)	Based on school staffing
Behavior Tech	1.0 FTE per cluster
InD – Intellectual Disability	
Students	8
Teacher	1.0 FTE
Para (186/7.5)	1.0 FTE
Sub Para	1.0 FTE per cluster
Sub Teacher	1.0 FTE per cluster
Specials (art, music, PE)	Based on school staffing
Nurse – as determined by student need	Based on student need
Sub Nurse (\$30/hour, 7.5 hrs, 8 days)	\$30/hour, 7.5 hrs, 8 days/month
LLD – Phasing out clusters, supports will be provided based on students remaining	
Students	8
Teacher	1.0 FTE
Para (186/7.5)	1.0 FTE
Sub Para	1.0 FTE per cluster
Sub Teacher	1.0 FTE per cluster
Specials (art, music, PE)	Based on school staffing
SLP	.50 FTE per cluster
SVE - PASS	
Students	10
Middle/High Teacher	1.0 FTE
Para (186/7.5)	1.0 FTE
Sub Para	1.0 FTE per cluster
Sub Teacher	1.0 FTE per cluster
Job Coach (1 for every 3 PASS classes)	1.0 FTE for every 3 PASS classes
AC - Access	
Students	10
Tech Ctr Teacher	1.0 FTE
SLP	1.0 FTE per cluster
Job Coach	4.0 FTE
Lead Teacher	1.0 FTE per cluster
CP – Career Placement	
Students	10
Tech Ctr Teacher	1.0 FTE
Sub Teacher	1.0 FTE per cluster
Job Coach (2)	2.0 FTE

Source: BCPS Exceptional Student Education and Support Division, 2014.



Exhibit 4.1-6
Virginia ESE Special Programs Allocations*

Disability Category	Maximum Number of Students Per Teacher	
	With Paraprofessional 100% of the time	Without Paraprofessional 100% of the time
Autism	8	6
Deaf-blindness	8	6
Developmental Delay: age 5-6	10	8
Developmental Delay: age 2-5	8 Center-Based 10 Combined	12 Home-based and/or Itinerant
Emotional Disability	10	8
Hearing Impairment/Deaf	10	8
Intellectual Disability	10	8
Learning Disability	10	8
Multiple Disabilities	8	6
Orthopedic Impairment	10	8
Other Health Impairment	10	8
Speech or Language Impairment	NA	NA
Traumatic Brain Injury	May be placed in any program, according to the IEP	
Combined group of students needing Level I services with students needing Level II students	20	

Source: Virginia Department of Education, Regulations Governing Special Education Programs for Children with Disabilities in Virginia, 2010.

*Allocations do not include related services staff.

Exhibit 4.1-7
North Carolina Special Education Class Size Requirement Per Teacher
Number of Special Education Students and Teacher Assistants

Special Education Service Delivery	Elementary		Middle School		High School		
	Standard Course of Study	Standard Course of Study Extended Content Standards	Standard Course of Study	Standard Course of Study Extended Content Standards	Standard Courses of Study ⁵	Standard Course of Study Occupational	Course of Study Extended Content Standards
Special Education General Skills ¹	12 Students	10 Students	14 Students	12 Students	14 Students	14 Students 1 Teacher Assistant (Job Coach) ⁶	12 Students
Special Education Targeted Skills ²	10 Students Or 12 Students 1 Teacher Assistant	8 Students Or 10 Students 1 Teacher Assistant	12 Students or 14 Students 1 Teacher Assistant	8 Students or 10 Students 1 Teacher Assistant	12 Students or 14 Students 1 Teacher Assistant	14 Students 1 Teacher Assistant (Job Coach)	10 Students
Special Education Sustained Support ³	12 Students 1 Teacher Assistant	10 Students 1 Teacher Assistant	12 Students 1 Teacher Assistant	10 Students 1 Teacher Assistant	14 Students 1 Teacher Assistant	14 Students 1 Teacher Assistant (Job Coach)	12 Students 1 Teacher Assistant
Special Education Intensive Needs ⁴	8 Students 1 Teacher Assistant	6 Students 1 Teacher Assistant or 8 Students 2 Teacher Assistants	8 Students 1 Teacher Assistant	6 Students 1 Teacher Assistant or 8 Students 2 Teacher Assistants	8 Students 1 Teacher Assistant	8 Students 1 Teacher Assistant or 10 Students 2 Teacher Assistants (Job Coaches)	6 Students 1 Teacher Assistant or 8 Students 2 Teacher Assistants



Exhibit 4.1-7 (Continued)
North Carolina Special Education Class Size Requirement Per Teacher
Number of Special Education Students and Teacher Assistants

NC 1508-3A Level of Services/Supports	
¹ Special Education General Skills – Services/supports provided to individuals who require specially designed academic, communication, and/or behavior support outside the general classroom for 20% or less of the day. The services could include, but are not limited to learning strategies instruction, organizational skills training, and curriculum assistance.	
² Special Education Targeted Skills – Services/supports provided to students who require specific instruction in targeted skills areas (to include but not limited to: reading math, written expression, social skills) outside the general education classroom from 21% - 60% of the day. Special targeted skills groups can range from 1-14 students with consideration given to any specific guidelines governing group size composition for any methodologies adopted by the LEA.	
³ Special Education Sustained Support – Services/supports outside the general education classroom for greater than 60% of the day, to students who require extensive explicit instruction to acquire, maintain, and generalize multiple skills. Students may have documented health, communication, sensory, and/or behavior problems. Periodic immediate support and supervision are required throughout the day.	
⁴ Special Education Intensive Needs – Services/supports outside the general education classroom to students who require extensive and explicit instruction to acquire, maintain, and generalize multiple skills. Student receive extensive, direct special education services for greater than 60% of the school day and require constant immediate supervision. The students may have persistent documented health, communication, and/or behavior problems. The students require an instructional pace requiring individual and small group instruction and have substantial behavioral or physical needs.	
⁵ Future-Ready Core Course of Study – The Standard Course of Study (College/University, College Tech Prep, Career Prep) will become the Future-Ready Core Course of Student, effective with the 9 th grade class of 2009-2010.	
⁶ Occupational Course of Study – Number of assistants (job coaches) will vary depending on the actual work-based requirements of the Occupational Course of Study.	

Source: North Carolina State Board of Education, Department of Public Instruction, Exceptional Children, Policies Governing Services for Children with Disabilities, October 2013.

Exhibit 4.1-8
Maryland Special Education Program Staffing Requirements
Number of Students with Disabilities Per Full-time Certified Teacher

Program	May Not Exceed Average Class Size – Without Aide	May Not Exceed Average Class Size – With Aide
Full-day Special Education	6	9
Students with Significant Orthopedic Impairments	Not permitted	7
Residential Special Education	4 And if applicable, full-time certified or licensed related services provider	7 And if applicable, full-time certified or licensed related services provider

Source: Maryland Division of State Documents, Code of Maryland Regulations, 2014.

COMMENDATION

BCPS is commended for maintaining staffing ratios for its specialized ESE programs that ensure a low student-to-adult ratio and are based on the programmatic needs of students.

FINDING

The current support facilitation model is not effective in providing the necessary support to students with disabilities or their teachers in the general education classrooms. While BCPS maintains staffing allocations for specialized programs, staff allocations and service delivery models for support facilitation of students with disabilities in general education programs varies



from school to school. Overall, support facilitators maintain high student caseloads and scheduling student interventions is challenging.

This is particularly evidenced in secondary schools. A few examples of how secondary schools schedule support facilitators include assignment by:

- all core content classes;
- intensive reading and math classes;
- learning resource center; and
- any combination of the above.

A review of sample IEPs for secondary students receiving special education services found many IEP goals and objectives are addressed in several ways, including support facilitation in the general education classroom, participation in a one or more intensive reading class often with a dually certified ESE/reading teacher; and direct language therapy with the speech language pathologist.

Samples of IEP goals include:

- *Given a short grade level reading passage and a reminder to use comprehension strategies, [student] will answer inference questions pertaining to main idea with 80 percent accuracy.*
- *Given a writing prompt and an example of one visual graphic organizer, Adrian will use a web drawing to write three sentences on the topic with correct punctuation in 4 out of 5 trials.*
- *Given a grade level passage orally or to read and a graphic organizer, [student] will retell a story to include characters, setting, and plot with 80 percent accuracy in 8 out of 10 trials.*
- *Given a writing checking/graphic organizer and extra time, [student] will be able to write a body paragraph with at least 3 detailed sentences to support her topic 80 percent of the time in 4 of 5 opportunities.*
- *Given reading strategies and extra time, [student] will read grade level text and use correct context clues to figure out the meanings of unfamiliar words 80 percent of the time in 4 of 5 opportunities.*
- *Given reading strategies and extra time, Carla will analyze information within grade level text and answer questions with 80 percent accuracy in 4 of 5 opportunities.*

During onsite visits and interviews with key staff, Evergreen found that, in most cases, the support facilitators, reading coaches, intensive reading teachers, and the speech-language pathologist do not consistently plan, schedule, or collaborate to maximize their support of students with disabilities and teachers in general education.



Staff survey results consistently support the need to revisit the support facilitation model with consideration to increased collaboration among school-based staff. **Exhibit 4.1-9** shows the staff survey results regarding collaborative planning and consultation with colleagues. As can be seen, fewer than 50 percent of speech education teachers, general education teachers, and special education providers indicated that they have adequate time for collaborative planning and consultation with colleagues.

Exhibit 4.1-9
Evergreen Survey Statement on
Collaborative Planning and Consultation

Survey Statement: My school provides adequate time for collaborative planning and consultation with colleagues (e.g., general education teachers, ESE teachers, ESE service providers such as therapists and behavior specialists). [For district staff, schools across the district provide staff adequate time...]						
Survey Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
District Administrator	0.0%	27.3%	27.3%	9.1%	27.3%	9.1%
District Program Specialist	3.0%	22.4%	22.4%	28.4%	16.4%	7.5%
School Administrator	40.7%	42.6%	7.9%	7.4%	1.4%	0.0%
Non-Instructional Support	20.2%	35.9%	18.5%	13.3%	6.4%	5.8%
Special Education Teacher	19.4%	34.1%	13.1%	21.0%	11.5%	0.8%
Special Education Provider	9.6%	35.8%	21.9%	18.7%	11.8%	2.1%
General Education Teacher	15.7%	31.2%	15.8%	21.3%	13.9%	2.2%
Paraprofessional	23.7%	35.2%	13.2%	7.6%	4.6%	15.8%
Other	23.5%	32.9%	14.7%	16.0%	7.5%	5.3%
Survey Statement: I have been trained and know how to work collaboratively with other teachers to serve our shared students with disabilities.						
Survey Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
District Administrator	9.1%	27.3%	0.0%	9.1%	0.0%	54.5%
District Program Specialist	49.3%	37.3%	3.0%	1.5%	0.0%	9.0%
School Administrator	38.0%	35.6%	6.0%	2.8%	0.5%	17.1%
Non-Instructional Support	43.5%	40.4%	5.5%	1.9%	1.7%	6.9%
Special Education Teacher	40.5%	45.3%	7.0%	4.0%	2.1%	1.3%
Special Education Provider	45.2%	43.1%	5.9%	3.7%	2.1%	0.0%
General Education Teacher	20.3%	37.7%	17.6%	15.5%	6.1%	2.9%
Paraprofessional	25.7%	34.2%	12.2%	8.9%	7.9%	11.2%
Other	39.4%	36.3%	10.0%	5.3%	2.2%	6.9%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.

The staff survey results further indicate that, while special education teachers and special education providers (over 80 percent) believe that are adequately trained to work collaboratively with other teachers, only 58 percent of general education teachers are confident of their training in collaboration. It is also important to note that approximately 40 percent of paraprofessionals remain neutral or believe that they are adequately trained in collaboration, even though every school is assigned at least one paraprofessional for inclusion of students with disabilities in general education.

In many cases, support facilitators, intensive reading teachers, and speech-language therapists address the same IEP goals for students with disabilities, but frequently do so in isolation from one another. The service delivery for students with disabilities in general education can be greatly improved by creating a collaborative approach to in-class support for students with disabilities in the general education setting.



RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.1-4:

Restructure the support facilitation staffing model to support greater collaboration and shared caseloads among ESE and dually certified staff, resulting in improved in-class support for students with disabilities and teachers in the general education setting.

BCPS should examine the current model for support facilitation and create a collaborative intervention model among support facilitators, dually certified teachers, and speech-language pathologists. The current ‘working-in-isolation’ model does not maximize the personnel resources nor provide maximum support to students with disabilities in general education.

The American Speech-Language and Hearing Association’s report, *A Model for Collaborative Service Delivery for Students With Language-Learning Disorders in the Public Schools*, is an excellent resource for creating a collaborative model.

FINDING

ESE personnel vacancies create a challenge for BCPS. The district lacks a comprehensive plan for addressing hard-to-fill vacancies and developing strategies to overcome this challenge. Moreover, job descriptions are out-of-date and do not accurately reflect the current job requirements of staff.

Exhibit 4.1-10 shows the vacancies for key ESE positions in BCPS for the 2012-13 and 2013-14 school years. Based on these data, the number of vacancies for ESE Specialists and Speech-Language Pathologists increased slightly, while ESE teacher vacancies increased nearly 10 percent from 2012-13 to 2013-14.

Exhibit 4.1-10
Key Personnel Vacancies
2012-13 and 2013-14 School Years

Position	2012-13 School Year	2013-14 School Year	Vacancy Increase/Decrease From 2012-13 to 2013-14
ESE Specialist	48	51	+3
ESE Teacher	253	274	+21
Speech-language Pathologist	96	104	+8

Source: BCPS Exceptional Student Education and Support Division, 2014.

BCPS designated staff conduct a number of informal activities for advertising and hiring ESE staff, including:

- using trend data to determine how many new ESE and SLP teachers will need to be hired by the first day of school;



- beginning to issue “Intent to Hire” contracts during early recruitment season with the goal of having all positions filled by first day of school;
- advertising nationally and locally (print and digital);
- using social media;
- identifying ESE candidates through Substitute Teacher Clearance Days;
- using weekly posts and email blasts on Teachers-Teachers.com;
- conducting monthly interview sessions;
- posting vacancies or potential openings on BCPS website;
- listing local universities to recruit candidates (beginning at the sophomore level);
- attending out-of-state recruitment events to advertise the need for SLP and ESE teachers;
- monitoring online Master SLP candidate interest and following up with email and phone calls;
- attending state and national conferences; and
- working closely with the SLP curriculum specialist to assist with prescreening, interviewing, and offering intent to hire contracts.

While these activities are appropriate, they do not address the systemic changes that need to occur to appropriately address the increasing number of ESE personnel vacancies.

A review of job descriptions for ESE personnel indicates that most have not been reviewed or updated since 2004. During onsite school visits and interviews with key staff, it was found that the job descriptions do not accurately or consistently reflect the job duties. Further, many job descriptions lack specific information regarding physical or special requirements. Given the range and severity of disabilities served throughout BCPS, it is imperative that job descriptions accurately reflect job duties and can be clearly articulated to potential employees.

During onsite visits to the schools, it was reported that ESE personnel turnover is often due to a lack of information or awareness of the actual job duties or the demands of special populations. Staff reported that teachers or support staff are often hired without the necessary training, experience, or credentials to successfully fulfill the job duties. The lack of information, awareness, or adequate preparation for ESE positions results in poor employee retention and difficulty recruiting potential candidates.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 4.1-5:

Develop a comprehensive plan for addressing hard-to-fill vacancies and strategies to meet this challenge.

A comprehensive plan should describe comparative salary and job requirements. Given the importance of recruiting and retaining highly effective teachers and support staff, a systematic, thorough approach is the most essential element for both initial success and sustainability. The plan should be considered a living, dynamic process, requiring ongoing revision.

Recommendation 4.1-6:

Update ESE job descriptions to accurately reflect job duties, necessary education, experience, physical requirements, and accountability measures.

Job descriptions define roles, responsibilities, and reporting relationships. They are essential for potential recruits to understand job duties and the district to hire staff with needed skills and knowledge. They are also necessary to ensure that key tasks are being completed, critical timelines are met, and duplication of effort is minimized.

Examples of current and well-written job descriptions are those of the transition services specialist position and the job coach position. Both job descriptions were board-approved in 2009 and provide appropriate descriptions of education, experience, job requirements and essential responsibilities. The job descriptions also include supervision reports for accountability. Examples of job descriptions that need to be updated include, but are not limited to: the family counselor position, exceptional student education specialist position, and teacher for behavioral support position. The paraprofessional position should be updated to include the specific requirements of special education settings along the continuum of services.

FINDING

The ESE Specialist responsibilities vary from school to school and exceed job description duties. As previously mentioned, ESE job descriptions need to be updated, including that of the ESE Specialist.

Exhibit 4.1-11 shows the job description for the ESE Specialist position. As shown, the description describes the contract year, qualifications, goal, accountability, and performance responsibilities. It should be noted that the job description does not include a statement of supervision.

School visits, interviews, and a review of data support a number of issues regarding the ESE Specialist positions:



Exhibit 4.1-11 ESE Specialist Job Description

Item	Description
Position Title	Exceptional Student Education Specialist (Resource Teacher)
Contract Year	Ten months teacher calendar (varying workdays). Exceptional Student Education Specialist will participate on selected days other than normal workdays for the purpose of screening and inservice education. One compensatory day will be awarded for each selected day.
Pay Grade	Teacher Salary Schedule
Qualifications	<p><u>Education:</u> An earned bachelor's degree or higher from an accredited institution; Florida certification in at least one area of exceptionality.</p> <p><u>Experience:</u> Minimum of three (3) years of successful teaching experience.</p> <p><u>Special Qualifications:</u> Bilingual skills preferred. Computer skills are required for the position.</p>
Direct Accountability	School Principal
Supervision	
Goal	To provide onsite procedural and curricular assistance to all school-based personnel with regard to the education of exceptional students.
Accountability Procedures	The school principal will assess the effectiveness of the ESE Specialist annually with respect to the performance of specific responsibilities.
Performance Responsibilities	<p>The ESE Specialist shall:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Upon request, serve as the principal's designee for ESE staffings. 2. Coordinate exceptional student education staffings, re-evaluations and parent conferences for exceptional students. 3. Provide onsite inservice training to school-based personnel on a regular basis. 4. At the elementary level, participate in early intervention screenings and staffings. 5. Assist regular teachers of mainstreamed exceptional students to provide appropriate educational experiences for these students. 6. Coordinate and/or conduct interventions, educational evaluations and observations of exceptional students. 7. Assist staffing committees in developing appropriate IEPs. 8. Conduct workshops for parents. 9. Prepare ESE folders for approval by the Area Coordinator. 10. Assist teachers in implementing effective classroom management strategies. 11. Provide feedback to the ESE Curriculum Supervisors with regard to curricula, related services and program delivery systems. 12. Participate in inservice training programs designed to improve the ability to provide procedural and curricular assistance. 13. Review current developments, literature and technical sources of information related to job responsibility. 14. Ensure adherence to good safety procedures. 15. Perform other duties as assigned by the school principal. 16. Follow federal and state laws, as well as School Board policies.
Reference: JJ-034	
Board Approved: (date)	
Revised: (date)	

Source: BCPS, Human Resources Department, 2004.



- The minimum qualifications for the ESE Specialist position are not adequate for the position. To be successful as an ESE Specialist, key staff reported that a candidate must have extensive experience in ESE compliance and procedures. Staff hired with minimum qualifications cannot adequately perform the job duties or provide the necessary support to school staff or parents. It was also reported that a lack of experience and the job demands also leads to high turnover rates among ESE Specialists.
- ESE Specialists work the regular school calendar, or 196 days. In previous years, the ESE Specialists worked a 216-day calendar, but it was reduced 196 days due to budget restraints. This does not allow time for opening- or closing-of-school ESE activities such as addressing transfer students, student enrollments, scheduling of staffings, evaluations, or IEP meetings, student schedules, professional development, and assisting school staff and parents with transitions in/out of programs or schools.
- Compliance procedures related to gifted education are assigned to the ESE Specialist. While gifted education is under the ESE umbrella, the Division of Instruction and Intervention provides all gifted education support services. Oversight of gifted education procedures is not included in the ESE Specialist's job description, which results in already extensive caseloads being even more challenging and creates an unnecessary burden on the ESE Specialist whose primary responsibility is ESE compliance.
- During onsite interviews, it was frequently reported that the ESE Specialists are assigned an array of other duties, including lunchroom supervision, bus duty, and covering classes when needed. It was further reported that in some cases the ESE Specialists spend up to two hours per day completing duties not related to their job descriptions. Given the high caseloads and demands for timely and accurate service delivery and compliance, these other duties greatly interfere with the ESE Specialists being able to fulfill their primary responsibilities.
- Caseloads for ESE Specialists are based on weighted FTE. Schools are allocated a .50 FTE for a weighted FTE of less than 300, and a 1.00 FTE for a weighted FTE greater than 300. This allocation formula allows for a considerable discrepancy of caseloads among the ESE Specialists.

Exhibit 4.1-12 provides an example of this discrepancy. As can be seen, the weighted caseload significantly varies from school-to-school, ranging from 43.33 weighted FTE at North Fork to over 295 weighted FTE at Liberty. In some schools with large caseloads, the school administrators use general funds to hire clerical support for the ESE Specialist. The allocation formula does not allow for any incremental staffing within the weighted FTE range below or above 300 weighted FTE.

- School-based accountability for ESE Specialist duties for compliance is lacking. The ESE Specialists are hired, assigned to the schools, and evaluated by principals. The ESE Specialists are often considered quasi-administrators and frequently work independently of the school-based administration. However, accountability to ensure that ESE services are in compliance with state and federal regulations is not school-based. This creates a disconnect between supervision of staff and accountability for implementation of special education services according to IDEA.



Exhibit 4.1-12
Example of ESE Specialist Allocations By School
Weighted FTE for .5 FTE ESE Specialist

School	Weighted FTE
Broward Estates	48.56
Country Isles	292.42
Floranada	236.82
Hawkes Bluff	297.98
Heron Heights	281.80
Hollywood Park	291.77
Lauderdale Manors	65.98
Liberty	295.38
Markham	298.17
North Fork	43.33
Panther Run	287.65
Park Lakes	276.03
Parkside	299.51
Pinewood	269.49
Walker	40.98

Source: BCPS Exceptional Student Education and Support Division, 2014.

Exhibit 4.1-13 shows the discrepancy in school administrator and ESE Specialist perception of ESE services in the schools. The school administrators perceive the delivery of ESE services and supports to be much better when compared to the perceptions of district administrators and the ESE program specialists.

Exhibit 4.1-13
Evergreen Survey Statement on
ESE Services and Supports

Survey Statement: Students with disabilities in my school who are served in regular class placement receive the supports and services they need to be successful in the general education curriculum. [For district staff, students across the district...]						
Survey Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
District Administrator	27.3%	54.5%	0.0%	9.1%	0.0%	9.1%
District Program Specialist	20.9%	43.3%	14.9%	10.4%	1.5%	9.0%
School Administrator	86.6%	13.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Survey Statement: My school provides adequate time for collaborative planning and consultation with colleagues (e.g., general education teachers, ESE teachers, ESE service providers such as therapists and behavior specialists). [For district staff, schools across the district provide staff adequate time...]						
Survey Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
District Administrator	0.0%	27.3%	27.3%	9.1%	27.3%	9.1%
District Program Specialist	3.0%	22.4%	22.4%	28.4%	16.4%	7.5%
School Administrator	40.7%	42.6%	7.9%	7.4%	1.4%	0.0%
Survey Statement: Students with disabilities in my school receive all of the ESE services required by their IEPs (i.e., type and amount of special education, related services, accommodations, behavioral supports, etc.). [For district staff, students across the district...]						
Survey Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
District Administrator	22.2%	22.2%	22.2%	11.1%	11.1%	11.1%
District Program Specialist	9.1%	24.2%	25.8%	30.3%	1.5%	9.1%
School Administrator	53.9%	38.3%	1.5%	4.9%	1.0%	0.5%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.



The ESE Specialist position job description duties do not accurately reflect their assigned duties in the schools. High caseloads, lack of an extended calendar to 216 days, other assigned duties, and lack of school-based accountability hinder the delivery of special education services and compliance with state and federal regulations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 4.1-7:

Restructure the ESE Specialist staffing allocation to allow incremental support within the weighted FTE formula.

Incremental staffing within the ESE Specialist staffing formula will create additional support in those schools with large caseloads. The additional staffing could include clerical support or an increase in the ESE Specialist FTE. The restructuring should also allow school administrators to reallocate general funds to other areas of need.

Recommendation 4.1-8:

Update the ESE Specialist job responsibilities to accurately reflect the necessary qualifications, extend calendar by at least 10 days, remove non-ESE duties and duties related to gifted education, and ensure school-based accountability.

Because the ESE Specialists are assigned to the schools, the accountability for compliance with state and federal regulations should rest with the school. The ESE Specialist positions should be reserved for ESE compliance duties with removal of all other assignments. School administrators should receive the necessary professional development and support from the Exceptional Student Education and Support Division to assume responsibilities of ESE compliance in their buildings. Principals should be held accountable to ensure that ESE Specialists are only performing ESE roles and responsibilities.

FINDING

The district maintains eight transition services specialist positions, but none of the positions are assigned to students with disabilities from 14 to 18 years of age. The district also maintains 26 job coach positions, but, according to onsite interviewees, none of the positions are assigned to students with disabilities from under 18 years of age with mild-to-moderate disabilities.

The job description for the transition services specialist indicates that transition services personnel are responsible for:

- planning, developing, disseminating, evaluating transition services for students with disabilities;
- developing basic equipment, materials and supplies lists for district transition programs and services;



- providing input to district curriculum supervisors on the development of transition services for students with disabilities;
- providing input to curriculum supervisors regarding appropriate high school course work based on post school outcomes for student with disabilities;
- advising and consulting with district curriculum supervisors, community agencies, school-based instructional and administrative personnel regarding transition services for students with disabilities;
- planning, developing and implementing parent education programs to promote parental involvement in transition planning;
- monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of the current transition programs and delivery systems;
- informing staff of changes in local, state, and national policies, rules and regulations related to transition, interpret the changes and assist school personnel in implementing the mandates appropriately for students with disabilities as they relate to transition services;
- assisting school-based administrators, when requested, with staff utilization and professional development;
- participating in interdepartmental planning and decision-making to ensure quality and consistency among transition service;
- meeting with advisory, advocacy and support groups to obtain and provide information related to transition services;
- developing and disseminating information to increase public awareness of the transition needs and opportunities for students with disabilities;
- supervising assigned non-instructional personnel, conducting annual performance appraisals and making recommendations for appropriate employment action;
- performing and promoting all activities in compliance with equal employment and nondiscrimination policies of the School Board of Broward County;
- participating and successfully completing, training programs offered to increase the individual's skills and proficiency related to the assignments;
- reviewing current developments, literature and technical sources of information related to job responsibilities;
- ensuring adherence to good safety procedures;



- following federal and state laws, as well as School Board policies; and
- performing other duties, as assigned by the Director or designee, which are consistent with the goals and objectives of this position

As documented in the job description, the essential performance responsibilities required of the job coach are to:

- develop a thorough knowledge of jobs in which students will be placed by physically performing all tasks which will be required of students at job site;
- provide onsite assistance to students by demonstrating the necessary work skills and, as needed, by helping the student to complete the task;
- maintain ongoing contact with student's on-the-job supervisor for as long as needed to ensure the student's successful performance in the position;
- collect and record performance data for each student under the direction of the OJT teacher and principal;
- provide input to the OJT with regard to the student's performance on the job;
- assist with helping the teacher plan instructional activities;
- follow up lessons presented by the teacher when provided with guidelines by the teacher;
- grade and record students' work under the direction of the teacher;
- monitor student attendance and punctuality;
- implement behavior management procedures as prescribed by the (on-the-job training) OJT teacher or other school support staff in order to ensure successful participation in the workplace;
- assist student in learning strategies for obtaining transportation to and from the work site;
- work the same schedule as the student (holidays, week-ends, nights, etc.) to the extent necessary to ensure the student's success on the job;
- communicate with employers, fellow employees, parents, teachers, and agency personnel to facilitate long term employment for students;
- perform and promote all activities in compliance with equal employment and nondiscrimination policies of The School Board of Broward County, Florida;



- participate, successfully, in the training programs offered to increase the individual's skill and proficiency related to the assignment;
- review current developments, literature and technical sources of information related to job responsibility;
- ensure adherence to good safety procedures;
- follow federal and state laws, as well as School Board policies; and
- perform other duties as assigned by the Principal or District Administrator.

Currently, the district's transition specialists and job coaching personnel are assigned to students with disabilities from 18 to 22 years of age or to students with moderate-to-severe disabilities. The Post-Graduate Alternatives for Secondary Students (PASS) program offers vocational training and employment for students with disabilities from 18 to 22 years. The Community-based Instruction (CBI) program offers employment and leisure skills training for students with moderate-to-severe disabilities. While these programs are worthy, there is not a similar emphasis on transition services students with mild to moderate disabilities from 14 to 18 years of age.

In order for the transition/matriculation services required by state and federal regulations to be provided, appropriate staff must be assigned for that purpose. As reviewed in **Section 4.11**, transition services and procedures for students with disabilities from 14 to 18 years of age are inconsistent, splintered, and often lacking. As shown in **Section 4.13**, data support that students with disabilities who are working toward standard diploma are often not academically successful and lack the employability skills necessary for independent living. The current allocation of transition personnel must be evaluated and redistributed to include students with mild-to-moderate disabilities from 14 to 18 years of age.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.1-9:

Evaluate the allocation of transition specialists and job coaches, and redistribute personnel to include assignment to students with mild-to-moderate disabilities from 14 to 18 years of age.

Consideration of transition services for students with disabilities begins at 14 years of age to ensure that transition services are in place beginning at 16 years of age. The ESE staffing allocation should assign the necessary personnel to ensure that transition services and supports are equitably provided for all eligible students.



4.1.3 Support to Schools

As accountability for schools regarding the success for all students increases, effective support to schools become essential. The planning and alignment of services and resources with district priorities help to ensure that educational resources are allocated where they will have the most impact on intended results. This requires common understanding of what the core educational goals are and ensuring that support to schools is targeted toward achieving those goals.

FINDING

The Exceptional Student Education and Support Division recognizes its role in instructional support to schools at three levels: **awareness, prevention, and intervention**. The respective tasks include:

- **Being aware of:**
 - staff development information and schedule;
 - team contact information and roles;
 - review and analysis of student data (gap analysis)
 - meeting schedules for school-based staff;
 - curriculum requirements and procedures as related to ESE; and
 - program standards and alignment.
- **Emphasizing prevention through:**
 - advisement and/assistance with scheduling of students;
 - review of curriculum;
 - review of behavior plans and interventions;
 - assistance to schools in aligning IDEA support;
 - coaching and mentoring; and
 - participation in school-based data chats.
- **Providing interventions such as:**
 - arrangement of onsite professional development;
 - progress monitoring;
 - scheduled coaching and mentoring; and
 - development and monitoring assistance plans.

To accomplish these tasks, ESE support to schools is assigned by school and zone areas. Within each School Support Team, BCPS designates the assignment of a curriculum supervisor and program specialists. The Division's vision is for the school support teams to offer comprehensive support to the schools, including:

- curriculum and instruction;
- speech and language;
- coaching and mentoring;
- assistive technology;



- IEP implementation;
- data analysis;
- program standards;
- behavior;
- accommodations;
- cluster programs; and
- least restrictive environment.

The Exceptional Student Education and Support Division stated goal is to focus 80 percent or more of staff time on curriculum and instruction and 20 percent or less on operations. The Division is committed to streamlined support to schools even with fewer resources. There are initiatives to align IEP development with current academic programs and interventions; implement intervention programs for ESE students; and continue providing instructional accommodations. The division aims to be included in all district initiatives to ensure that the needs of students with disabilities are considered. Overall, the mission and vision of the Exceptional Student Education and Support Division support a collaborative approach to improved outcomes for students with disabilities.

COMMENDATION

The mission and vision of the Exceptional Student Education and Support Division promotes collaboration with district departments and designates comprehensive curriculum and instructional support to schools.

FINDING

While the Exceptional Student Education and Support Division has a vision for special education services and supports, the vision has yet to be implemented in the district. With the recent reorganization of the department and creating a framework for curriculum and instructional support to the schools, improving the performance and academic success of students with disabilities is a districtwide challenge.

Exhibit 4.1-14 shows staff survey results regarding ESE communication and support to the schools, specifically regarding sufficient training for general education teachers to support ESE students. As shown, 50 percent or more of the district program specialist, school administrator, and special education provider groups agree/strongly agree with the statement “Sufficient training is available for general education teachers to support ESE students”. The majority in all other groups responded neutral/disagree/strongly disagree, with the district administrator group at 44 percent disagree/strongly disagree being the most emphatic. The general education teacher group was 32 percent agree and 44 percent neutral/disagree, while the special education teacher group was 45 percent agree and 47 percent neutral/disagree.

During onsite visits and interviews with key personnel, it was reported that, historically, there has been a broad disconnect between ESE Division and the schools. School staff consistently reported that ESE supervisors were rarely seen in the schools. It was further reported that, historically, interactions between the Division and the schools were often crisis-driven and not focused on providing ongoing curriculum and instructional support. The communications and collaborative efforts between ESE and other district departments have historically been limited.



Exhibit 4.1-14
Evergreen Survey Statement on
Communication and Support to the Schools

Survey Statement: Sufficient training is available for general education teachers to support ESE students.						
Survey Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
District Administrator	11.1%	11.1%	22.2%	33.3%	11.1%	11.1%
District Program Specialist	12.9%	41.9%	29.0%	6.5%	4.8%	4.8%
School Administrator	18.8%	40.6%	24.4%	9.1%	6.1%	1.0%
Non-Instructional Support	9.7%	27.8%	27.8%	9.1%	7.3%	18.4%
Special Education Teacher	10.8%	34.3%	25.4%	13.7%	8.4%	7.4%
Special Education Provider	5.3%	44.7%	24.7%	16.5%	2.9%	5.9%
General Education Teacher	8.6%	22.7%	32.0%	6.8%	5.0%	25.0%
Paraprofessional	10.9%	25.0%	22.6%	4.8%	5.6%	31.0%
Other	10.5%	24.5%	27.8%	11.9%	6.5%	18.8%

Source: Evergreen Survey 2014.

To move from a crisis-driven approach to a collaborative instructional approach, it is necessary that ESE curriculum supervisors maintain ongoing communication with school administrators; participate in school administrator meetings; and participate in school-based continuous improvement initiatives. Collaborative planning and working directly with general and special education school staff for the delivery of curriculum and instructional supports to the schools must be evident.

As previously mentioned, the Exceptional Student Education and Support Division focus is 80 percent or more of staff time on curriculum and instruction and 20 percent or less time on operations. While this is an admirable goal, onsite interviews documented that very few of the ESE staff are certified in, or have knowledge of, general education content, standards, or data-driven instruction. This necessitates a strong collaborative approach with the Division of Instruction and Interventions, with the general education content experts taking the lead on curricular development, professional development, and implementation.

The Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resource System (FDLRS) provides instructional support services to BCPS ESE programs in four central functions: child find, parent services, human resource development, and technology. In regard to high-quality instruction, FDLRS supports:

- accommodations and modifications;
- classroom/behavior management;
- differentiated instruction and effective instructional strategies;
- ESE policies and procedures;
- instructional interventions and assessments for math and reading for students with disabilities;
- models for support and inclusive practices; and
- modules, school-based teams, and professional learning communities.



While the supports offered by FDLRS are worthy, the collaboration among FDLRS, the Exceptional Student Education and Support Division, and the Division of Instruction and Interventions has been limited. More often, the three units have worked parallel and separate from one another. The parallel approach prevents a realization of the department's vision for curriculum and instructional support to the schools.

To realize its vision, it is critical that Exceptional Student Education and Support Division closely align with the Division of Instruction and Interventions and the continuous improvement initiatives in the schools. The two continuous improvement models were observed in BCPS schools are Marzano's *Art and Science of Teaching*, and DeFour's *Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)*. The models are evidenced in the schools by iObservations, high yield strategies, text complexity, leveled instructional goals, and grade-level, subject-area, and data-review PLCs. These models aim to address the Florida standards, differentiate instruction, and improve the academic achievement for all students. The ESE initiatives should be an evident and integral part of continuous improvement in the schools.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 4.1-10:

Ensure curriculum and instructional supports to the schools align with and are integrated within the continuous improvement models.

The Exceptional Student Education and Support Division mission and vision for curriculum and instructional supports to the schools is admirable. With the implementation of the initiatives to achieve the vision, a new way of work must become apparent throughout the district. The ESE curriculum supervisors should attend principal meetings and meet at least monthly with the principals of their assigned schools for collaborative planning and work toward the delivery of curriculum and instructional supports to the schools. The Division should empower school administrators to effectively address the academic needs of students with disabilities through school-based professional development and guiding the integration of curriculum and instructional supports within the school's continuous improvement structures. Careful planning and key initiatives should be implemented to create the systemic change necessary to improve the outcomes for students with disabilities throughout BCPS.

Recommendation 4.1-11:

Establish a consistent schedule for ESE Curriculum Supervisors to participate in all principal meetings and visits to schools.

The ESE Curriculum Supervisors should attend all principal meetings and meet at least monthly with the principals of their assigned schools for collaborative planning and work toward the delivery of curriculum and instructional supports to the schools. The ESE curriculum supervisors should also maintain a weekly visitation schedule to schools and participate in school-based continuous improvement initiatives, professional learning communities, and data analysis reviews for students with disabilities.



4.2 ESE SUPPORT AND RELATED SERVICES



4.2 ESE SUPPORT AND RELATED SERVICES

This section discusses practices that either enhance or encumber the availability, provision, and quality of specialized instruction and services associated with exceptional student education in Broward County Public Schools. The section is divided into the following subsections:

- 4.2.1 Management and Organization
- 4.2.2 Staffing
- 4.2.3 Transportation
- 4.2.4 Instructional Technology

4.2.1 Management and Organization

Exceptional Student Education (ESE) provides extended support for students and their families and enhances student performance and academic achievement. These educational services are provided to supplement, accommodate, or modify the general academic course of study, and are intended to give adequate support to ensure the academic success of students with disabilities. The specialized student support role is to provide supplemental or extended support for students and their families that contribute to enhanced student performance and academic achievement.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) mandates that special education services be provided to students with disabilities in the general education setting to the greatest extent possible. *No Child Left Behind* reinforces that goal with its express expectation that all students will be proficient by 2013-14. Towards that end, for years many districts have provided training and encouragement to help regular classroom teachers learn how to accommodate the needs of special education students in their classes.

Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 extends opportunity and access to all people with disabilities, including those in regular education programs. Furthering equitable treatment for all people, the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) extends the goal of eliminating discrimination against individuals with disabilities even more. Those laws, along with advances in medical technology, have opened opportunities for more students than ever to receive their education in the public schools of the nation.

FINDING

Some offices responsible for related services have procedures in place to systematize decision making, use data to guide actions, and monitor processes. For instance, the SEDNET Coordinator and the Director of Student Support Services have both developed procedures that build accountability into service provision. The SEDNET Office conducts monthly training for new clinicians regarding what to expect when they enter the school system and an overview of services, the organization, and its partnerships. The SEDNET Coordinator also noted that employees also learn about the impact of early experiences and support on later life as Harvard's Center on the Developing Child has found. This Center studies in-depth the impact of early influences on the development of children's brains and long-term development.

Additionally, the SEDNET Coordinator conducts monthly small groups for her staff where they examine all of their notes together with her three team leads. Staff conducts bi-weekly random audits where records from EasyIEP™ are checked against clinician anecdotal notes. Follow-up



letters detail findings and provide feedback for improvement. The coordinator also uses monthly meetings to give iObservation information so that, at evaluation time, there are no surprises and there have been ample opportunities for improvement throughout the year. Each staff member is also asked periodically to lead the group and talk about how they related their reflections from such feedback to their service to students.

Current leaders in the BCPS Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services have only been in their positions a short period of time. Nonetheless, they have already undertaken a comparison, in some ESE-related services positions, of costs of employees versus contracted services to determine which approach is the most cost-effective to meet district needs.

The new Director of Support Services has examined processes, data analysis, and usage within the offices for which he is responsible. He first ensured that data were clean, so now his office supplies schools with reports that give them feedback regarding their compliance with ESE policies and procedures, laws, and regulations. He is asking the company, Public Consulting Group (PCG), to provide the district with a snapshot of what the schools look like as a basis for determining the wise use of staff each year.

Recognizing the need for IEP teams at schools to have the skills necessary to control potentially emotionally charged meetings, he developed a plan to train all school teams in Facilitative Leadership over time and offered an overview to parents and the ESE Advisory Committee. The Director uses caseload data to identify high referring schools and pair those schools with others with lower referral rates to assign support staff who report to him. He continually monitors open cases and uses staff flexibly so that he floats one when the numbers increase to the point of needing to be addressed. Under his leadership, the district negotiated down the contract costs for speech and language pathologists (SLPs) last year.

Although it is not a part of the Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services, the Transportation Department's work certainly interacts with and affects ESE students and departments. They, too, very effectively use data to drive decisions on issues such as routing, recommendations for program location, bus loads, length of bus rides (within their ability), and revenues and costs.

COMMENDATION

The BCPS Office of Support Services, SEDNET, Transportation Department, and the Executive Director of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services are commended for their application of business principles and use of data in decision making.

FINDING

While first steps have been initiated to determine the cost benefits of having staff employed or contracted by the district, a comprehensive study is far from complete or inclusive of all areas of ESE operations that need to be examined.



Areas of concern identified by Evergreen include:

- Job descriptions are unclear and have not been updated as time, staffing, reporting relationships, and responsibilities have changed. Clarity of roles and responsibilities assists employees in performing district expectations and district leaders in holding them accountable.
- Staffing numbers have been drastically reduced in all areas pertaining to related and support services but there is no evidence that district leadership as a whole has taken a step back to examine how that has impacted service delivery.
- School areas and centers have closed, but again, there is no evidence in terms of staffing, student impact, support service levels being maintained, or transportation that a comprehensive analysis of all aspects of impact are considered in order to make indicated adjustments on an ongoing basis.
- Job titles are ambiguous. Family counselors do not counsel families, but serve students in schools. Other counselors actually serve families after hours, but are limited in their ability to do so by family work hours and availability of transportation. They reside in another division of BCPS as do social workers but have no linkage with the “family counselors” in ESE.
- The span of control of ESE administrators has been stretched beyond reasonable limits of reporting, consulting, observation, or evaluation. For example, the two Psychological Service Coordinators are responsible for supervising and evaluating 122 psychologists who are not centrally located, but assigned to schools across the district’s more than 1,200 square miles. Conducting iObservations on 61 staff with whom they have infrequent contact in addition to other responsibilities is both unjust to the staff they evaluate and challenging to achieve with any degree of accuracy or fidelity.
- Contracting versus employing related services staff such as occupational and physical therapists needs to be analyzed to determine the most beneficial and cost-effective model for students. Staff interviewed were particularly concerned about BCPS ensuring a sufficient number of speech language pathologists (SLPs) and particularly those that are district employees instead of contracted.
- While district leadership has studied SLP caseloads and created staffing guidelines, there are many factors weighing into the workload of SLPs that complicate the issue (These are discussed further in a later finding).

Another reflection of the need for the district to purposefully address the issues identified by Evergreen is the almost even split in parents’ rating of the quality of effectiveness of therapies and related services in BCPS as shown in **Exhibit 4.2-1**. Specifically, 23.5 percent either strongly agree/agree that therapies and related services are improving while only slightly more, 27.1 percent, strongly disagree/disagree. Slightly more than 29 percent believe they are staying the same; another 20.1 percent expressed “No Opinion.”



Exhibit 4.2-1
Evergreen Parent Survey Statement
on ESE Services

Survey Statement: Overall, the quality and effectiveness of therapies and related services provided by BCPS are:				
Survey Group	Improving	Staying the Same	Declining	No Opinion
Parent	23.5%	29.4%	27.1%	20.1%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.2-1:

Develop a prioritized schedule in which key areas of district operations are identified for deeper examination and related action.

BCPS encourages strong reliance on data. Data take many forms and, used appropriately, guides decisions that are based on facts rather than perceptions. A thorough examination of all facets of ESE operations will enable the district to make changes that clarify roles, responsibilities, reporting relationships, and ensure sufficient staffing levels to support students, teachers, and administrators. It will also provide evidence upon which ongoing re-organization beyond the tenure of this report should be directed. Formal communications systems, meetings, and planning to meet student needs should also be established between divisions of BCPS with similar roles and responsibilities regarding student support.

FINDING

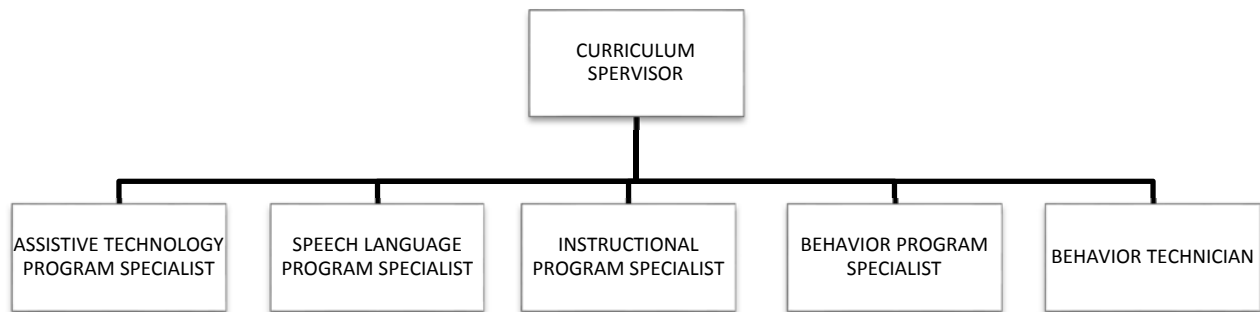
Overall, the organization's current structure is not well-aligned for clear communications and direction for staff in related and support services. A consistent concern expressed by staff in related service support positions was that the team-based reporting structure creates ambiguity and is ineffective in the use of their limited time available for student support.

While the team model for supporting curriculum is solid, it may have unintended consequences; specifically, it diffuses accountability and corporate expertise of groups of related services staff. **Exhibit 4.2-2** shows the structure.

Due to the team organization, not all staff with the same expertise such as Behavior Program Specialists, Assistive Technology (AT) specialists, or SLPs report to the same Curriculum Specialist. Staff report that there is little uniformity in what the five teams do regarding AT and other activities. They report that each team has different foci, depending on the team leader. Two of the AT staff report to one Curriculum Specialist with the rest reporting to another. When these staff members have a question related to a particular case, they channel it to their supervising Curriculum Specialist whose expertise may or may not be in their own area. If they have a question, for instance, related to AT, they ask the FDLRS Coordinator whose department houses AT as well as their designated Curriculum Specialist. This dual supervisory structure presents two impediments to efficiency and effectiveness. Many reported that the same question asked of different supervisors renders different answers, contributing to inconsistency across the district. Furthermore, all staff with similar professional expertise and related concerns do not report to the same supervisor.



Exhibit 4.2-2
BCPS Support Team Structure
2013-14 School Year



Source: ESE Division PowerPoint provided to Evergreen, February 2014.

The intent is for there to be targeted support for curriculum delivered through the team approach. The reality is that there are not enough staff in each area of related services to provide the targeted support intended. The communications approach is also counter-productive to focusing staff time on direct student services.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.2-2:

Create three Supervisor positions for Assistive Technology, Behavior, and Speech and Language.

While the current organizational structure is focused on support for curriculum and instruction, it is not best organized to capitalize on the respective expertise of staff in the related service positions who currently report to the Curriculum Specialists. Adding the proposed positions would benefit the district in the following ways:

- Enhance communications, one of the three pillars of the Division's organizational goals, by clarifying reporting relationships and making each discipline have a single individual to whom they report, thus eliminating ambiguity caused by conflicting directions given by supervisors in two roles.
- Ensure that staff with related responsibilities are supervised by an individual with expertise in their discipline.

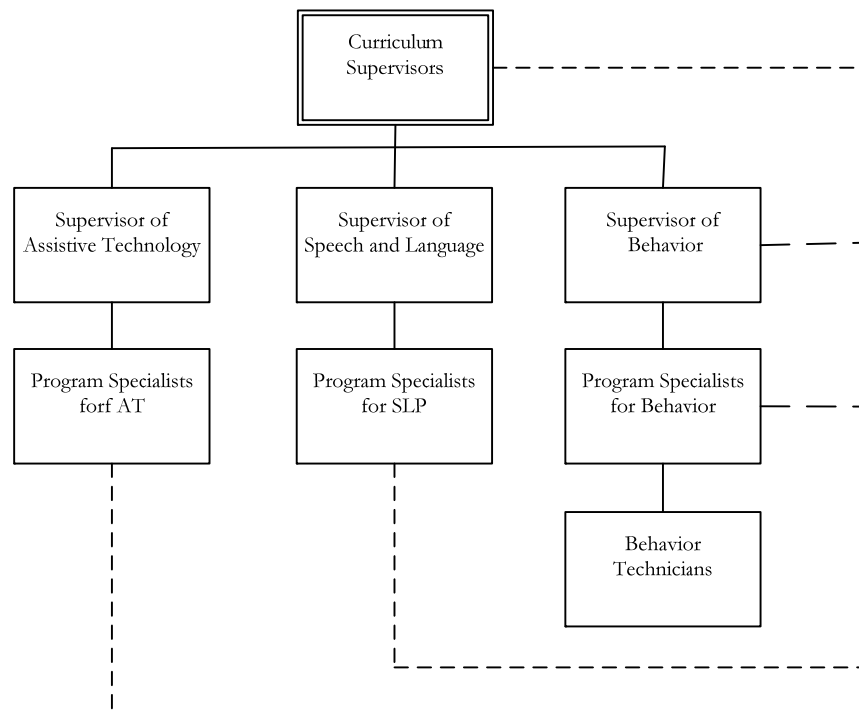
The positions will be on a par with the Curriculum Supervisors and will supervise the Program Specialists in their related area. They will coordinate the work of their specialists as it relates to their area of expertise and work with the Curriculum Supervisors to resolve questions and provide direction and consistency among all of the program specialists under their supervision. This recommendation capitalizes on the expertise of staff according to their background and experience and ensures that communications and processes in each related service area are clear and consistent. The Program Supervisors will remain as a part of the teams assisting the



Curriculum Supervisors but their direct supervisors will be the Supervisors of Assistive Technology, Speech and Language, and Behavior.

The proposed organizational structure for each area is shown in **Exhibit 4.2-3**. The Supervisor of Assistive Technology and Speech and Language will report to the Director of Support Services and the Supervisor of Behavior will report to the Director of Exceptional Student Education. The two Directors will work together to coordinate the activities of all Supervisors.

Exhibit 4.2-3
Proposed Organizational Structure for Supervisors



Source: Created by Evergreen Solutions, 2014.

FINDING

SEDNET has created a strong network of partnerships with community agencies that provide counseling to students and their families. The Coordinator's background is in a community mental health agency so her knowledge and networking enhance relationships that are historically part of the fabric of SEDNET in Broward County. The district has been fortunate in having had little turnover among SEDNET Coordinators in its history, too. **Exhibit 4.2-4** displays the variety of partnerships that have been created to support student needs.



Exhibit 4.2-4
BCPS Partnerships to Support ESE Student Needs



Source: BCPS ESE New Parent Open House PowerPoint, February 22, 2014.

As shown in **Exhibit 4.2-5**, the Evergreen survey conducted as part of this ESE review reveals that overwhelmingly both parents and district staff surveyed recognize the impact these partnerships have on ESE children as positive. Almost 41 percent of parents strongly agreed/agreed that community partnerships have a positive impact on students with disabilities; between 35 and 58 percent of school-based staff including principals, general education and ESE teachers, and non-instructional staff positions also strongly agreed/agreed. District administrators and program specialists also strongly agreed/agreed, but at lower percentages with 33.3 percent of district administrators and 44.2 percent of program specialists strongly agreeing/agreeing.

COMMENDATION

The BCPS SEDNET Office is commended for strengthening services offered BCPS students through agency partnerships.



Exhibit 4.2-5 Evergreen Survey Statement on ESE Services

Survey Statement: Existing community partnerships have a positive impact on students with disabilities.				
Survey Group	Strongly Agree/Agree	No Opinion	Disagree/Strongly Agree	N/A
Parents	40.9%	28.2%	14.0%	16.8%
District Staff				
District Administrator	33.3%	33.3%	22.2%	11.1%
District Program Specialist	44.2%	37.7%	4.9%	13.1%
School Staff				
School Administrator	57.9%	27.7%	5.6%	8.7%
Non-Instructional Support	50.9%	29.1%	4.9%	15.0%
Special Education Teacher	46.3%	34.3%	9.4%	10.1%
Special Education Provider	45.0%	36.9%	4.4%	13.8%
General Education Teacher	35.3%	38.1%	5.5%	21.1%
Paraprofessional	42.9%	30.0%	6.0%	21.0%
Other	47.8%	29.6%	9.6%	13.0%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.

4.2.2 Staffing

As noted in the previous section, in order for a school district and its departments to fulfill their educational responsibilities to its students, parents, staff, and community, they must be properly staffed, including:

- providing sufficient personnel to enable the district to educate its students;
- ensuring that teachers and administrators have the capacity to meet the needs of all sectors of students and the individual needs of specific students;
- ensuring that administrators are strong instructional leaders who grow continuously in their jobs and foster growth in others;
- providing sufficient support staff to focus on the roles and responsibilities for which they were hired; and
- ensuring that staff are equitably distributed in the positions so all students are receiving similar levels of support.

FINDING

Processes are not conducive to prioritizing staff time and allowing them to focus on the most complex children and their needs. Nor do they enable staff to perform the tasks for which they were hired. The district has established a focus on customer service. Although it is still transitioning, at the moment the balance appears to be tipping more toward parents and less toward staff serving its ESE children. This manifests itself in ineffective use of staff time



diverting them from student support and raises the potential for unilateral decisions being made outside of the IEP team process.

Many staff reported that internal district protocols are not adhered to. For example, staff described instances when they were in the midst of providing services to a student or teacher and received a call requiring that they stop that service immediately and go to another school where a demand was being made. They expressed concern that this practice undermines their professional decision making and credibility, and, more importantly, interferes with their ability to meet student needs. Many stated that these mid-service calls frequently take them from a child with complex, critical needs to attend to a child with less severe or urgent needs. The phrase “putting out fires” was often used when discussing inappropriate use of their time and expertise.

Reports of such service interruption were related at schools as well as among focus groups, testifying to the extent of the issue. Examples include not only direct service provision or in-depth consultation with students and/or staff, but also cancellation of professional development sessions with little notice or explanation to the BCPS staff who had enrolled in them. They also include requests for staff to meet short deadlines even when they are off calendar and not being paid.

Weekly phone “bridges,” or conference calls among team members working with each Curriculum Specialist enable all staff serving the same schools to talk about children many of them serve and coordinate services or identify overlaps in service. This is one means Curriculum Specialists use to stay in touch with their teams. On the positive side, they enable all staff serving the same schools to talk about children many of them serve and coordinate services or identify overlaps in service and sometimes discover that they are duplicating services. However, the bridges are often lengthy and require staff members to listen to conversations about children for whom they have no responsibility, thus reducing their direct student service time without a student-specific benefit being realized. These calls could continue regardless of the supervisor assigned them.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.2-3:

Protect the effective use of staff time by setting and adhering consistently to priorities for services.

The ESE Leadership Team, including supervisors of related service providers and professional development, should identify priorities within each area that focus staff time on the most complex, high priority student and/or staff needs. They should then clearly and uniformly communicate to both external and internal audiences that these are priorities for staff time that will be violated only in cases justified by extreme and urgent need. Those needs should also be clearly identified and communicated.

Administrators at all levels should stand behind unambiguous priorities and work together to protect students’ and staff time for those purposes. District staff who provide related and support services are far too few in number to be able to provide effective and efficient services even with



this unity of purpose behind their responsibilities. Students' IEPs have been developed through consensus of a team including the students' parents with services and times crafted for their individual needs. Thus, a high district priority should be that the time and services on them are delivered with fidelity.

The function currently implemented with phone bridges could still occur and include staff still assigned to various zones of the district. However, a better use of all staff time would be to set a schedule for case studies of students that coordinates staff time ensuring that appropriate staff are involved in student discussions but are free to provide direct services when their students' needs are not being discussed.

FINDING

Last year, BCPS assembled a group of speech language pathologists (SLPs) to develop a guideline for caseload allocation. Representatives noted that this was the first time such a process had led to a guideline in the budget tool. Until then, the district had only looked at "body count."

COMMENDATION

Broward County Public Schools is commended for beginning to examine staffing related to caseloads.

FINDING

Despite development of an SLP staffing guideline, caseloads currently range from approximately 80 to 120 students per SLP.

In general, the quality of speech and language services is considered to be very good. Principals reported satisfaction with their SLPs, although they were not always satisfied with the number of SLPs assigned to their schools.

It should be noted that caseloads and workloads are not one and the same. Serving 30 students with ASD five days per week at a school with a specialized program, some individually, and some in groups, is not the same as serving 80 middle school students many of whom are mainstreamed. A new program, Accelify, will be used next year for managing caseloads and providing a visual display for transportation purposes.

Testimony also reflected a concern that criteria need to be more carefully examined regarding language challenges resulting from second language acquisition as opposed to more organic causes. Additionally, the onset of the new Florida Standards related to oral speaking and listening has compelled more students to make presentations that often highlight their speech difficulties and increase their potential exposure to bullying. This may result in additional students being identified as needing ESE services due to speech difficulties being educationally relevant so that they can "speak accurately and clearly." It also reflects a need for students to be served for articulation needs rather than those specifically related to academics which is the



current standard for services in the district. A general concern expressed was that this leaves students without support when they move into content-specific courses where they often struggle.

Fairfax County, Virginia, has devised a staffing allocation formula based on student services provided. They currently have 207 SLPs serving 10,000 students with speech or language services on their IEPs. They assign .5 FTE to schools for every 25 students. In sites with specialized programs such as autism, prekindergarten ESE, or deaf or hard-of-hearing, one SLP is assigned for each 34 students.

Speech and language caseloads are high and perhaps not well-balanced. Additional staff would reduce caseloads and make the program more effective by providing therapy and better support through school language and literacy interventions. Additionally, SLPs have varying responsibilities beyond their caseloads that affect their workload and impact their time available for direct student services: test proctoring, IEP meetings, conducting re-evaluations, and writing quarterly progress reports on every student. Also, some serve only a single school while others serve students in multiple schools. More than one school representative noted that both district and school staff agreed there was a need for an additional SLP, but that district funds were not allocated to support the position. Also, BCPS staff reported to Evergreen consultants that, when new schools are added in the district, the number of SLPs is not similarly increased.

The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) reports that, as the complexity of the school work environment changes, workloads that involve responsibilities beyond student caseloads may contribute to increased turnover especially. A position paper (<http://asha.org/policy/PS2002-00122/#d4e105>) on workload analysis reported that large caseloads lead to poorer student outcomes and fewer service options. This document related those outcomes of expanded caseloads to impeding IDEA's intent of a continuum of services individualized to student needs.

ASHA also notes that “a higher caseload impacts” among other things:

- a free and appropriate public education (FAPE), since it may lead to inappropriate service delivery models for some students;
- integration of curriculum, especially with Common Core standards, which require sufficient time for understanding and planning;
- time for collaboration that would ensure transfer and generalization of strategies and skills and consultation with parents and other professionals; and
- professional development.

Its 2012 Schools Survey (ASHA, 2012) found that a “median monthly caseload size of ASHA-certified, school-based SLPs who were clinical service providers working full-time was 47, with an individual caseload range of 1 to 240.” It further states that, “the average number of students on speech-language caseloads has remained relatively unchanged over the past decade, while the role and related responsibilities of the school-based SLP have increased dramatically...



necessitate(ing) the shift to a workload approach if SLPs are to continue to add value to the students' classroom experiences." A representative group of BCPS SLPs reported their caseloads to range between 83 and 120.

ASHA continually studies issues related to staffing and service delivery for students. This association collects data in a National Outcomes Measurement System (NOMS) that are used to identify changing trends that may affect staffing patterns and analyze patterns of care to guide improved services. The organization has a webpage dedicated to caseload/workload issues (http://www.asha.org/SLP/schools/schools_resources_caseload/). One document they publish notes that "group treatment is much more commonly used by SLPs with large caseloads." The report notes that delivery model negatively affects the ability of students to make measurable progress in speech sound production skills "when they receive individual treatment as opposed to group treatment?" Additionally, among preschool children receiving individual intervention, 78 percent made "significant progress in articulation, compared with 57 percent who received group treatment." This report concludes that "larger caseloads appear to be related to slower progress for children in treatment" and that "students on large caseloads appear to take longer to make progress on communication skills."

A K-6 Schools NOMS Fact Sheet reveals that an anonymous survey of classroom teachers shows that over 60 percent agree or strongly agree that SLP services positively impact classroom performance with respect to socialization, reduced frustration, improved listening and communication skills, and improved reading-related skills and written language skills. The survey is conducted by SLPs who participate in NOMS requesting that their child's teacher complete a confidential survey asking for their assessment of the impact of SLP services on various aspects of student classroom performance.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.2-4:

Continue to examine staffing of speech/language pathologists (SLPs) with respect to caseload/workload issues and fund additional positions according to findings.

When both school and district leaders agree that additional ESE staff, whether they are SLPs or other positions, are required in order to meet the needs of the students with disabilities within a given school, the school should not be required to fund the position unilaterally and without consideration from the district. BCPS should develop a process whereby a principal can make a case for additional support staff, or develop parameters within which the district will fund positions beyond FTE-indicated numbers, or both. Part of this examination should include analysis of student numbers, frequency of service, number of schools served, and the intensity of services needed by each student.

One BCPS innovation zone reported having an SLP assigned to perform the majority of evaluations at those zone schools. This is intended to free up the other SLPs in the zone to offer students more of the direct support they warrant to address their language and speech needs. The district should re-examine this service delivery model with that used in other zones to determine the most efficient and effective model.



Benefits identified to the workload approach of assigning SLP staff by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (<http://www.asha.org/Practice-Portal/Professional-Issues/Caseload-and-Workload/Frequently-Asked-Questions/>) parallel needs revealed in BCPS and should be considered as caseload/workloads are more purposefully examined:

- *School districts have reported that reasonable workloads increase retention and recruitment of SLPs as reflected in the success stories described above.*
- *The ability to provide FAPE is strengthened within the workload framework, as it identifies and accommodates the wide range of both direct and indirect services necessary to support students with IEPs.*
- *A workload approach provides support for the SLP to deliver services using a wide range of dynamic service delivery options to support students and respond to their changing needs (Cirrin et al., 2010).*
- *Workload scheduling supports collaboration and consultation efforts, which allows for extended support of speech/language and academic goals by all team members.*
- *Workload scheduling facilitates individualization of services, thus providing amount of services driven by the student's ever changing individual needs.*
- *Fewer services are cancelled due to meetings, supervision/trainings, etc.*

The link to Fairfax County's budget document that details staffing allocations for SLPs among other staff is <http://www.fcps.edu/fs/budget/documents/proposed/FY15/FY15ProposedBudget.pdf>. ESE staffing standards begin on page 203. While they are based largely on Virginia's Standards of Quality, Fairfax County amends them within guidelines based on experience annually. Gray shaded areas indicate changes being considered for the 2014-15 school year.

FINDING

As with SLPs, staffing for other support personnel who provide related services to schools, teachers, and students has decreased considerably in recent years in all areas. This has dramatically impacted the provision of direct services to schools and support for ESE teachers and their students. It has also diffused their ability to perform tasks that are integral parts of their job responsibilities but do not directly impact student services. Staff is being placed in the position of working after hours and essentially on a voluntary basis to perform job tasks that, with higher levels of staffing could previously have been conducted within work hours. This does provide many with administrative experience to strengthen their marketability but tends, over time, to cause burnout. Or, when the tasks, such as crisis teams, are addressed during work hours they negatively impact time spent serving schools and students.

Another factor affecting related services has been the closure of center schools. When they have closed, staff noted that there had been little consideration of their caseloads which, in many cases, nearly doubled as those center students transferred to other schools. No evidence was provided that the district has taken steps to develop capacity or accountability for schools to



address the void this has created in service level and responsiveness to student needs. Furthermore, there is no evidence that the district has continued to consider staff: student ratios recommended by national organizations or peer levels of related services staff.

In the past, there have been as many as 150 psychologists serving BCPS students. There are currently 136, including team leads and those on prekindergarten child find teams. One example of high caseloads was that individual psychologists may serve a school with 3,000 students, but it is only one of three schools they serve.

The National Association of School Psychologists' *Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services*, 2010, (http://www.nasponline.org/standards/2010standards/2_PracticeModel.pdf) states that staffing recommendations "should not exceed 1 to 1000 students"...when "providing comprehensive and preventive services (i.e. evaluations, consultation, individual/group counseling, crisis response, behavioral interventions, etc.) this ratio should not exceed 500 to 700 students for 1 school psychologist in order to ensure quality of student outcomes." BCPS exceeds these ratios.

Exhibit 4.2-6 shows a comparison of BCPS staffing for these positions compared to its peer districts.

Exhibit 4.2-6
Comparison of Psychologist Staffing
Broward County Public Schools and Peer Districts

Florida Peer School District	Student Enrollment (2012-13)	School Psychologists		Number at 1:1,000	% difference from NASP Recommendation
	#	Current #	%		
Broward County Public Schools	260,234	133	0.8%	260	-.49%
Orange County Public Schools	125,662	94	0.7%	125	-.25%
Duval County Public Schools	200,287	53	0.6%	200	-.73%
Hillsborough County Public Schools	354,236	175	1.1%	354	-.51%
Miami-Dade County Public Schools	183,021	222	0.9%	183	+.21%
School District of Palm Beach County	179,494	83	0.6%	179	-.54%
Pinellas County Public Schools	103,596	72	0.9%	103	-.30%
Peer Average	191,049	117	0.8%	191	-.39%
National Peer School District	Student Enrollment (2012-13)	School Psychologists			% Difference from NASP Recommendation
	#	Current #	%		
Broward	260,234	133	0.8%	260	-.49%
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	140,161	67	0.6%	140	-.52%
Fairfax County Public Schools	180,616	NA	NA	NA	-
Gwinnett County County Public Schools	164,976	NA	NA	NA	-
Houston Independent School District	203,354	12	0.1%	203	-.94%
Montgomery County Public Schools	148,780	NA	NA	NA	-
Peer Average	167,577	39	0.4%	168	-.77%

Source: Florida Department of Education, 2013 and Peer State Databases, 2014.



Exhibit 4.2-6 shows that:

- only one (Miami-Dade County Public Schools) of the 11 districts chosen for comparability staffs more psychologists than NASP recommends;
- Orange and Pinellas counties' school districts are closer to the NASP Recommendation 4.2-than BCPS;
- school districts in Hillsborough, Palm Beach, and Charlotte-Mecklenburg counties are staffed at nearly the same levels as BCPS compared to NASP recommendations (those four, though, only staff at 50 percent of the NASP recommended level); and
- while BCPS employs approximately 50 percent of the psychologists recommended by NASP, its percentage compared to peer districts in Florida is the same at 0.8 percent of psychologists to student enrollment.

At one point, there were 53 Teachers for Behavioral Support in addition to eight Program Specialists for Behavior. Now those total staff numbers have been reduced to only 11 Program Specialists for Behavior—after a cut of three Program Specialist positions during the 2012-13 school year. The positions of Teachers for Behavioral Support no longer exist. When BCPS staffed the teacher positions, they were assigned direct support to schools with the Program Specialists serving a district-level role. The title of Program Specialist implies an ability to work at the macro level of “big picture” management; however, with so few behavior specialists currently in the district and no Teachers for Behavioral Support, specialists can no longer play that role. One observation mirrored multiple interviewees that, whereas there “used to be a whole behavioral staff assigned to schools, there are now just program specialists who help in emergency situations.” Fairfax County Public Schools utilizes Applied Behavior Analysis Coaches and ABA Instructional Assistants. These are not state-specified positions, but those recognized by the district as important for support of students with autism. The Instructional Assistants are assigned to elementary schools “such that there is always one autism staff member for every 2.25 Level 2 autism services. The ABA Coaches are assigned one per every 13 ABA elementary classrooms which are defined as 6 Level 2 students. Level 2 class sizes are set based on student need in conjunction with paraprofessional support. Those class sizes are located at http://www.doe.virginia.gov/special_ed/regulations/state/regs_speced_disability_va.pdf.

Similarly, at one time there were eight Assistive Technology staff positions and an Instructional Technology Program Specialist at FDLRS whereas now there are five positions in all. When there were eight, each served between 23 and 25 schools. They now serve 49 traditional schools each in addition to the charter schools (approximately 100 districtwide) and preschools located within their regions. In contrast, Fairfax County Public Schools assigns staff based upon a point system it assigns to students with IEPs based on their primary service to determine staffing levels of AT personnel. Those assigned a “Level 1” value have less severe needs; those with more severe needs are assigned values between 2.6 and 3.8. Staffing numbers fluctuate each year based on the point system, with an AT staff member assigned for every 250 points accumulated. Currently, there are 31 AT staff in the district.

Ten behavior technicians have now been cut to five, one per Curriculum Specialist team. They are certified to use Professional Crisis Management (PCM) with students when needed, provide feedback, and immediately implement a positive behavior intervention plan (PBIP) then show



school staff how to reduce support as the need decreases. Their pay is a good return on investment at a paraprofessional level with additional supplementation for their certification. Again, in Fairfax County, Virginia, positions are assigned to schools based on their student needs. When student IEPs indicate a need for a more restrictive placement than their home school as a result of behavioral issues, they are placed in a regional comprehensive school focused on students with emotional/behavioral disabilities. Those schools receive four additional teaching positions which are determined at the principal's discretion; a behavioral resource teacher is often one of those positions.

Before district administration became centralized, support staff were located within four areas of the district. ESE and Support Services coordinators oversaw the four areas with supporting teams of support staff serving schools under them. For example, in each area, there were six program specialists under the Student Services Coordinator, for a total of 24 Program Specialists. When administration was consolidated, those 24 Program Specialists were largely cut, both reducing direct school support and changing the roles accordingly. Although services are still being provided to schools, the coordinators are more detached from schools in the centralized structure. The number of district coordinators has also decreased from four to currently one.

Exhibit 4.2-7 shows two slides from a February 22, 2014 powerpoint for a new ESE parent open house. It states that one of the district's three pillars of service related to its mission statement is effective communications and details staff expectations. However, current levels of support and related services staff make achieving some of the stated goals difficult, at a minimum, to achieve. For example, the document states that:

- In Psychological Services, one communications task is to develop “brain sharks for Threat Assessment training.” While the department does provide this training, it is done by staff who volunteer their time, as they also do for parent training after hours and coordination of the internship program.
- Itinerant service teachers are expected to “collaborate with general education staff to ensure generalization of skills.” However, the majority of staff who are not school-based report that working with either teachers or students to the extent required to ensure transfer of skills cannot happen within their schedules.

Finally, when classes are added at schools, a set array of instructional materials, curricula, furniture, and other items are provided. However, no process appears to be in place to consider staffing needs or related services for the students who will be in the classroom.

RECOMMENDATION

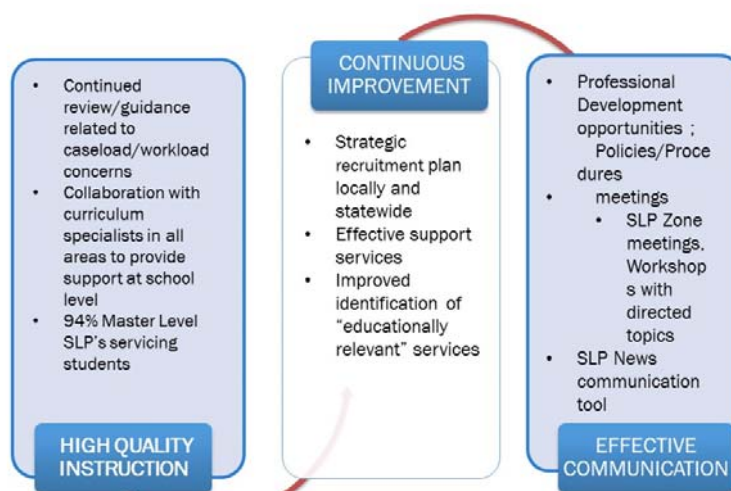
Recommendation 4.2-5:

Expand the ESE Division's focus on data to the impact on students caused by staffing decreases in related service areas and develop strategies, including increasing staffing levels, to address identified needs.

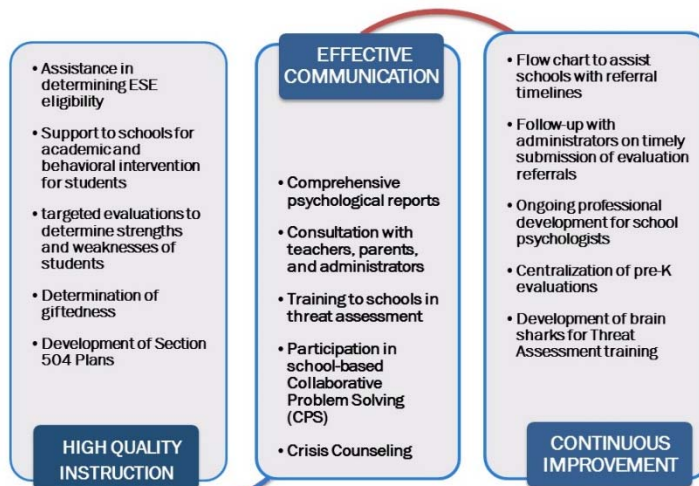


Exhibit 4.2-7
New ESE Parent Open House Presentation
February 22, 2014

SPEECH/LANGUAGE SERVICES



PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES



Source: BCPS ESE New Parent Open House PowerPoint, February 22, 2014.



In the past, the district relied on the expert model of service provision, expecting specific staff with expertise to perform support functions within the schools. With the decreases in staffing in these positions, it can no longer rely on them to be “all things to all people.” One of the express underpinnings of “high quality instruction” for the Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services is “school-based capacity.”

Beyond examination of data relative to student behavior, the district must consider and develop a systematic approach to addressing the void created with a dearth of staff. Presently, staff such as Behavior Program Specialists are expected to provide services at the level they did when there were almost six times as many as there are now. When there were 64 positions related to behavior, all staff testified that immediate assistance was available for students and teachers either to provide behavioral support to students and teachers or to assist in de-escalating behavioral issues. Testimony revealed that, with the reduction of staff, the district has taken no proactive steps to build capacity within school staffs or support teams to fill that void. This is true in areas of related services in addition to behavioral support, but they are used to illustrate the point. While Evergreen made attempts to solicit comparable numbers of related services staff beyond psychologists, districts’ spring breaks made collecting those data challenging.

FINDING

As noted in the previous finding, five Assistive Technology Specialists are available to serve the district’s 31,388 (2012-13) ESE students, including those in charters and private schools.

Exhibit 4.2-8 displays data from an AT Report provided to Evergreen. The five specialists were serving 3,334 ESE students who used 4,629 devices in elementary, middle, high, charter, and center schools.

Exhibit 4.2-8
Assistive Technology Report Data

Number of School Zones Served	Number of Students Served	Picture/Symbol Communication Systems	Static Displays	Visual Schedules	Voice Output Communication Aids
31*	3,334	842	20	2,976	791

Source: BCPS Assistive Technology Office, 2014.

*The district website reports 28 Innovation Zones; this number includes those 28 in addition to community agencies, charter schools, and a districtwide total.

The team is too small to meet existing needs as effectively as it should and maintain consistency across the district using its current work processes. More effective outreach would identify even more students who would benefit from AT. All of their responsibilities take time for each member of the minimal AT staff of five professionals and a clerical staff member who also serves the FDLRS Coordinator; they limit their influence on ESE student learning and teacher knowledge, and the ability to infuse its use into their instruction. If the AT office was staffed more adequately or changed its way of work to allow for more outreach, knowledge of all instructional staff could be enhanced.



AT staff report that they are comfortable with their role in identifying equipment, helping students try appropriate technologies out, and procuring the right equipment for each student. Testimony revealed, however, that the AT specialist responsibilities across the district limit the amount of time they can dedicate to supported practice with students. As a result, appropriate technologies to support student academic pursuits are often not used. This is confirmed in **Exhibit 4.2-9**.

The exhibit shows that more district administrators do not believe there is sufficient AT training and professional development to meet the needs of the students receiving them (33.3%) than do (22.2%). General education teachers, those who are left supporting students with the technologies in their classrooms once the AT staff leave, are almost equally divided between strongly agreeing/agreeing (27.6%) and disagreeing/strongly disagreeing (25.7%). As with behavioral support, staff interviewed noted that providing more consistent and ongoing training of school-based ESE Specialists and teams would ensure that more students are receiving the support they need to benefit students.

Exhibit 4.2-9
Evergreen Parent Survey Statement on
Assistive Technology Training for Teachers

Survey Statement: Teachers are provided with sufficient AT training and professional development to meet the needs of the students with disabilities they serve.						
Survey Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
District Staff						
District Administrator	0.0%	22.2%	33.3%	11.1%	22.2%	11.1%
School Staff						
General Education Teacher	6.9%	20.7%	28.1%	16.0%	9.7%	18.6%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.

A comparison of AT staffing in many of the largest Florida districts shows that BCPS levels are relatively comparable—all districts need larger staffs or a different way of meeting student AT needs. **Exhibit 4.2-10** illustrates staffing in some peer districts in Florida and **Exhibit 4.2-11** shows comparisons with out-of-state peers. Besides district AT staff, FDLRS Centers employ technology specialists to support district AT departments such as the Program Technology Specialist in Broward's FDLRS Center.

Exhibit 4.2-10
Assistive Technology Department Staffing
Broward County and Peer Districts*
2012-13 School Year

Florida Peer School District	Local Assistive Technology Specialists
Broward County Public Schools	5
Orange County Public Schools	5
Hillsborough County Public Schools	4
Miami-Dade County Public Schools	6
School District of Palm Beach County	6
Pinellas County Public Schools	3

Source: Technology & Learning Connections – MTSS Florida's MTSS Projects, Region 3, 2013

*Data were not available for Duval.



Exhibit 4.2-11
Assistive Technology Department Staffing
Broward County and Out-of-State Peer Districts
2013-14 School Year

National Peer School District	Local Assistive Technology Specialists
Broward County Public Schools	5
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	-
Fairfax County Public Schools	31
Gwinnett County Public Schools	-
Houston Independent School District	-
Montgomery County Public Schools	8
Peer Average	19.5

Source: Evergreen Phone Calls and Emails to Out-of-State Peer Districts, 2014.

This support for districts varies because some FDLRS Centers (e.g., Broward, Palm Beach) serve only one district, so their specialists are dedicated to that one district's needs. Others serve multiple districts, so the time of their specialists is split. Although not peer districts, Evergreen also received staffing data from other Florida districts for comparison. Volusia County Public Schools and Brevard County Public Schools also have five Local Assistive Technology (LATS) Specialists. In addition, Volusia County Public Schools has a vision specialist. Seminole County Public Schools' staff includes two SLPs, one vision specialist, one PT, and one OT. Lee County Public Schools only has two LATS. Fairfax County Public Schools, has more AT staff than all peers with 31. They use the previously mentioned formula guided by Virginia's Standards of Quality.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.2-6:

Develop strategies to extend the impact the Assistive Technology Office has on educational opportunities for ESE students in all BCPS schools.

BCPS should consider following the lead of Miami-Dade County Public Schools, which has begun examining ways in which it can extend the reach of its limited AT Department based on approaches Fairfax, Virginia, and Montgomery County, Maryland, have developed that expand their small departments' reach through empowerment of teacher leaders at the school level. In that way, small staff impact is extended beyond just the individual students with whom they work. Understanding and using processes for integrating and applying technology are transferred to wider audiences, (e.g., school teams) who become knowledgeable and conversant with how technologies can improve student engagement, independence in learning processes, and teacher collaboration. The premise is that the majority of students is high incidence but low in terms of need for one-on-one in-depth services, so can be served by knowledgeable teachers at the school site. Thus, the AT teams with deeper and broader knowledge can focus their time, knowledge, and skills on low incidence students needing more intensive supports.



Their approach changes the work of the department, moving its role to resource and mentor for other special and general education staff from one of working largely with students. Fairfax County Public Schools has developed Technology Outreach Program Support (TOPS)¹ in which school staffs work closely with an ATS Resource Teacher to develop and implement an AT Collaboration School Plan that addresses the AT training needs of the staff. An array of training opportunities is offered for TOPS members throughout the year as well as opportunities to participate in special projects. A TOPS Advisory Board representing school staffs from each district cluster directs the future of the program and works together to integrate technology and serve as school and county resources. They have also created AT Ambassadors of high school students who share ideas and knowledge with teachers, parents and students and model the use of AT as a means of building capacity across their district.

Montgomery County Public Schools' High Incidence Accessible Technology (HIAT) has used Universal Design for Learning (UDL)² as a foundation for creating pilot Building Instructional Technology Leadership Teams (ITLT) focused on integrating UDL and technology into instruction for all students. This approach addresses the UDL that BCPS uses. Having begun in three middle schools and expanded to three elementary schools, the project has already:

- generated 60 video examples “that exemplify how student choices can facilitate manageable differentiation in all classrooms and methods to integrate mobile technology into classrooms,” thus, sustaining continuous development;
- developed tools to effectively measure UDL implementation including job-embedded professional development;
- produced permanent training materials that relate the UDL design to specific content, creating a platform to inform future curriculum development within the UDL framework;
- used Race to the Top (RTTT) federal funds to purchase equipment and materials that can be used beyond RTTT funding; and
- created an online course for credit about UDL implementation and coaching staffs for schoolwide implementation.

Montgomery County Public Schools staff identify the most critical factor is the principal's directive indicating that is an expectation and ongoing discussion throughout the year. The district's Office of Shared Accountability is also conducting a study of the project's impact on key expected outcomes.

A useful tool for moving AT support beyond the central team that is often employed by districts nationally is the Quality Indicators for Assistive Technology (QIAT)³. Eight indicators were developed by focus groups and validated through research. The indicators are the:

- consideration of assistive technology needs;
- assessment of assistive technology needs;

¹<http://www.fcps.edu/dss/sei/ats/staff.shtml>

²<http://montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/hiat/udl/>

³<http://indicators.knowbility.org>



- assistive technology in the IEP;
- assistive technology implementation;
- evaluation of effectiveness of assistive technology;
- assistive technology in transition;
- administrative support for assistive technology; and
- assistive technology professional development.

Accompanying self-assessment matrices align with each indicator and are intended for individual service providers and school districts to assess their current practices and plan for improvement.

FINDING

Currently, reporting Assistive Technology on EasyIEP™ does not effectively capture the specific services provided by the AT Program Specialists in accordance with IDEA, such as evaluation/assessment, purchasing equipment, customizing/repairing, coordinating services with other therapists, training/technical assistance for student and family, training/technical assistance for staff working with the student.

Staff reported that there is no uniformity in recordkeeping among AT staff. Previously, they all maintained a log of school visits on FileMaker Pro. That process has been abandoned with each now keeping records as she chooses. The use of a central database would enable both AT specialists and district leaders to be aware of services provided in each school or zone and pull data that would provide a picture of commonalities and needs across BCPS. Additionally, AT staff spend an inordinate amount of time having to install software on school-owned computers or logging into computers at schools because they do not have administrative privileges districtwide.

Staff also reported that the list of AT options on the Special Considerations page of EasyIEP™ has not been updated to reflect currently available technologies. Additionally, AT Program Specialists are not the only staff who provide AT. Other groups include occupational therapy (OT), physical therapy (PT), visual impairment (VI), and deaf, hard- of-hearing (DHH)/Audiologists. However, not all disciplines use the same process. Also, AT is a support that can be requested for students on a 504 plan; however, district staff report that there is no clear direction regarding whose responsibility conducting an assessment is or the funding source for the equipment.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.2-7:

Examine and update reporting processes for assistive technology.

The district should develop an annual schedule to examine EasyIEP™ reporting for assistive technology. During that period, the district should consult with representatives of AT support staff to ensure that reporting is comprehensive to include all technology and services. Meanwhile, the district should create a dropdown menu in a logging wizard that reflects all



services, technologies, and service providers. It should also define staff responsibility for AT included in 504 plans and identify the funding source and process for purchase of that equipment.

FINDING

The quantity and quality of support services provided for BCPS ESE students varies largely depending on the level of school they attend. There are few, if any, transitional processes within each area of related services as students move from the supportive, nurturing, often self-contained environment in elementary schools to changing classes in a large school and being mainstreamed into general education classes.

Support systems in terms of staffing and related services are strong for BCPS elementary students with special needs; however, when those students advance to middle school, the same levels of support from related service staff are no longer available. Elementary schools with specialized programs provide small class sizes and multiple staff both on campus and as itinerant support. District staff acknowledged this lack of transitional processes.

The district piloted a cohesive, coordinated approach to support for ESE middle school students at two schools this year in recognition of the need for continuation of the services they were provided in their elementary specialized programs. By adding a Family Counselor and a Behavior Program Specialist, students receive more targeted support. The Behavior Program Specialist who is responsible for special projects spent two weeks assisting students and teachers in developing an integrated support system. Support they are given by the additional staff includes social skills groups, an extensive amount of positive behavior intervention plan implementation, delivery of reinforcers, support provided during lunchtime, and using point sheets. The students, though, are in general education classes. Additionally, the staff members are in continual contact with the students throughout the week. District staff reported that the program will be expanded to 11 more middle schools next year.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.2-8:

Expand identification of specific related services that are needed as students move from particular types of elementary cluster programs to middle schools and use that analysis to guide additional middle school supports for all ESE students.

Anecdotal evidence reflects that the addition of just two support staff at the pilot middle schools has made a tremendous difference for these students and their schools. More quantitative data should be analyzed to determine the impact of the additional staff and services on students and the schools as a whole. A study of additional factors should extend beyond just the services in these schools to other considerations so that the process can continue to be fine-tuned for the benefit of students, staffs, and families.



FINDING

Broward County Public Schools has strong internship programs for both SLPs and psychologists. They serve as a robust recruitment tool. The psychology internships enable the district to recruit from across the nation and even Canada, and both teach and mentor interns in Broward's processes, and hire the best after observing them in the field.

COMMENDATION

Broward County Public Schools is commended for recognizing the strategic role that a vibrant internship program can play in recruiting high quality staff.

FINDING

While the internship has proven a rich source of new, highly trained and skilled psychologists for BCPS, it is no longer being funded. Interns have come from afar, bringing perspectives from a variety of experiences and diversifying the workforce in BCPS.

The funding of approximately \$20,000 per psychology intern has been cut this year. This undermines the strong recruitment tool the internships have served for close to two decades.

Some of the programs from which interns have come to Broward in the past require paid internships, so this is likely to affect the district's ability to recruit interns as broadly as in the past and serve as a conduit to highly qualified psychologists who are familiar with both the Broward schools and community. In fact, BCPS leaders recently called potential psychology interns to inform them of the district's inability to pay for the internships. The net result is that only six interns agreed to go to BCPS with many going to the School District of Palm Beach County and Miami-Dade County Public Schools, both of which pay interns.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.2-9:

Weigh the cost versus benefits of the school psychology internship positions to the district and identify funds to continue the program.

No one interviewed could provide details on why the internships were not funded this year or where the funds previously provided had been re-allocated. Medicaid reimbursement funds are one possible source for funding the positions. In the past, between 10 and 12 interns annually provided an impressive return on investment, working full-time for a whole year for that \$20,000 salary.

FINDING

BCPS has a history of purposefully hired bilingual psychologists in Spanish (26), Creole (3), Portuguese (1), Mandarin (1), and Hebrew (1) and assigning them to schools as resources.



Additionally, the department has trained their entire staff on bilingual assessments and will conduct refresher training in the fall. The bilingual psychologists also have a Professional Learning Community that is open to anyone.

COMMENDATION

Broward County Public Schools is commended for its intentional recruitment, hiring, and training practices regarding psychologists to reflect the diversity of culture and language within the district.

FINDING

The BCPS Psychological Services Office has received multiple national recognitions for aspects of its operations. Its website was recently recognized as exemplary by the National Association of School Psychologists. The department is a past recipient of the *Excellence in School Psychology Award* jointly presented by the American Psychological Association and the National Association of School Psychologists; and the *Innovative Practices in School Psychology Award* from the Florida Association of School Psychologists. The program quality these awards reflect may be contributing factors to BCPS's past ability to attract interns from across the nation.

COMMENDATION

The BCPS Office of Psychological Services is commended for its exceptional processes and products that have brought the district state and national recognition.

4.2.3 Transportation

Transportation is an example of a related service for students with disabilities under IDEA. Section 34 CFR §300.34(c)(16) of the IDEA regulations defines transportation to include travel to, from, and between schools as well as in and around school buildings. Specialized equipment such as special or adapted buses, lifts, and ramps may be required to facilitate student transportation. It is the responsibility of the IEP team to determine whether transportation as a related service is required for a child with a disability to benefit from special education and related services, and, if so, how to implement those transportation services.

Travel training is another vehicle for transportation services for SWDs. This practice entails instruction enabling students to develop an awareness of the environment in which they live, and equipping these students with the skills necessary to move effectively and safely from place to place within that environment. For some students, this skill and knowledge would enable them to take advantage of non-specialized transportation with general education students.

The BCPS Transportation Department is led by a new Director with extensive experience in large school districts. The BCPS Transportation Department includes a Special Needs Operations unit. Its stated purpose is to ensure that students with IEPs or 504 plans who have



special needs that warrant transportation accommodations to ensure FAPE receive them. The Transportation Department website states its responsibilities are to:

- ensure the special needs population accommodations are documented on a plan;
- create an environment of understanding for the special needs population among Bus Operators and Bus Attendants and other Pupil Transportation staff;
- ensure compliance with laws in conjunction with federal, state and local municipalities; and
- analyze and monitor trends which may warrant change for student safety.

FINDING

Over the past two decades, the BCPS Transportation Department has made multiple attempts to obtain Medicaid reimbursement for eligible transportation services for ESE students. The first attempt was made before computerization of services and was abandoned as too onerous for the cost benefits. Another attempt was made five years ago; and then another two years ago using barcodes. During that endeavor, 12 clerks were hired to maintain the records. When the district only realized approximately \$6,000, that effort was also halted.

Two years ago, collaboration with the ESE Medicaid Coordinator led to a quick, efficient use of Scantron forms by drivers for Medicaid reimbursement record-keeping. Transportation Department representatives reported that, with validation and scanning done by the ESE office, they are at 100 percent qualified reimbursements. From FY 2011 to last year, receipts rose from \$22,847 to \$391,711. Costs associated with the process are estimated at only \$750 for supplies. Evergreen did not discover the total amount of revenues that were generated through transportation Medicaid processes, but only those assigned to the Transportation Department. Orange and Fairfax County Public Schools reported filing for Medicaid funding, but the allocation of such funds to transportation was not clear to those interviewed as it was a function of a different department. Some other districts' representatives interviewed stated that the effort was not worth the revenues it generated.

COMMENDATION

The BCPS Transportation Department and the Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services are commended for persistence and collaboration in maximizing Medicaid funds for transportation services to ESE students.

FINDING

Costs and services for BCPS students with transportation as a related service are out of proportion to those in peer districts. Compared to peer district averages, Broward County has a significantly higher number of bus attendants (321) assigned to its ESE students with IEPs who ride buses. Additionally, a document provided Evergreen shows that 173 "unique aides" or one-



on-one “additional attendants” are assigned to its buses through IEPs. This brings the total number of attendants who are assigned to ESE students with IEPs in Broward County to 494. Evergreen called all peer districts in Florida and other states to attempt to collect comparable data other than anecdotal. **Exhibit 4.2-12** shows the data that were provided by peer districts. Data were only available from one Florida district, Orange County Public Schools (OCPS), but were collected from several out-of-state peers. As a consequence, peer averages were not able to be computed for Florida districts, nor could a valid comparison within the State be made. Compared to the BCPS total of 494 bus monitors/attendances, OCPS reports only 322. OCPS reports only three or four one-on-one bus attendants compared to BCPS’s 173. While BCPS has 35 nurses who ride on its ESE buses, OCPS has none.

Exhibit 4.2-12
ESE Bus Attendants in
Broward County Public Schools and Peers

National Peer School District	Total Bus Attendants/Monitors	One-On-One Attendants/Monitors	Nurses Who Ride Buses
Broward	494	173	35
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	82	Not sure because schools are responsible for assigning	Not sure because schools are responsible for assigning
Fairfax County Public Schools	NA	NA	NA
Gwinnett County Public Schools	178**	None has ever been requested	16
Houston Independent School District	NA	NA	NA
Montgomery County Public Schools	497	25	None
Peer Average	252	25	16

Source: Phone Calls and Emails to Peer Districts, March 2014.

* NA-Not Available

**on 511 special education buses.

An examination of the data in the chart shows that BCPS has more attendants/monitors and one-on-one monitors than the average of out-of-state peer districts. The average number of monitors from out-of-state peers is 252 contrasted with BCPS’s 494. Additionally, whereas BCPS has 173 one-on-one attendants, the peer average of those out-of-state districts is 25, one-seventh the number that BCPS has. Clearly, BCPS’s staffing for both types of bus attendants/monitors far exceeds peer districts.

One BCPS example described a single bus with six one-on-one attendants and an additional attendant. Conversations with representatives of peer districts revealed that none of them was nearly as heavily staffed with bus monitors as BCPS, and that they have processes in place to maximize the use of those they have as well as minimize the costs. Orange County has transportation managers that attend all IEP meetings where the possibility of a one-on-one monitor will be discussed. Most of those types of monitors are assigned to students who attend center schools because of the severity of their disabilities and require bus accommodations such as safety vests. The representative also noted that they work closely to monitor factors affecting student needs for additional support such as a conflict with a driver, monitor, or other student and make adjustments in rides accordingly to decrease personnel costs for such intensive staffing. In



contrast, Broward County has two transportation staff members that do not regularly attend IEP meetings, although they are available for that kind of support.

Gwinnett County Public Schools, too, serves students whose IEPs reflect the need for a monitor. However, their processes are to assign the monitor to assist the whole bus even if there are only one or two students who require one. The Gwinnett representative stated that no request for a one-on-one monitor has ever been made. In the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, monitors are provided largely for students in wheelchairs and those with the most significant needs such as some students with autism. They do not have buses with multiple monitors riding them. If an IEP team at a school determines the need for a bus monitor or nurse, the district has determined that it is the school's responsibility to assign a staff member to perform that duty. While they have no written document to that effect, a district representative told Evergreen it had evolved over the past five years or so into standard operating practice. While that practice works well for Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, it is not being endorsed by Evergreen for BCPS to adopt without conducting its own investigation of its fit to district needs.

Additionally, approximately 33 to 35 nurses ride buses for medically fragile children in accordance with IEPs in BCPS. The only other peer districts that responded to Evergreen contacts regarding nurses on buses were Gwinnett County Public Schools, which has 16 nurses who ride because of medical fragility of students, and Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. The latter could not provide the number who ride buses because it is the responsibility of the school that determines the need for a nurse or one-on-one attendant in an IEP meeting to meet that need.

In Orange County Public Schools, the costs of 259 of the district's 322 bus monitors are paid from IDEA funds with the rest funded from the transportation budget. In contrast, in BCPS all costs are paid from the transportation budget, although the transportation department has no control over them. Gwinnett County's transportation department includes funding for these positions in its transportation budget and nurses are paid with IDEA funds. In Charlotte-Mecklenburg, 77 of the monitors are funded through special education and the transportation department funds an additional five substitute monitors to cover for monitors who are out each day. The five were determined by estimating that approximately eight percent of monitors would be out each day.

Additional comparison data can be found on the School Bus Fleet Magazine website <http://www.schoolbusfleet.com/research/default.aspx#Special-NeedsSurvey> with Premium Membership.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.2-10:

Develop processes and accountability strategies relating to IEP transportation components, especially the staffing of ESE bus attendants and one-on-one bus attendants.

District transportation and ESE leaders should clearly define parameters for the addition of both types of bus attendants and guidelines for their inclusion in IEPs. These parameters should be included in training for those involved in IEP development and integrated into principal leadership and IEP team training. Furthermore, when schools anticipate that transportation needs



will be discussed at IEP meetings, processes should ensure that transportation representatives are at the table when those IEPs are developed.

BCPS district leaders should make specific decisions according to their analysis of policy and staffing needs for BCPS. One consideration that may decrease the possibility of over-staffing buses with attendants may be for the positions to come from school budgets rather than the transportation budget or to do as Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools does and hold schools responsible for identifying staff to ride. The district should also examine IDEA at least as a partial source of funding for those positions as some peer districts do.

FINDING

BCPS transportation leaders stated that they are “very passionate about efficiencies.” That statement is well documented with the data they referenced and provided Evergreen relating to ongoing analyses of costs, Edulog (a boundary planning and routing optimization system) data, and pursuing Medicaid reimbursement. Recently, representatives from the Transportation Department have begun to be involved in discussions regarding program placement considerations. Representatives of the department have sat at the table with program planners with data related to the potential impact of decisions on bus routes, costs, and student impact. Transportation representatives have used data from Edulog on schools and boundaries, and the impact of moving students beyond their home school zones.

It is imperative for transportation and program staff to collaborate to create and locate programs in sites that best meet student needs. Neither program placement nor bus routes should be the sole determinant of decisions affecting students’ length of day or length of bus ride.

COMMENDATIONS

The BCPS Transportation Department is commended for its proactive focus on data in guiding decisions about staffing, routing, and costs.

Broward County Public Schools is commended for recognizing the interdependent relationship between programs and transportation and involving representatives of both in planning.

FINDING

Some of the district’s program planning decisions result in high transportation costs. Costs relate both to the dollar amount spent to transport students to school sites far from their homes as well as student time spent being transported.

Many school-based staff observed that a number of buses serving their schools arrive with fewer than ten students. In fact, the number of runs with fewer than ten students reported by the Transportation Department is 1,229.



An additional factor that impacts BCPS's transportation costs as well as the length of student bus rides is that the routes are dictated by program locations. One example of routing not being cost-effective because of program locations was cited in a single attendance boundary where InD students as well as 58 PreKindergarten students attend between four and five different schools.

Both additions and closures of center schools and alternative programs located in only a few sites in the county have impacted the length of student bus rides and related costs to the district.

Exhibit 4.2-13 from a BCPS powerpoint provided Evergreen shows the potential costs to the district of additional buses to move students to intensive classrooms at center schools from other schools as intensive classes were added.

Exhibit 4.2-13
Projected Transportation Costs of Moving Students
From Other Locations to New Intensive Sites

Request	Number of Buses Required	Cost to District
Cresthaven to Cypress for Intensive	6	\$288,000
Norcrest to Cypress for Intensive	0	0
Hollywood Park to Fairway for Intensive and Specialized	3	\$144,000
Margate to Ramblewood for Intensive and Specialized	3	\$144,000
Meadowbrook to Stephen Foster for Intensive	2	\$96,000
Park Springs to Park Trails for Intensive	2	\$192,000
Silver Shores to Chapel Trail for Intensive	2	\$192,000
Total Buses and Costs	18	\$672,000

Source: BCPS Transportation Department, March, 2014.

Documentation provided Evergreen shows that 63 percent of BCPS's ESE students spend an hour or more on the bus both traveling to and from school. **Exhibit 4.2-14** shows details of those data. This compares to 26 percent of general education bus rides lasting over one hour as shown in **Exhibit 4.2-15**.

Exhibit 4.2-14
Exceptional Student Bus Runs
2013-14 School Year

Time and Longevity of Runs	Number	Percentage
*Total AM Runs	813	
AM Runs Less than 1 hour	301	
AM Runs Greater/Equal to 1 Hour	512	63%
*Total AM Runs	814	
PM Runs Less than 1 hour	303	
PM Runs Greater/Equal to 1 Hour	511	63%

Source: BCPS Transportation Department, 2014.

*Runs may not be exclusive to special needs students (because of inclusion on buses)



Exhibit 4.2-15
General Education Student Bus Runs
2013-14 School Year

Time and Longevity of Runs	Number	Percentage
*Total AM Runs	2418	
AM Runs Less than 1 hour	1800	
AM Runs Greater/Equal to 1 Hour	618	26%
*Total AM Runs	814	
PM Runs Less than 1 hour	1803	
PM Runs Greater/Equal to 1 Hour	644	36%
Total Runs	4,865	
Total Over 1 Hour	1,262	26%
Total Hour or Less	3,603	74%

Source: BCPS Transportation Department, 2014.

The difference in percentage of bus rides over an hour between ESE students and their general education peers is a significant concern. It not only impacts the length of time ESE students probably have in school compared to their peers, it affects their readiness to learn, and potentially impacts their behavior. Furthermore, district staff expressed concerns that many of the students who are on such lengthy bus rides are those with emotional/behavioral disabilities whose time on buses should be shorter than the average ride of students in the district, not longer. Additionally, it may place the district in an untenable or indefensible position should students or parents mount a legal challenge.

It is likely those lengthy bus rides have resulted from singular, rather than collaborative decisions about program placement, school closure, and/or student assignment when programs fill up. Armed with Edulog quantitative data, the impact on students of program expansion within school boundaries can be objectively compared to the impact of moving them to programs in other school boundaries. Transportation department data add consideration of factors such as the cost analysis of decisions on transportation as well as length of student rides before program decisions are made. Now the district can cooperatively examine programming in terms of known and anticipated program costs along with transportation staffing and related costs.

Exhibit 4.2-16 shows a comparison of BCPS schools by type with its peers in Florida and other states. It shows that the breakdown of BCPS's school types and numbers is relatively comparable to Florida districts. However, when compared to districts outside the state, BCPS:

- has a lower percentage of regular education schools (89.3 percent) compared to peers (96.2 percent);
- has a higher number of special education schools (20) than Gwinnett County Public Schools with four and Montgomery with five (the only two peer districts for which data were available);
- has a slightly higher percentage (3%) of special education schools than the peer average (2.8 percent); and
- has both higher numbers and percentages (20/5.9 percent) of alternative schools compared to those same out-of-state district peer averages (1/0.8 percent).



Exhibit 4.2-16
Comparison of Schools by Type
2012-13

Florida Peer School District	Regular Education		Special Education		Alternative Education		Vocational/Technical		Adult		Total
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
Broward County Public Schools	301	89.3%	10	3.0%	20	5.9%	3	0.9%	3	0.9%	337
Duval County Public Schools	174	88.3%	5	2.5%	18	9.1%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	197
Hillsborough County Public Schools	257	82.6%	16	5.1%	24	7.7%	4	1.3%	10	3.2%	311
Miami-Dade County Public Schools	465	87.9%	7	1.3%	36	6.8%	3	0.6%	18	3.4%	529
Orange County Public Schools	205	82.7%	10	4.0%	28	11.3%	4	1.6%	1	0.4%	248
School District of Palm Beach County	196	76.0%	12	4.7%	20	7.8%	3	1.2%	27	10.5%	258
Pinellas County Public Schools	133	77.3%	10	5.8%	20	11.6%	3	1.7%	6	3.5%	172
Peer Average	238	83.4%	10	3.5%	24	8.5%	3	1.0%	10	3.6%	286
National Peer School District	Regular Education		Special Education		Alternative Education		Vocational/Technical		Adult		Total
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
Broward	301	89.3%	10	3.0%	20	5.9%	3	0.9%	3	0.9%	337
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Fairfax County Public Schools	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Gwinnett County Public Schools	126	95.5%	4	3.0%	2	1.5%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	132
Houston Independent School District	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Montgomery County Public Schools	196	97.0%	5	2.5%	0	0.0%	1	0.5%	0	0.0%	202
Peer Average	161	96.2%	5	2.8%	1	0.8%	1	0.2%	0	0.0%	167

Source: Florida Department of Education, 2013 and Peer State Databases, 2014.

A U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) Question and Answer website on serving children with disabilities who require transportation (http://idea.ed.gov/explore/view/p/,root,dynamic,QaCorner,12_) states the following regarding length of transportation (emphasis added):

*Neither Part B of the IDEA nor the regulations address the issue of the length of a school day. Determining the length of a school day is a decision left to the SEA. However, the IDEA defines school day as any day, including a partial day, that children are in attendance at school for instructional purposes. Additionally, school day has the same meaning for all children in school, including both those with and without disabilities. **In general, a school day for a child with a disability should not be longer or shorter than a school day for general education students.** However, if a child's IEP Team determines a child needs a shorter or extended school day in order to receive FAPE, then appropriate modifications should be incorporated into the IEP. However, these modifications must be based on the unique needs of the child, as determined by the IEP team, and not solely based on the child's transportation time.*

When ESE students spend an hour or more each way on a bus riding to and from their program, the length of their school day is more often than not shortened to less than their peers in the same class who live closer to the program site. This is contrary to the above-cited USDOE response.



RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.2-11:

Examine BCPS program placement determination in light of the impact of decisions on the length of ESE student bus rides, develop procedures to remedy the issues, and ensure that all transportation-related procedures are uniformly followed in the district.

In numerous conversations, BCPS staff observed that there were discrepancies in program location that negatively affected the length of student bus rides. While it is fiscally impossible to locate all programs in all areas of the district, BCPS should develop guidelines for decisions regarding program placement, include these guidelines in ESE Specialist trainings and meetings, inform principals, and adhere to uniform standards. The district should regularly review program placements and make necessary changes. As has begun, transportation representative should remain a part of those discussions and decisions,

FINDING

The Transportation Department's Special Needs Operations Unit provides in-service training programs and seminars to its Bus Operators and Attendants. As part of initial hiring, drivers are exposed to some information on IEPs and student behavior on the bus particularly as it ascertains to ESE Students and their needs. The unit, comprised of a Special Needs Supervisor and ESE trainer, also focuses on compliance.

In BCPS, ESE drivers receive an additional 24 hours of training beyond the basic training provided by law for all drivers. Then, when route selection occurs, those who have taken the ESE-specific training are the only ones who can bid on the ESE routes. That provides the district an assurance that the drivers of those routes are as knowledgeable as possible about ESE student needs, laws, and their roles in meeting them. If, at the end of the route bidding, ESE routes remain without assigned operators, the Department sets up another 24-hour training so that all drivers of ESE routes are certified to drive those students and understand their unique needs.

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Transportation Department has cultivated a strong relationship with the physical therapy department in the district. They recently collaborated on providing bus driver training that strengthened driver awareness of student needs and support that transportation staff could provide them. They plan to do this annually. This is a model that BCPS could adopt.

COMMENDATION

The BCPS Transportation Department ensures operators and attendants are knowledgeable about ESE students, legal aspects of transporting students, and specific needs and strategies.



4.2.4 Instructional Technology

Instructional technology is not an end in itself; rather, it is a means to improve and more effectively facilitate progress and outcomes driven by and aligned with district priorities and requirements. Technology and information services support all programs and users within the school district and community. District and school administrators, staff, teachers, students, parents, and community members depend upon the communications, information, applications, and tools provided through a range of end-user devices, systems, and user interfaces that make up the technology infrastructure and communications network of the district. Uniform standards, policies and procedures, and effectively organized operations and management, are essential to a school district realizing the benefits of instructional technology and information systems.

FINDING

Evergreen's parent and staff surveys included statements on instructional technology for students with disabilities. **Exhibit 4.2-17** displays results from the parent survey related to instructional technology. As can be seen, 41.2 percent of parents agreed with the statement "Instructional technology is effectively implemented in the classroom for students with disabilities." Overall, 27.2 percent of parents disagreed with this statement and 31.1 percent of parents indicated "Neutral" or "Not Applicable."

Exhibit 4.2-17
Evergreen Parent Survey Statements on
Instructional Technology

Survey Statement: Instructional technology is effectively implemented in the classroom for students with disabilities.						
Survey Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
Parents	17.7%	23.5%	18.4%	15.1%	12.6%	12.7%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.

Exhibit 4.2-18 displays results of Evergreen's staff survey regarding instructional technology for students with disabilities. Based on the results displayed, the following can be determined:

- For the statement "Sufficient training on the use of instructional technology is available for staff and teachers to support ESE students," all survey groups indicated higher levels of agreement than disagreement with the statement, with the exception being the district administrators (33.3 percent disagreed compared to only 11.1 percent that agreed). Notably, 60.4 percent of school administrators agreed with the statement; 44.5 percent of non-instructional support agreed with the statement, compared to just 27.1 percent that disagreed; and 47.3 percent of special education teachers agreed with the statement, compared to 33.9 percent in this group that disagreed.
- For the statement "Instructional technology is effectively implemented in the classroom for students with disabilities," all but two survey groups expressed a higher level of agreement than disagreement with the survey statement. The two survey groups split between positive and negative feedback included the district administrator survey group (22.2 percent agreed and 22.2 percent disagreed) and the district program specialist survey group (32.8 percent agreed and 29.5 percent disagreed).



Exhibit 4.2-18
Evergreen Staff Survey Statements on
Instructional Technology

Survey Group	SURVEY STATEMENTS					
	Sufficient training on the use of instructional technology is available for staff and teachers to support ESE students.			Instructional technology is effectively implemented in the classroom for students with disabilities.		
	Strongly Agree/Agree	Neutral/NA	Disagree/Strongly Disagree	Strongly Agree/Agree	Neutral/NA	Disagree/Strongly Disagree
District Administrator	11.1%	55.5%	33.3%	22.2%	55.5%	22.2%
District Program Specialist	36.0%	34.4%	29.5%	32.8%	37.7%	29.5%
School Administrator	60.4%	13.2%	26.4%	67.1%	18.4%	14.4%
Non-Instructional Support	44.5%	28.3%	27.1%	48.6%	33.6%	17.8%
Special Education Teacher	47.3%	18.8%	33.9%	51.4%	20.8%	27.8%
Special Education Provider	39.0%	31.3%	29.6%	54.6%	30.4%	14.9%
General Education Teacher	42.4%	23.0%	34.6%	45.3%	30.3%	24.3%
Paraprofessional	42.3%	37.5%	20.2%	53.9%	28.0%	18.1%
Other	43.3%	27.7%	29.1%	50.7%	29.5%	19.8%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.

Notably, the significantly more respondents in the following seven survey groups agreed with this statement than disagreed:

- School administrators (67.1 percent agreed and 14.4 percent disagreed);
- Non-instructional support (48.6 percent agreed and 17.8 percent disagreed);
- Special education teacher (51.4 percent agreed and 27.8 percent disagreed);
- Special education provider (54.6 percent agreed and percent 14.9 disagreed);
- General education teacher (45.3 percent agreed and 24.3 percent disagreed);
- Paraprofessional (53.9 percent agreed and 18.1 percent disagreed); and
- Other (50.7 percent agreed and 19.8 percent disagreed).

In addition to survey results, Evergreen’s interviews included questions on access to instructional technology for students with disabilities as compared to access to instructional technology for mainstream students. While many stakeholders recognized the lack of overall instructional technology resources for all students in the BCPS, there is a general consensus among stakeholders that there are no disparities between what students with disabilities have access to and what is accessible to mainstream students.

COMMENDATION

Broward County Public Schools is commended for ensuring that students with disabilities have equal access to instructional technology.

FINDING

The BCPS Information Technology Department updates and publishes a multi-year technology plan ever several years to guide and map the district’s desired direction into the long-term future in terms of technology advancement. The most recent iteration of the technology plan is titled



“District Education Technology Plan 2013-2016” and was published on May 21, 2013. The plan addresses the use of technology in teaching, learning, management/support, and professional learning, and includes guiding tenets, needs assessment, challenges and risk factors, performance measures, and four specific goals for BCPS technology.

Exhibit 4.2-19 displays the table of contents from the 2013-2016 District Education Technology Plan.

Another document was also made available titled the “Broward County Public Schools Information and Technology Plan (January 2014).” This document was more in-depth than the 2013-2016 District Education Technology Plan, and according to the document it was created to:

- describe the vision and mission for technology deployment in Broward County Public Schools;
- define the key technology objectives needed to support the district’s three strategic goals of high quality instruction, continuous improvement and effective communications;
- assess where the District is today and provide recommendations to meet district goals; and
- identify a set of prioritized strategic initiatives and technology investments and a road map for implementation over the next three to five years.

Exhibit 4.2-19
BCPS Education Technology Plan
Table of Contents

Section Title	Page Number
Introduction	4
The District’s Guiding Tenets	8
Guiding Tenets of Educational Technology	9
Needs Assessment	10
Challenges and Risk Factors	11
Program Evaluation Through Performance Management	12
District Technology Plan Goals	13
Goal 1.0 Technology In Teaching	14
Goal 2.0 Technology In Learning	17
Goal 3.0 Information Technology (IT) Service Management and Support	20
Goal 4.0 Professional Learning Supporting Technology	22
Appendix A: Cross Reference Guides (District Plan, FDOE, US DOE, E-Rate)	25

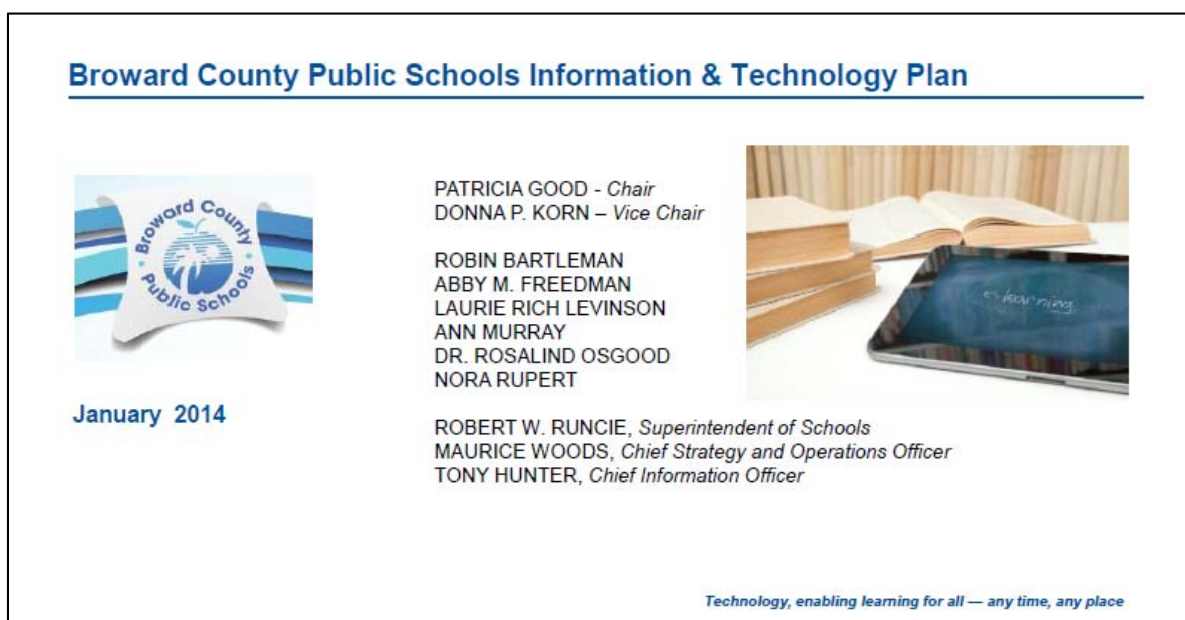
Source: Broward County Public Schools, 2014.



Exhibit 4.2-20 displays the cover page for the BCPS Information and Technology Plan. Currently, the district’s Education Technology Plan and the Information and Technology Plan do not include a section on technology for students with disabilities, although their technology needs are typically very different from other students.

Interestingly, the plan states on page 54 the following: “Concern About Access to Technology for Special Needs Students: Stakeholders have indicated that the strategic plan needs to address technology needs of students with special needs (e.g., students with disabilities, ESOL students, etc.).”

Exhibit 4.2-20
BCPS Information & Technology Plan
Cover Page



Source: Broward County Public Schools, 2014.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.2-12:

Create a Technology Plan for students with disabilities for the 2014-15 school year.

BCPS should create and share a Technology Plan for students with disabilities for the 2014-15 school year as either a standalone plan or as an addendum or appendix to the current BCPS Information and Technology Plan. The plan should include technological challenges unique to students with disabilities in the BCPS and goals to address those challenges.



FINDING

In August 2013, Broward County Public Schools initiated a program called Digital 5: Pathways for Personalized Learning (D5). The program provided BCPS fifth graders with personal laptops for use at home and in the classroom. According to BCPS, D5 was “implemented at 27 elementary schools to create a personalized learning environment for blended, student-centered learning.” Under D5, approximately 3,200 fifth grade students and their teachers received digital devices and access to digital resources, online instructional materials and other learning tools to maximize student learning and engagement. The D5 computers reduce the need for hardcover textbooks as well as folders and paper.

The D5 program included the following 27 BCPS elementary schools:

- Bennett
- Broadview
- Broward Estates
- Coral Cove
- Coral Park
- Coral Springs
- Davie
- Eagle Point
- Harbordale
- Hollywood Hills
- Hollywood Park
- James Hunt
- Lauderhill Paul Turner
- Lloyd Estates
- Maplewood
- Nova Blanche Forman
- Palm Cove
- Pembroke Lakes
- Pompano Beach
- Quiet Waters
- Sanders Park
- Sea Castle
- Silver Lakes
- Tropical
- Watkins
- Westchester
- Wilton Manors

The Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services was informed of the D5 initiative the week before planned rollout. Fifteen of the schools included students in self-contained ESE classes, but their needs for laptops had not been taken into consideration during planning. As a consequence, those ESE students did not receive their laptops and training until October, two months after the other students received theirs.

Evergreen visited several of these schools and included in interviews with staff questions on Digital 5 and the availability of computers distributed through this program to students with disabilities. Staff at these schools shared that while the initial roll-out of D5 devices to ESE students was flawed, the district rectified the situation and, in the end, there were no discrepancies between technology received from D5 between fifth grade students with disabilities in more restrictive settings and mainstream fifth grade students. Multiple parent interviews yielded the same finding.

COMMENDATION

Broward County Public Schools is commended for ensuring computers distributed under the Digital 5 project were provided to students with disabilities and mainstream students alike.



4.3 USE OF FUNDS



4.3 USE OF FUNDS

Annually, FLDOE publishes a manual called *Funding for Florida School Districts*. The manual explains the use of funding weights as follows:

Program cost factors assure that each program receives an equitable share of funds in relation to its relative cost per student. Through the annual program cost report, districts report the expenditures for each FEFP program. The cost per FTE student of each FEFP program is used to produce an index of relative costs, with the cost per FTE of Basic, Grades 4-8, established as the 1.000 base. In order to protect districts from extreme fluctuation in program cost factors, the Florida Legislature typically uses a three-year average in computing cost factors.

Multiplying the FTE students for a program by its cost factor produces “weighted FTE.” This calculation weights the FTE to reflect the relative costs of the programs as represented by the program cost factors.

For 2013-14, the ESE funding weights for Exceptional Student Education (ESE) are:

- | | |
|---|-------|
| • 111 – Kindergarten and Grades 1, 2 and 3 with ESE Services | 1.125 |
| • 112 – Grades 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 with ESE Services | 1.000 |
| • 113 – Grades 9, 10, 11 and 12 with ESE Services | 1.011 |
| • 254 – Support Level 4 | 3.558 |
| • 255 – Support Level 5 | 5.089 |

As can be seen by the weights given to students in Level 4 and 5 categories, the State recognizes that the cost to educate these students is far greater than the cost of educating a student with less significant needs resulting from the disability. The FLDOE *Matrix of Services Handbook* defines Level 4 and Level 5 as follows:

Level 4 indicates that for the majority of learning activities, the student is receiving specialized approaches, assistance, or equipment, or is receiving more extensive modifications to the learning environment. Services received on a daily basis are generally included at this level. For example, in Domain C: Independent Functioning, the student may require supervision during the majority of activities for physical safety or assistance with activities of daily living that require frequent assistance from a staff member.

Terms used to describe Level 4 services and supports include very specialized or different programs or approaches, daily or very frequent services, and assistance needed for a majority of learning activities.

Level 5 indicates that the student is receiving continuous and intense (one-on-one or very small group) assistance, multiple services, or substantial modifications for the majority of learning activities. In Domain D: Health Care, for example, the student may receive a combination of services, such as suctioning and the delivery of medications that necessitates continuous monitoring and assistance.



Terms used to describe Level 5 services and supports include continuous or constant intervention or assistance, intensive or individualized approaches and services for the majority of the day, and multiple services.

In addition to the State's FEFP funding and the ESE Guaranteed Allocation, special revenues from federal and state grant funding are also sent to the district to provide services to ESE students.

The Broward Finance Office provided data files showing the annual ESE budgets (excluding budgets for gifted programs) and the corresponding actual expenditures by school and by department. For 2013-14, the actual expenditures are those recorded as of March 6, 2014, or approximately eight of the 12 months in the fiscal year (**Note:** Prior years could not be used in the analysis as the financial information for ESE could not be separated from the Gifted program for those prior years).

Exhibit 4.3-1 provides both the Special Revenue and General Fund budgets and actual expenditures for FY 2012-13 and FY 2013-14 to date.

As shown in **Exhibit 4.3-1**, \$1.1 million in Special Revenues were not expended in FY 2012, and \$22.8 of the \$52.6 million budgeted for 2013-14, remains unexpended. Unexpended Special Revenue Funds, in most instances, can roll forward to the next year.

For General Fund, Broward does not budget for fringe benefits at the school or department level, which contributes to the appearance of overbudgeted expenditures at all levels. According to staff, the 2013-14 Budget Status Report encumbers salaries for the entire year, but the fringe benefits are based on year to date (March 6). As benefits are allocated to the departments and schools, actual expenditures will always exceed the initial budgets by the amount of the benefits (see **Exhibit 4.3-2**). General Fund budgets for both FY 2012-13 and FY 2013-14 to date significantly exceed the initial budgets. For FY 2012-13, overbudgeted General Fund expenditures totaled \$33.7 million. In FY 2013-14 through March 6, 2014, General Fund expenditures are \$22.6 million over budget. Extrapolated out over the 12 months of the fiscal year, the deficit for FY 2013-14 will meet or exceed the prior year overages.

Exhibit 4.3-3 provides the amount of Special Revenue Funding by grant source for the last three fiscal years. The certified roll-forward amounts represent unobligated balances of an award or project that are allowed to be continued in subsequent funding periods.

Exhibits 4.3-4 and 4.3-5 show the percent of budgets and expenditures by expense category. As shown, campuses tend to budget and expend the majority of both their General Fund and Special Revenue Funds on salaries and benefits. On the other hand, the Central Office level expends the majority of those dollars for purchased services.

Exhibits 4.3-6 through 4.3-8 provide additional detail on the Central Office budgets and expenditures by category separated by Special Revenue Funds and the General Fund.

Exhibits 4.3-9 and 4.3-10 provide campus-level detail related to the summary numbers shown above.



Exhibit 4.3-1
Summary of ESE Budgets and Actual Expenditures
FY 2012-13 and FY 2013-14 (through March 6, 2014)

Campus/ Department	Special Revenue Budget	Special Revenue Expenditures	Over (Under) Special Revenue Budget	General Fund Budget	General Fund Expenditures	Over (Under) General Fund Budget	Total ESE Budget	Total ESE Expenditures	Over (Under) Total ESE Budget
2012-13									
ESE Central Office	\$21,654,122	\$20,424,630	(\$1,229,492)	\$10,438,857	\$10,508,154	\$69,297	\$32,092,979	\$30,932,784	(\$1,160,195)
All Schools	\$28,476,896	\$28,578,511	\$101,615	\$114,623,766	\$148,271,979	\$33,648,213	\$143,100,662	\$176,850,490	\$33,749,828
Total Districtwide	\$50,131,017	\$49,003,141	(\$1,127,877)	\$125,062,623	\$158,780,133	\$33,717,510	\$175,193,640	\$207,783,274	\$32,589,633
2013-14 (thru 3/6/14)									
ESE Central Office	\$25,041,638	\$10,695,504	(\$14,346,135)	\$12,721,796	\$12,767,221	\$45,425	\$37,763,434	\$23,462,725	(\$14,300,710)
All Schools	\$27,577,361	\$19,070,381	(\$8,506,980)	\$119,027,872	\$141,607,407	\$22,579,535	\$146,605,233	\$160,677,788	\$14,072,555
Total Districtwide	\$52,619,000	\$29,765,885	(\$22,853,115)	\$131,749,668	\$154,374,628	\$22,624,960	\$184,368,668	\$184,140,513	(\$228,155)

Source: Compiled by Evergreen Solutions based on data provided by Broward County Schools Finance Office, March 2014.

Exhibit 4.3-2
Benefits as a Percent of Total General Fund Salaries
2012-13 and 2013-14 (Year to Date)

Area	2012-13			2013-14 (thru March 6, 2014)		
	Actual Salary	Actual Benefits	Benefits as Percent of Salary	Actual Salary	Actual Benefits	Benefits % of Salary
Central Office	\$2,330,397	\$605,205	26.0%	\$5,397,312	\$884,057	16.4%
Schools	\$109,735,146	\$34,909,615	31.8%	\$114,041,988	\$24,510,350	21.5%
Total	\$112,103,463	\$35,515,734	31.7%	\$119,439,300	\$25,394,407	21.3%

Source: Compiled by Evergreen Solutions based on data provided by Broward County Schools Finance Office, March 2014.

FINDING

Monitoring of ESE revenues and expenditures in Broward County Public Schools is spread among many positions at varying levels within the organization, leading to a lack of focus on specific ESE-related issues.

According to the Executive Director of the Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services, the Directors of School Performance and Accountability oversee the campuses and principals within their assigned zone—including budget oversight. These directors report to the Chief School Performance and Accountability Officer. When a campus has budget issues with any of the various program dollars, including ESE, the assigned director will work with the school to assist it in resolving the issue.

Additionally, the ESE Executive Director receives a monthly Special Revenue Report and principals receive monthly financial reports that provide budget to actual information at the campus and department level. The ESE Executive Director uses this monthly report to monitor the budgets and make projections for future budget needs.

During the course of this review, BCPS provided Evergreen budget to actual expenditures at the department and school levels (see **Exhibits 4.3-9** and **4.3.10**). The initial set of numbers showed that in 2012-13, the only full year of budgets and expenditures available, two of the ESE centers schools had between \$160,000 and \$460,000 in unexpended Special Revenues for the year. After examining the numbers, staff revised the data as some of those school's program costs were erroneously charged to one of the Central Office accounts. By charging the expenses to the schools in question, the schools no longer had large under-budgeted expenditures. Instead, those under-budgeted dollar amounts appear in Central Office's Special Education Instruction (2610097800) category.

For 2013-14, as shown in **Exhibit 4.3-10**, Whispering Pines appears to be under-budgeted by \$679,127 and Cross Creek School is under budget by \$688,197. Although this is only a partial year, most of the other schools shown in **Exhibit 4.3-10**, are under budget for Special Revenues in proportion to the number of months left in the school year. For General Fund, most schools are at or near the budget for the full year since benefits, which are not included in the initial budget, are included in current expenditures.



Exhibit 4.3-3
ESE Special Revenue Awards and Roll-Forward Amounts
FY 2011-12 to FY 2013-14

Grant Name	2013-14			2012-13			2011-12		
	Award	Roll/ Supplement	Total	Award	Roll/ Supplement	Total	Award	Roll/ Supplement	Total
Broward Behavioral Health (BBHC)	\$116,282	\$0	\$116,282	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
DCF Suicide	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$122,454		\$122,454	\$122,454	\$0	\$122,454
DCF Wilton Manors	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
FDLRS General Revenue	\$29,470	\$0	\$29,470	\$29,470	\$0	\$29,470	\$29,470	\$0	\$29,470
FDLRS IDEA Part B	\$925,674	\$0	\$925,674	\$925,674	\$0	\$925,674	\$925,674	\$0	\$925,674
FDLRS Part B Pre-K	\$163,220	\$0	\$163,220	\$163,220	\$0	\$163,220	\$163,220	\$0	\$163,220
FDLRS Regional Technology (Aten)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Florida Inclusive Network (Fin)	\$212,000	\$0	\$212,000	\$229,667	\$0	\$229,667	\$212,000	\$0	\$212,000
IDEA Part B	\$48,976,556	\$5,516,985	\$54,493,541	\$51,359,196	\$5,357,519	\$56,716,715	\$50,582,337	\$3,665,108	\$54,247,445
IDEA Pre-K	\$1,190,059	\$24,502	\$1,214,561	\$1,181,634	\$25,055	\$1,206,689	\$1,151,033	\$11,461	\$1,162,494
Sednet General Revenue	\$13,870	\$0	\$13,870	\$13,870	\$0	\$13,870	\$13,870	\$0	\$13,870
Sednet IDEA Part B	\$72,628	\$0	\$72,628	\$72,628	\$0	\$72,628	\$80,299	\$0	\$80,299
Sednet IDEA Part B Trust	\$41,502	\$0	\$41,502	\$41,502	\$0	\$41,502	\$33,831	\$0	\$33,831
	\$51,741,261	\$5,541,486	\$57,282,747	\$54,139,315	\$5,382,574	\$59,521,889	\$53,314,188	\$3,676,569	\$56,990,757

Source: Broward County Schools Finance Office, March 2014.

Exhibit 4.3-4
Percent of ESE General Fund Budgets/Expenditures by Category

Campus/ Department	Salaries	Benefits	Purchased Services	Supplies	Capital Outlay	Other
2013-14 Schools & Departments Budget Thru 3/6/14						
Total ESE Central Office - Budget	36.2%	0.2%	62.9%	0.6%	0.2%	0.0%
Total ESE Central Office - Expenditures	42.5%	5.8%	51.6%	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%
Total Schools - Budget	95.2%	0.0%	0.8%	3.3%	0.7%	0.0%
Total Schools - Expenditures	80.5%	17.3%	0.6%	1.1%	0.5%	0.0%
2012-13 Schools & Departments Budget						
Total ESE Central Office - Budget	26.1%	0.2%	73.5%	0.1%	0.2%	0.0%
Total ESE Central Office - Expenditures	22.5%	5.8%	71.5%	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%
Total Schools - Budget	95.5%	0.0%	0.8%	2.8%	0.8%	0.0%
Total Schools - Expenditures	74.0%	23.5%	0.6%	1.3%	0.6%	0.0%

Source: Compiled by Evergreen Solutions based on data provided by Broward County Schools Finance Office, March 2014.

Exhibit 4.3-5
Percent of ESE Special Revenue Budgets/Expenditures by Category

Campus/ Department	Salaries	Benefits	Purchased Services	Supplies	Capital Outlay	Other
2013-14 Schools & Departments Budget Thru 3/6/14						
Total ESE Central Office - Budget	33.6%	11.1%	34.3%	1.6%	19.4%	0.0%
Total ESE Central Office - Expenditures	40.9%	12.8%	42.1%	0.5%	3.7%	0.0%
Total Schools - Budget	66.4%	32.5%	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Total Schools - Expenditures	66.8%	32.3%	0.6%	0.0%	0.2%	0.0%
2012-13 Schools & Departments Budget						
Total ESE Central Office - Budget	35.5%	8.9%	47.7%	3.7%	4.2%	0.0%
Total ESE Central Office - Expenditures	34.4%	10.1%	48.7%	1.2%	5.6%	0.0%
Total Schools - Budget	67.8%	30.4%	1.4%	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%
Total Schools - Expenditures	66.9%	32.2%	0.6%	0.0%	0.2%	0.0%

Source: Compiled by Evergreen Solutions based on data provided by Broward County Schools Finance Office, March 2014.



Exhibit 4.3-6
Detail on ESE Central Office Special Revenue Budgets/Expenditures by Category
2012-13 and 2013-14 thru March 6, 2014

Funds Center	2012-13 Budget				2013-14 (thru 3/6/14 budget)	
	2600097800	2600098180	2610097800	Total ESE Central Office	2610097800	Total ESE Central Office
Description	Special Ed Instr	Psychological Services	Special Ed Instr		Special Ed Instr	
Salaries	\$0	\$146,889	\$7,542,647	\$7,689,536	\$8,410,718	\$8,410,718
Benefits	\$0	\$4	\$1,935,484	\$1,935,488	\$2,783,612	\$2,783,612
Purchased Services	\$0	\$0	\$10,324,268	\$10,324,268	\$8,600,178	\$8,600,178
Supplies	\$2,422	\$10,000	\$788,207	\$800,629	\$401,090	\$401,090
Capital Outlay	\$10,000	\$0	\$894,051	\$904,051	\$4,846,040	\$4,846,040
Other	\$0	\$0	\$150	\$150	\$0	\$0
Grand Total	\$12,422	\$156,893	\$21,484,806	\$21,654,122	\$25,041,638	\$25,041,638
Description	2012-13 Expenditures				2013-14 Expenditures through 3/6/14	
Salaries	\$0	\$0	\$7,026,717	\$7,578,357	\$4,371,461	\$4,371,461
Benefits	\$0	\$0	\$2,060,376	\$2,237,530	\$1,371,681	\$1,371,681
Purchased Services	\$0	\$0	\$9,954,645	\$9,954,645	\$4,498,823	\$4,498,823
Supplies	\$2,422	\$0	\$233,238	\$235,660	\$55,745	\$55,745
Capital Outlay	\$0	\$0	\$1,147,082	\$1,147,082	\$397,794	\$397,794
Other	\$0	\$0	\$150	\$150	\$0	\$0
Grand Total	\$2,422	\$0	\$20,422,208	\$20,424,630	\$10,695,504	\$10,695,504
Over/(Under) ESE Budget	(\$10,000)	(\$156,893)	(\$1,062,599)	(\$1,229,492)	(\$14,346,135)	(\$14,346,135)

Source: Compiled by Evergreen Solutions based on data provided by Broward County Schools Finance Office, March 2014.



Exhibit 4.3-7
Detail on ESE Central Office General Fund Budgets/Expenditures by Category
2012-13 Fiscal Year

Funds Ctr	Description	Salaries	Benefits	Purchased Services	Supplies	Capital Outlay	Other	Total
		2012-13 ESE Central Office Budget						
1200095120	EEO Compliance	\$41,058	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$41,058
2200097081	FR-Indirect Fringe							\$0
2220097031	District Reserves	\$426,939	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$426,939
2600095330	Athletics	\$0	\$0	\$375	\$2,455	\$0	\$0	\$2,830
2610097800	Special Ed Instr	\$1,494,942	\$0	\$7,579,486	\$5,272	\$5,077	\$1,930	\$9,086,707
2610097802	ESE-OT/PT Services	\$0	\$0	\$81,932	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$81,932
2610425810	Itinerant Programs	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
2620098080	Special Ed & Support							\$0
2635098260	Health Ed Services							\$0
2665098130	Medicaid	\$170,653	\$0	\$5,801	\$0	\$11,238	\$0	\$187,692
2710097790	Pre-K - 2	\$93,763	\$17,977	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$111,740
2730097880	College & Career	\$54,358	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$54,358
2755098180	Psychological Svcs	\$266,290	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$266,290
2760098140	Special Ed Ops	\$179,311	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$179,311
Total ESE Central Office Budget		\$2,727,314	\$17,977	\$7,667,594	\$7,727	\$16,315	\$1,930	\$10,438,857
Funds Ctr	Description	2012-13 ESE Central Office Expenditures						
1200095120	EEO Compliance	\$37,920	\$914	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$38,834
2200097081	FR-Indirect Fringe							\$0
2220097031	District Reserves	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
2600095330	Athletics	\$0	\$0	\$375	\$2,456	\$0	\$0	\$2,831
2610097800	Special Ed Instr	\$1,534,380	\$412,512	\$7,445,075	\$3,521	\$5,077	\$1,930	\$9,402,495
2610097802	ESE-OT/PT Services	\$0	\$0	\$70,385	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$70,385
2610425810	Itinerant Programs	\$7,060	\$173	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$7,233
2620098080	Special Ed & Support							\$0
2635098260	Health Ed Services							\$0
2665098130	Medicaid	\$154,042	\$22,922	\$0	\$0	\$4,899	\$0	\$181,863
2710097790	Pre-K - 2	\$86,302	\$21,455	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$107,757
2730097880	College & Career	\$38,325	\$359	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$38,684
2755098180	Psychological Svcs	\$298,809	\$88,070	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$386,879
2760098140	Special Ed Ops	\$211,479	\$59,714	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$271,193
Total ESE Central Office Expenditures		\$2,368,317	\$606,119	\$7,515,835	\$5,977	\$9,976	\$1,930	\$10,508,154
Over/(Under) ESE Central Office Budget		(\$358,997)	\$588,142	(\$151,759)	(\$1,750)	(\$6,339)	\$0	\$69,297

Source: Compiled by Evergreen Solutions based on data provided by Broward County Schools Finance Office, March 2014.

Exhibit 4.3-8
Detail on ESE Central Office General Fund Budgets/Expenditures by Category
2013-14 thru March 6, 2014

Funds Center	Description	Salaries	Benefits	Purchased Services	Supplies	Capital Outlay	Other	Total
		2013-14 ESE Central Office Budget						
1200095120	EEO Compliance	\$34,072	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$34,072
2200097081	FR-Indirect Fringe	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
2220097031	District Reserves	\$73,099	\$0	\$1,180,715	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,253,814
2600095330	Athletics	\$0	\$0	\$375	\$1,500	\$0	\$0	\$1,875
2610097800	Special Ed Instr	\$3,283,760	\$0	\$6,668,623	\$14,606	\$12,539	\$2,205	\$9,981,733
2610097802	ESE-OT/PT Services	\$3,120	\$0	\$104,315	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$107,435
2610425810	Itinerant Programs	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
2620098080	Special Ed & Support	\$32,478	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$32,478
2635098260	Health Ed Services	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$529	\$0	\$0	\$529
2665098130	Medicaid	\$198,922	\$0	\$42,520	\$54,583	\$11,238	\$0	\$307,263
2710097790	Pre-K - 2	\$110,840	\$23,094	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$133,934
2730097880	College & Career	\$54,358	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$54,358
2755098180	Psychological Svcs	\$275,852	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$275,852
2760098140	Special Ed Ops	\$538,453	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$538,453
Total ESE Central Office Budget		\$4,604,954	\$23,094	\$7,996,548	\$71,218	\$23,777	\$2,205	\$12,721,796
Funds Center	Description	2013-14 ESE Central Office Expenditures						
1200095120	EEO Compliance	\$28,236	\$652	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$28,888
2200097081	FR-Indirect Fringe	\$0	(\$149,187)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$149,187)
2220097031	District Reserves	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
2600095330	Athletics	\$0	\$0	\$375	\$1,500	\$0	\$0	\$1,875
2610097800	Special Ed Instr	\$4,152,994	\$669,617	\$6,485,541	\$5,087	\$4,156	\$1,580	\$11,318,975
2610097802	ESE-OT/PT Services	\$2,165	\$61	\$104,315	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$106,541
2610425810	Itinerant Programs	\$7,265	\$108	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$7,373
2620098080	Special Ed & Support	\$26,916	\$7,501	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$34,417
2635098260	Health Ed Services	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$529	\$0	\$0	\$529
2665098130	Medicaid	\$169,884	\$12,158	\$0	\$0	\$3,068	\$0	\$185,110
2710097790	Pre-K - 2	\$87,447	\$14,998	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$102,445
2730097880	College & Career	\$24,898	\$700	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$25,598
2755098180	Psychological Svcs	\$310,649	\$64,983	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$375,632
2760098140	Special Ed Ops	\$615,094	\$113,931	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$729,025
Total ESE Central Office Expenditures		\$5,425,548	\$735,522	\$6,590,231	\$7,116	\$7,224	\$1,580	\$12,767,221
Over/(Under) ESE Central Office Budget		\$820,594	\$712,428	(\$1,406,317)	(\$64,102)	(\$16,553)	(\$625)	\$45,425

Source: Compiled by Evergreen Solutions based on data provided by Broward County Schools Finance Office, March 2014.

Exhibit 4.3-9
ESE Budgets and Expenditures
2012-13 Fiscal Year

Campus/ Department	2012-13 Special Revenue Budget	2012-13 Special Revenue Expenditures	2012-13 Over (Under) Special Revenue Budget	2012-13 General Fund Budget	2012-13 General Fund Expenditures	2012-13 Over (Under) General Fund Budget	2012-13 Total ESE Budget	2012-13 Total ESE Expenditures	2012-13 Over (Under) Total ESE Budget
Anderson Boyd H. H	\$97,209	\$97,709	\$500	\$801,832	\$1,114,857	\$313,025	\$899,041	\$1,212,566	\$313,525
Ann Storck Center I	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$47,034	\$47,034	\$0	\$47,034	\$47,034	\$0
Apollo M	\$119,615	\$114,981	(\$4,634)	\$449,142	\$533,459	\$84,317	\$568,757	\$648,440	\$79,683
Arc Broward Inc.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$75,131	\$75,131	\$0	\$75,131	\$75,131	\$0
Ashe Jr. Arthur M	\$34,785	\$34,880	\$96	\$374,027	\$494,568	\$120,541	\$408,812	\$529,448	\$120,637
Atlantic Technical C	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$992,950	\$1,217,575	\$224,625	\$992,950	\$1,217,575	\$224,625
Atlantic West E	\$298,151	\$298,351	\$200	\$697,476	\$891,812	\$194,336	\$995,627	\$1,190,163	\$194,536
Attucks M	\$29,846	\$29,846	\$0	\$272,549	\$366,223	\$93,674	\$302,395	\$396,069	\$93,674
Baby Boomers	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$8,591	\$8,591	\$0	\$8,591	\$8,591	\$0
Bair M	\$83,943	\$83,943	(\$0)	\$361,097	\$474,919	\$113,822	\$445,040	\$558,862	\$113,822
Banyan E	\$55,744	\$55,784	\$40	\$505,247	\$674,392	\$169,145	\$560,991	\$730,176	\$169,185
Baudhuin Oral School	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$197,521	\$197,521	\$0	\$197,521	\$197,521	\$0
Bayview E	\$67,657	\$66,178	(\$1,479)	\$123,663	\$170,376	\$46,713	\$191,320	\$236,554	\$45,234
Beachside Mont Vill	\$27,150	\$27,150	\$0	\$145,672	\$159,576	\$13,904	\$172,822	\$186,726	\$13,904
Bennett E	\$49,691	\$49,691	\$0	\$912,329	\$1,195,848	\$283,519	\$962,020	\$1,245,539	\$283,519
Bethune E	\$24,922	\$24,922	(\$0)	\$221,607	\$292,778	\$71,171	\$246,529	\$317,700	\$71,171
Boulevard Heights E	\$28,843	\$28,843	(\$0)	\$274,629	\$247,329	(\$27,300)	\$303,472	\$276,172	(\$27,300)
Bright Horizons Ctr	\$685,661	\$740,292	\$54,632	\$2,121,449	\$2,705,105	\$583,656	\$2,807,110	\$3,445,397	\$638,288
Broadview E	\$24,862	\$24,721	(\$141)	\$528,018	\$748,228	\$220,210	\$552,880	\$772,949	\$220,069
Broward Children's C	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$13,288	\$13,287	(\$1)	\$13,288	\$13,287	(\$1)
Broward Children's C	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$9,986	\$9,985	(\$1)	\$9,986	\$9,985	(\$1)
Broward Estates E	\$4,436	\$4,436	\$0	\$102,077	\$114,910	\$12,833	\$106,513	\$119,346	\$12,833
Broward Girls Acad	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$273,976	\$298,883	\$24,907	\$273,976	\$298,883	\$24,907
Broward Virtual H	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$6,255	\$17,221	\$10,966	\$6,255	\$17,221	\$10,966



Exhibit 4.3-9 (Continued)
ESE Budgets and Expenditures
2012-13 Fiscal Year

Campus/ Department	2012-13 Special Revenue Budget	2012-13 Special Revenue Expenditures	2012-13 Over (Under) Special Revenue Budget	2012-13 General Fund Budget	2012-13 General Fund Expenditures	2012-13 Over (Under) General Fund Budget	2012-13 Total ESE Budget	2012-13 Total ESE Expenditures	2012-13 Over (Under) Total ESE Budget
Broward Youth Treat	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Castle Hill E	\$25,448	\$25,451	\$2	\$380,300	\$536,642	\$156,342	\$405,748	\$562,093	\$156,344
Central Park E	\$26,368	\$24,213	(\$2,155)	\$180,255	\$271,778	\$91,523	\$206,623	\$295,991	\$89,368
Challenger E	\$48,232	\$48,232	(\$0)	\$439,539	\$568,837	\$129,298	\$487,771	\$617,069	\$129,298
Chapel Trail E	\$44,595	\$43,359	(\$1,236)	\$401,448	\$534,582	\$133,134	\$446,043	\$577,941	\$131,898
City Of Coral Spring	\$4,999	\$0	(\$4,999)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$4,999	\$0	(\$4,999)
Coconut Creek E	\$326,202	\$326,133	(\$68)	\$670,307	\$829,529	\$159,222	\$996,509	\$1,155,662	\$159,154
Coconut Creek H	\$149,727	\$149,656	(\$71)	\$816,438	\$1,087,347	\$270,909	\$966,165	\$1,237,003	\$270,838
Coconut Palm E	\$296,780	\$296,854	\$74	\$478,525	\$441,365	(\$37,160)	\$775,305	\$738,219	(\$37,086)
Colbert E	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$360,807	\$453,274	\$92,467	\$360,807	\$453,274	\$92,467
College Academy	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,323	\$88,451	\$86,128	\$2,323	\$88,451	\$86,128
Collins E	\$36,026	\$35,099	(\$926)	\$245,577	\$304,017	\$58,440	\$281,603	\$339,116	\$57,514
Cooper City E	\$65,842	\$65,842	(\$0)	\$178,673	\$239,113	\$60,440	\$244,515	\$304,955	\$60,440
Cooper City H	\$176,868	\$171,901	(\$4,967)	\$657,012	\$757,524	\$100,512	\$833,880	\$929,425	\$95,545
Coral Cove E	\$306,770	\$294,269	(\$12,501)	\$666,424	\$773,849	\$107,425	\$973,194	\$1,068,118	\$94,924
Coral Glades H	\$155,186	\$154,998	(\$188)	\$629,272	\$800,434	\$171,162	\$784,458	\$955,432	\$170,974
Coral Park E	\$420,230	\$420,120	(\$110)	\$468,156	\$683,026	\$214,870	\$888,386	\$1,103,146	\$214,760
Coral Springs E	\$46,110	\$46,110	(\$0)	\$483,989	\$728,549	\$244,560	\$530,099	\$774,659	\$244,560
Coral Springs H	\$169,944	\$165,565	(\$4,379)	\$672,604	\$931,241	\$258,637	\$842,548	\$1,096,806	\$254,258
Coral Springs M	\$130,403	\$130,903	\$500	\$557,396	\$688,926	\$131,530	\$687,799	\$819,829	\$132,030
Country Hills E	\$62,000	\$56,896	(\$5,103)	\$559,349	\$802,491	\$243,142	\$621,349	\$859,387	\$238,039
Country Isles E	\$276,453	\$271,422	(\$5,031)	\$693,199	\$753,464	\$60,265	\$969,652	\$1,024,886	\$55,234
Cresthaven E	\$24,243	\$24,243	(\$0)	\$519,998	\$725,216	\$205,218	\$544,241	\$749,459	\$205,218
Croissant Park E	\$37,398	\$37,414	\$15	\$471,455	\$714,733	\$243,278	\$508,853	\$752,147	\$243,293
Cross Creek School	\$1,160,344	\$1,181,262	\$20,918	\$1,126,669	\$1,326,499	\$199,830	\$2,287,013	\$2,507,761	\$220,748
Crystal Lake M	\$92,903	\$96,228	\$3,325	\$376,062	\$492,450	\$116,388	\$468,965	\$588,678	\$119,713
Cypress Bay H	\$168,522	\$168,522	\$0	\$863,786	\$1,279,573	\$415,787	\$1,032,308	\$1,448,095	\$415,787
Cypress E	\$45,753	\$45,753	(\$0)	\$261,657	\$345,410	\$83,753	\$307,410	\$391,163	\$83,753
Cypress Run Ed Ctr	\$62,134	\$62,134	(\$0)	\$206,041	\$464,754	\$258,713	\$268,175	\$526,888	\$258,713

Exhibit 4.3-9 (Continued)
ESE Budgets and Expenditures
2012-13 Fiscal Year

Campus/ Department	2012-13 Special Revenue Budget	2012-13 Special Revenue Expenditures	2012-13 Over (Under) Special Revenue Budget	2012-13 General Fund Budget	2012-13 General Fund Expenditures	2012-13 Over (Under) General Fund Budget	2012-13 Total ESE Budget	2012-13 Total ESE Expenditures	2012-13 Over (Under) Total ESE Budget
Dandy William M	\$53,285	\$49,782	(\$3,503)	\$264,281	\$312,560	\$48,279	\$317,566	\$362,342	\$44,776
Dania E	\$387,954	\$385,029	(\$2,925)	\$987,338	\$1,159,060	\$171,722	\$1,375,292	\$1,544,089	\$168,797
Dave Thomas Education	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$158,609	\$236,054	\$77,445	\$158,609	\$236,054	\$77,445
Davie E	\$29,247	\$29,247	(\$0)	\$326,932	\$478,356	\$151,424	\$356,179	\$507,603	\$151,424
Deerfield Beach E	\$310,283	\$314,866	\$4,583	\$486,755	\$625,920	\$139,165	\$797,038	\$940,786	\$143,748
Deerfield Beach H	\$91,389	\$91,093	(\$296)	\$651,948	\$918,803	\$266,855	\$743,337	\$1,009,896	\$266,559
Deerfield Beach M	\$56,552	\$56,552	(\$0)	\$534,036	\$734,657	\$200,621	\$590,588	\$791,209	\$200,621
Deerfield Park E	\$165	\$165	\$0	\$172,146	\$198,596	\$26,450	\$172,311	\$198,761	\$26,450
Dillard E	\$25,532	\$25,532	(\$0)	\$215,730	\$344,756	\$129,026	\$241,262	\$370,288	\$129,026
Dillard H	\$149,048	\$149,051	\$3	\$605,962	\$837,228	\$231,266	\$755,010	\$986,279	\$231,269
Dillard M-H	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Discovery Elementary	\$24,295	\$24,294	(\$0)	\$192,183	\$336,441	\$144,258	\$216,478	\$360,735	\$144,258
Dolphin Bay E	\$69,885	\$69,630	(\$255)	\$356,830	\$420,823	\$63,993	\$426,715	\$490,453	\$63,738
Douglas Marjorie St	\$85,790	\$86,063	\$274	\$673,176	\$927,490	\$254,314	\$758,966	\$1,013,553	\$254,588
Drew Charles E	\$26,612	\$24,377	(\$2,235)	\$399,214	\$481,465	\$82,251	\$425,826	\$505,842	\$80,016
Driftwood E	\$48,066	\$48,313	\$247	\$208,613	\$375,164	\$166,551	\$256,679	\$423,477	\$166,798
Driftwood M	\$120,135	\$120,665	\$530	\$703,004	\$876,484	\$173,480	\$823,139	\$997,149	\$174,010
Eagle Point E	\$75,463	\$75,322	(\$140)	\$227,421	\$335,619	\$108,198	\$302,884	\$410,941	\$108,058
Eagle Ridge E	\$47,390	\$47,390	(\$0)	\$578,309	\$783,504	\$205,195	\$625,699	\$830,894	\$205,195
Ely Blanche H	\$40,781	\$39,473	(\$1,308)	\$709,351	\$879,584	\$170,233	\$750,132	\$919,057	\$168,925
Embassy Creek E	\$87,795	\$87,795	(\$0)	\$289,081	\$361,643	\$72,562	\$376,876	\$449,438	\$72,562
Endeavour Primary	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$340,111	\$423,725	\$83,614	\$340,111	\$423,725	\$83,614
Everglades E	\$351,715	\$351,439	(\$276)	\$681,856	\$899,774	\$217,918	\$1,033,571	\$1,251,213	\$217,642
Everglades H	\$180,929	\$180,853	(\$76)	\$730,667	\$980,659	\$249,992	\$911,596	\$1,161,512	\$249,916
Fairway E	\$29,247	\$29,247	(\$0)	\$124,779	\$186,344	\$61,565	\$154,026	\$215,591	\$61,565
Falcon Cove M	\$169,999	\$169,893	(\$106)	\$504,958	\$628,032	\$123,074	\$674,957	\$797,925	\$122,968
Flamingo E	\$20,196	\$24,485	\$4,289	\$146,808	\$186,530	\$39,722	\$167,004	\$211,015	\$44,011
Flanagan Charles H	\$199,318	\$199,325	\$7	\$773,635	\$1,200,688	\$427,053	\$972,953	\$1,400,013	\$427,060
Florana E	\$349,170	\$343,846	(\$5,324)	\$540,562	\$722,720	\$182,158	\$889,732	\$1,066,566	\$176,834



Exhibit 4.3-9 (Continued)
ESE Budgets and Expenditures
2012-13 Fiscal Year

Campus/ Department	2012-13 Special Revenue Budget	2012-13 Special Revenue Expenditures	2012-13 Over (Under) Special Revenue Budget	2012-13 General Fund Budget	2012-13 General Fund Expenditures	2012-13 Over (Under) General Fund Budget	2012-13 Total ESE Budget	2012-13 Total ESE Expenditures	2012-13 Over (Under) Total ESE Budget
Florida Ocean Sci	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$546	\$0	(\$546)	\$546	\$0	(\$546)
Forest Glen M	\$121,645	\$119,385	(\$2,260)	\$657,382	\$899,341	\$241,959	\$779,027	\$1,018,726	\$239,699
Forest Hills E	\$25,144	\$22,560	(\$2,583)	\$363,711	\$512,143	\$148,432	\$388,855	\$534,703	\$145,849
Fort Lauderdale H	\$107,094	\$107,849	\$755	\$611,856	\$819,584	\$207,728	\$718,950	\$927,433	\$208,483
Foster Stephen E	\$28,322	\$28,347	\$25	\$629,839	\$858,921	\$229,082	\$658,161	\$887,268	\$229,107
Fox Trail E	\$329,608	\$331,184	\$1,575	\$596,968	\$784,303	\$187,335	\$926,576	\$1,115,487	\$188,910
Franklin Academy	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Franklin Academy E	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Gator Run E	\$68,089	\$68,089	(\$0)	\$475,133	\$726,137	\$251,004	\$543,222	\$794,226	\$251,004
Glades M	\$146,227	\$146,191	(\$36)	\$473,860	\$582,017	\$108,157	\$620,087	\$728,208	\$108,121
Griffin E	\$112,982	\$96,354	(\$16,628)	\$942,272	\$994,970	\$52,698	\$1,055,254	\$1,091,324	\$36,070
Gulfstream M	\$72,490	\$72,490	\$0	\$111,826	\$139,870	\$28,044	\$184,316	\$212,360	\$28,044
Hallandale Adult/Com	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$346,324	\$403,919	\$57,595	\$346,324	\$403,919	\$57,595
Hallandale E	\$19,488	\$19,472	(\$16)	\$243,087	\$335,135	\$92,048	\$262,575	\$354,607	\$92,032
Hallandale H	\$132,155	\$128,200	(\$3,954)	\$388,530	\$566,826	\$178,296	\$520,685	\$695,026	\$174,342
Harbordale E	\$109,001	\$109,172	\$170	\$284,715	\$345,890	\$61,175	\$393,716	\$455,062	\$61,345
Hawkes Bluff E	\$70,114	\$70,114	(\$0)	\$583,343	\$809,828	\$226,485	\$653,457	\$879,942	\$226,485
Heron Heights Elem	\$11,824	\$9,309	(\$2,514)	\$173,769	\$224,938	\$51,169	\$185,593	\$234,247	\$48,655
Hollywood Central E	\$79,764	\$79,719	(\$45)	\$190,863	\$255,296	\$64,433	\$270,627	\$335,015	\$64,388
Hollywood Hills E	\$41,757	\$41,757	\$0	\$192,433	\$203,112	\$10,679	\$234,190	\$244,869	\$10,679
Hollywood Hills H	\$113,808	\$113,808	(\$0)	\$494,010	\$621,428	\$127,418	\$607,818	\$735,236	\$127,418
Hollywood Park E	\$110,851	\$109,992	(\$859)	\$1,055,259	\$1,323,174	\$267,915	\$1,166,110	\$1,433,166	\$267,056
Horizon E	\$222,347	\$295,904	\$73,557	\$598,994	\$740,332	\$141,338	\$821,341	\$1,036,236	\$214,895
Hunt James S. E	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$148,540	\$255,828	\$107,288	\$148,540	\$255,828	\$107,288
Imagine Charter Scho	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Imagine Middle Sch	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Indian Ridge M	\$148,283	\$148,783	\$500	\$506,147	\$737,503	\$231,356	\$654,430	\$886,286	\$231,856
Indian Trace E	\$59,307	\$57,387	(\$1,920)	\$336,240	\$443,081	\$106,841	\$395,547	\$500,468	\$104,921
Juvenile Detention C	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$134,323	\$161,329	\$27,006	\$134,323	\$161,329	\$27,006

Exhibit 4.3-9 (Continued)
ESE Budgets and Expenditures
2012-13 Fiscal Year

Campus/ Department	2012-13 Special Revenue Budget	2012-13 Special Revenue Expenditures	2012-13 Over (Under) Special Revenue Budget	2012-13 General Fund Budget	2012-13 General Fund Expenditures	2012-13 Over (Under) General Fund Budget	2012-13 Total ESE Budget	2012-13 Total ESE Expenditures	2012-13 Over (Under) Total ESE Budget
King Martin Luther	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$258,812	\$300,777	\$41,965	\$258,812	\$300,777	\$41,965
Lake Forest E	\$320,562	\$322,455	\$1,892	\$688,966	\$876,068	\$187,102	\$1,009,528	\$1,198,523	\$188,994
Lakeside E	\$52,102	\$52,057	(\$45)	\$476,359	\$554,842	\$78,483	\$528,461	\$606,899	\$78,438
Lanier-James Ed Ctr	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$223,146	\$209,422	(\$13,724)	\$223,146	\$209,422	(\$13,724)
Larkdale E	\$15,501	\$13,254	(\$2,247)	\$327,005	\$347,774	\$20,769	\$342,506	\$361,028	\$18,522
Lauderdale Lakes M	\$145,898	\$145,898	(\$0)	\$264,055	\$397,020	\$132,965	\$409,953	\$542,918	\$132,965
Lauderdale Manors E	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$163,038	\$209,242	\$46,204	\$163,038	\$209,242	\$46,204
Lauderhill M	\$53,939	\$53,717	(\$222)	\$206,039	\$311,091	\$105,052	\$259,978	\$364,808	\$104,830
Lauderhill M-H	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Lauderhill Paul Turn	\$230,213	\$242,848	\$12,635	\$580,519	\$705,075	\$124,556	\$810,732	\$947,923	\$137,191
Liberty E	\$199,254	\$206,346	\$7,091	\$369,758	\$429,428	\$59,670	\$569,012	\$635,774	\$66,761
Lloyd Estates E	\$30,018	\$30,018	(\$0)	\$282,799	\$384,986	\$102,187	\$312,817	\$415,004	\$102,187
Lyons Creek M	\$183,576	\$180,404	(\$3,172)	\$623,646	\$778,135	\$154,489	\$807,222	\$958,539	\$151,317
Manatee Bay E	\$86,270	\$88,374	\$2,104	\$484,056	\$624,543	\$140,487	\$570,326	\$712,917	\$142,591
Maplewood E	\$115,769	\$113,200	(\$2,570)	\$743,721	\$980,012	\$236,291	\$859,490	\$1,093,212	\$233,721
Margate E	\$41,077	\$41,077	(\$0)	\$517,533	\$659,717	\$142,184	\$558,610	\$700,794	\$142,184
Margate M	\$140,991	\$143,390	\$2,400	\$548,284	\$637,435	\$89,151	\$689,275	\$780,825	\$91,551
Markham Robert C. E	\$26,197	\$23,917	(\$2,280)	\$89,608	\$167,387	\$77,779	\$115,805	\$191,304	\$75,499
Marshall Thurgood E	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$288,068	\$375,970	\$87,902	\$288,068	\$375,970	\$87,902
Mcarthur H	\$160,000	\$160,610	\$610	\$626,310	\$751,461	\$125,151	\$786,310	\$912,071	\$125,761
Mcfatter Technical C	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$296,215	\$557,555	\$261,340	\$296,215	\$557,555	\$261,340
Mcnab E	\$68,155	\$68,155	(\$0)	\$169,841	\$263,508	\$93,667	\$237,996	\$331,663	\$93,667
Mcnicol M	\$37,680	\$37,612	(\$67)	\$355,436	\$431,961	\$76,525	\$393,116	\$469,573	\$76,458
Meadowbrook E	\$281,418	\$285,745	\$4,327	\$713,526	\$976,282	\$262,756	\$994,944	\$1,262,027	\$267,083
Millennium M	\$159,251	\$159,251	(\$0)	\$366,922	\$573,477	\$206,555	\$526,173	\$732,728	\$206,555
Miramar E	\$65,716	\$65,666	(\$51)	\$532,906	\$688,962	\$156,056	\$598,622	\$754,628	\$156,005
Miramar H	\$69,774	\$62,446	(\$7,329)	\$787,105	\$988,942	\$201,837	\$856,879	\$1,051,388	\$194,508
Mirror Lake E	\$345,311	\$349,453	\$4,142	\$1,107,644	\$1,387,621	\$279,977	\$1,452,955	\$1,737,074	\$284,119
Monarch H	\$152,661	\$152,661	(\$0)	\$729,662	\$971,261	\$241,599	\$882,323	\$1,123,922	\$241,599

Exhibit 4.3-9 (Continued)
ESE Budgets and Expenditures
2012-13 Fiscal Year

Campus/ Department	2012-13 Special Revenue Budget	2012-13 Special Revenue Expenditures	2012-13 Over (Under) Special Revenue Budget	2012-13 General Fund Budget	2012-13 General Fund Expenditures	2012-13 Over (Under) General Fund Budget	2012-13 Total ESE Budget	2012-13 Total ESE Expenditures	2012-13 Over (Under) Total ESE Budget
Morrow E	\$39,296	\$39,296	(\$0)	\$376,926	\$446,340	\$69,414	\$416,222	\$485,636	\$69,414
New Renaissance M	\$82,150	\$67,757	(\$14,393)	\$339,508	\$450,895	\$111,387	\$421,658	\$518,652	\$96,994
New River M	\$82,482	\$82,482	(\$0)	\$450,515	\$635,110	\$184,595	\$532,997	\$717,592	\$184,595
Nob Hill E	\$80,066	\$86,422	\$6,356	\$735,292	\$928,351	\$193,059	\$815,358	\$1,014,773	\$199,415
Norcrest E	\$313,050	\$320,897	\$7,847	\$789,406	\$975,756	\$186,350	\$1,102,456	\$1,296,653	\$194,197
North Andrews Garden	\$64,814	\$64,707	(\$107)	\$173,000	\$238,811	\$65,811	\$237,814	\$303,518	\$65,704
North Fork E	\$47,462	\$47,461	(\$0)	\$135,699	\$167,024	\$31,325	\$183,161	\$214,485	\$31,325
North Lauderdale E	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$215,587	\$273,190	\$57,603	\$215,587	\$273,190	\$57,603
North Side E	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$82,126	\$117,568	\$35,442	\$82,126	\$117,568	\$35,442
Northeast H	\$65,723	\$50,172	(\$15,552)	\$598,736	\$752,283	\$153,547	\$664,459	\$802,455	\$137,995
Nova Blanche Forman	\$70,984	\$70,984	(\$0)	\$181,941	\$239,723	\$57,782	\$252,925	\$310,707	\$57,782
Nova D Eisenhower E	\$61,338	\$44,710	(\$16,628)	\$346,876	\$341,534	(\$5,342)	\$408,214	\$386,244	(\$21,970)
Nova H	\$93,210	\$90,975	(\$2,235)	\$324,151	\$389,441	\$65,290	\$417,361	\$480,416	\$63,055
Nova M	\$47,131	\$47,073	(\$58)	\$246,915	\$322,160	\$75,245	\$294,046	\$369,233	\$75,187
Oakland Park E	\$35,565	\$35,565	(\$0)	\$406,804	\$580,126	\$173,322	\$442,369	\$615,691	\$173,322
Oakridge E	\$44,937	\$44,940	\$3	\$350,951	\$409,523	\$58,572	\$395,888	\$454,463	\$58,575
Off Campus Learning	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$172,177	\$141,121	(\$31,056)	\$172,177	\$141,121	(\$31,056)
Olsen M	\$97,977	\$96,054	(\$1,922)	\$439,283	\$527,711	\$88,428	\$537,260	\$623,765	\$86,506
Orange Brook E	\$55,482	\$55,482	(\$0)	\$178,901	\$204,973	\$26,072	\$234,383	\$260,455	\$26,072
Oriole E	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$95,935	\$103,850	\$7,915	\$95,935	\$103,850	\$7,915
Pace Ctr For Girls	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$170	\$0	(\$170)	\$170	\$0	(\$170)
Palm Cove E	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$215,425	\$218,200	\$2,775	\$215,425	\$218,200	\$2,775
Palmview E	\$13,247	\$13,247	\$0	\$261,240	\$324,902	\$63,662	\$274,487	\$338,149	\$63,662
Panther Run E	\$303,383	\$299,046	(\$4,337)	\$517,003	\$583,668	\$66,665	\$820,386	\$882,714	\$62,328
Park Lakes E	\$65,180	\$65,180	(\$0)	\$429,982	\$717,300	\$287,318	\$495,162	\$782,480	\$287,318
Park Ridge E	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$270,999	\$374,191	\$103,192	\$270,999	\$374,191	\$103,192
Park Springs E	\$306,321	\$303,582	(\$2,739)	\$845,895	\$978,550	\$132,655	\$1,152,216	\$1,282,132	\$129,916
Park Trails E	\$268,979	\$270,367	\$1,388	\$713,453	\$905,239	\$191,786	\$982,432	\$1,175,606	\$193,174
Parkside E	\$287,010	\$288,388	\$1,377	\$783,983	\$859,968	\$75,985	\$1,070,993	\$1,148,356	\$77,362



Exhibit 4.3-9 (Continued)
ESE Budgets and Expenditures
2012-13 Fiscal Year

Campus/ Department	2012-13 Special Revenue Budget	2012-13 Special Revenue Expenditures	2012-13 Over (Under) Special Revenue Budget	2012-13 General Fund Budget	2012-13 General Fund Expenditures	2012-13 Over (Under) General Fund Budget	2012-13 Total ESE Budget	2012-13 Total ESE Expenditures	2012-13 Over (Under) Total ESE Budget
Parkway M	\$138,228	\$132,740	(\$5,488)	\$425,088	\$480,452	\$55,364	\$563,316	\$613,192	\$49,876
Pasadena Lakes E	\$318,788	\$319,965	\$1,178	\$718,691	\$920,171	\$201,480	\$1,037,479	\$1,240,136	\$202,658
Pembroke Lakes E	\$121,577	\$117,144	(\$4,433)	\$376,030	\$423,607	\$47,577	\$497,607	\$540,751	\$43,144
Pembroke Pines Chart	\$19,031	\$19,031	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$19,031	\$19,031	\$0
Pembroke Pines Chart	\$9,114	\$9,114	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$9,114	\$9,114	\$0
Pembroke Pines E	\$353,394	\$349,407	(\$3,987)	\$421,160	\$517,848	\$96,688	\$774,554	\$867,255	\$92,701
Pembroke Pines M Cha	\$3,101	\$3,101	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$3,101	\$3,101	\$0
Perry Annabel C. E	\$45,009	\$44,983	(\$26)	\$429,332	\$628,704	\$199,372	\$474,341	\$673,687	\$199,346
Perry Henry D. M	\$26,191	\$26,191	(\$0)	\$195,343	\$323,343	\$128,000	\$221,534	\$349,534	\$128,000
Peters E	\$66,679	\$66,788	\$109	\$322,018	\$414,744	\$92,726	\$388,697	\$481,532	\$92,835
Pine Ridge Ed Ctr	\$22,330	\$22,330	\$0	\$208,159	\$256,833	\$48,674	\$230,489	\$279,163	\$48,674
Pines Lakes E	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$542,657	\$727,258	\$184,601	\$542,657	\$727,258	\$184,601
Pines M	\$102,087	\$110,613	\$8,527	\$493,656	\$614,868	\$121,212	\$595,743	\$725,481	\$129,739
Pinewood E	\$64,818	\$64,818	(\$0)	\$717,244	\$833,875	\$116,631	\$782,062	\$898,693	\$116,631
Pioneer M	\$116,781	\$116,668	(\$113)	\$474,598	\$556,858	\$82,260	\$591,379	\$673,526	\$82,147
Piper H	\$116,556	\$116,556	(\$0)	\$765,058	\$990,530	\$225,472	\$881,614	\$1,107,086	\$225,472
Plantation E	\$748	\$703	(\$45)	\$230,120	\$403,932	\$173,812	\$230,868	\$404,635	\$173,767
Plantation H	\$149,744	\$145,541	(\$4,203)	\$626,615	\$759,001	\$132,386	\$776,359	\$904,542	\$128,183
Plantation M	\$83,415	\$83,459	\$44	\$189,620	\$278,977	\$89,357	\$273,035	\$362,436	\$89,401
Plantation Park E	\$24,765	\$25,337	\$572	\$554,008	\$650,151	\$96,143	\$578,773	\$675,488	\$96,715
Pompano Beach E	\$24,622	\$24,542	(\$80)	\$444,430	\$530,544	\$86,114	\$469,052	\$555,086	\$86,034
Pompano Beach H S	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$72,233	\$118,450	\$46,217	\$72,233	\$118,450	\$46,217
Pompano Beach M	\$91,676	\$89,917	(\$1,759)	\$271,195	\$399,064	\$127,869	\$362,871	\$488,981	\$126,110
Pompano Substance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$18,011	\$23,825	\$5,814	\$18,011	\$23,825	\$5,814
Quiet Waters E	\$38,227	\$35,517	(\$2,710)	\$296,133	\$349,725	\$53,592	\$334,360	\$385,242	\$50,882
Ramblewood E	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$500,833	\$602,235	\$101,402	\$500,833	\$602,235	\$101,402
Ramblewood M	\$121,264	\$128,437	\$7,173	\$472,979	\$667,002	\$194,023	\$594,243	\$795,439	\$201,196
Renaissance Of N Brw	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Rickards James S. M	\$82,582	\$82,439	(\$143)	\$215,651	\$313,808	\$98,157	\$298,233	\$396,247	\$98,014

Exhibit 4.3-9 (Continued)
ESE Budgets and Expenditures
2012-13 Fiscal Year

Campus/ Department	2012-13 Special Revenue Budget	2012-13 Special Revenue Expenditures	2012-13 Over (Under) Special Revenue Budget	2012-13 General Fund Budget	2012-13 General Fund Expenditures	2012-13 Over (Under) General Fund Budget	2012-13 Total ESE Budget	2012-13 Total ESE Expenditures	2012-13 Over (Under) Total ESE Budget
Riverglades E	\$46,941	\$44,269	(\$2,673)	\$130,051	\$213,041	\$82,990	\$176,992	\$257,310	\$80,317
Riverland E	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$244,255	\$264,347	\$20,092	\$244,255	\$264,347	\$20,092
Riverside E	\$76,536	\$76,536	(\$0)	\$384,460	\$544,897	\$160,437	\$460,996	\$621,433	\$160,437
Rock Island E	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$182,136	\$270,864	\$88,728	\$182,136	\$270,864	\$88,728
Royal Palm E	\$10,406	\$10,406	\$0	\$353,013	\$436,341	\$83,328	\$363,419	\$446,747	\$83,328
Sanders Park E	\$88,744	\$86,700	(\$2,044)	\$449,236	\$593,664	\$144,428	\$537,980	\$680,364	\$142,384
Sandpiper E	\$315,091	\$315,621	\$530	\$514,139	\$534,335	\$20,196	\$829,230	\$849,956	\$20,726
Sawgrass E	\$249,363	\$249,377	\$14	\$593,333	\$673,179	\$79,846	\$842,696	\$922,556	\$79,860
Sawgrass Springs M	\$120,047	\$125,165	\$5,118	\$433,519	\$593,694	\$160,175	\$553,566	\$718,859	\$165,293
Sea Castle E	\$269,388	\$262,273	(\$7,114)	\$445,708	\$514,714	\$69,006	\$715,096	\$776,987	\$61,892
Seagull Adult	\$680	\$578	(\$102)	\$1,496,630	\$2,067,725	\$571,095	\$1,497,310	\$2,068,303	\$570,993
Seminole M	\$116,659	\$117,227	\$568	\$670,728	\$1,011,284	\$340,556	\$787,387	\$1,128,511	\$341,124
Sheridan Hills E	\$42,733	\$42,893	\$160	\$389,478	\$536,578	\$147,100	\$432,211	\$579,471	\$147,260
Sheridan Park E	\$347,069	\$344,652	(\$2,417)	\$572,929	\$645,616	\$72,687	\$919,998	\$990,268	\$70,270
Sheridan Technical C	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$673,381	\$911,679	\$238,298	\$673,381	\$911,679	\$238,298
Silver Lakes E	\$359,769	\$359,769	\$1	\$707,876	\$835,332	\$127,456	\$1,067,645	\$1,195,101	\$127,457
Silver Lakes M	\$58,434	\$57,949	(\$485)	\$266,470	\$342,533	\$76,063	\$324,904	\$400,482	\$75,578
Silver Palms E	\$73,773	\$73,853	\$80	\$463,727	\$596,921	\$133,194	\$537,500	\$670,774	\$133,274
Silver Ridge E	\$124,663	\$123,567	(\$1,095)	\$957,277	\$1,189,627	\$232,350	\$1,081,940	\$1,313,194	\$231,255
Silver Shores E	\$92,812	\$92,694	(\$118)	\$797,465	\$985,794	\$188,329	\$890,277	\$1,078,488	\$188,211
Silver Trail M	\$140,627	\$131,050	(\$9,577)	\$449,230	\$515,664	\$66,434	\$589,857	\$646,714	\$56,857
Somerset Acad Dav	\$804	\$804	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$804	\$804	\$0
Somerset Pines Acdmy	\$5,867	\$5,867	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$5,867	\$5,867	\$0
South Broward H	\$106,431	\$104,290	(\$2,141)	\$745,974	\$972,257	\$226,283	\$852,405	\$1,076,547	\$224,142
South Plantation H	\$114,912	\$115,411	\$498	\$1,148,152	\$1,556,865	\$408,713	\$1,263,064	\$1,672,276	\$409,211
Stirling E	\$67,250	\$61,532	(\$5,718)	\$739,887	\$1,017,669	\$277,782	\$807,137	\$1,079,201	\$272,064
Stranahan H	\$108,253	\$108,210	(\$43)	\$408,233	\$563,011	\$154,778	\$516,486	\$671,221	\$154,735
Sunland Park E	\$8	\$8	\$0	\$301,513	\$345,001	\$43,488	\$301,521	\$345,009	\$43,488
Sunrise M	\$150,330	\$150,330	(\$0)	\$388,074	\$479,464	\$91,390	\$538,404	\$629,794	\$91,390
Sunset Lakes E	\$65,862	\$65,550	(\$313)	\$564,571	\$719,244	\$154,673	\$630,433	\$784,794	\$154,360



Exhibit 4.3-9 (Continued)
ESE Budgets and Expenditures
2012-13 Fiscal Year

Campus/ Department	2012-13 Special Revenue Budget	2012-13 Special Revenue Expenditures	2012-13 Over (Under) Special Revenue Budget	2012-13 General Fund Budget	2012-13 General Fund Expenditures	2012-13 Over (Under) General Fund Budget	2012-13 Total ESE Budget	2012-13 Total ESE Expenditures	2012-13 Over (Under) Total ESE Budget
Sunset Learning Ctr	\$1,795,015	\$1,798,211	\$3,196	\$2,137,310	\$2,561,391	\$424,081	\$3,932,325	\$4,359,602	\$427,277
Sunshine E	\$22,539	\$22,542	\$3	\$167,678	\$227,167	\$59,489	\$190,217	\$249,709	\$59,492
Tamarac E	\$21,630	\$21,632	\$3	\$767,874	\$1,059,053	\$291,179	\$789,504	\$1,080,685	\$291,182
Taravella J.P. H	\$118,553	\$113,680	(\$4,873)	\$956,205	\$1,247,242	\$291,037	\$1,074,758	\$1,360,922	\$286,164
Tedder E	\$82,921	\$80,520	(\$2,401)	\$483,148	\$643,255	\$160,107	\$566,069	\$723,775	\$157,706
Tequesta Trace M	\$94,129	\$94,129	(\$0)	\$380,641	\$483,314	\$102,673	\$474,770	\$577,443	\$102,673
The Quest	\$452,024	\$446,312	(\$5,712)	\$2,743,275	\$3,789,749	\$1,046,474	\$3,195,299	\$4,236,061	\$1,040,762
Thompson Academy	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$220,932	\$364,721	\$143,789	\$220,932	\$364,721	\$143,789
Tradewinds E	\$267,150	\$275,866	\$8,717	\$758,598	\$1,020,393	\$261,795	\$1,025,748	\$1,296,259	\$270,512
Tropical E	\$45,815	\$45,596	(\$219)	\$846,742	\$1,131,974	\$285,232	\$892,557	\$1,177,570	\$285,013
United Cerebral Pals	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$33,624	\$33,623	(\$1)	\$33,624	\$33,623	(\$1)
Village E	\$52,941	\$51,108	(\$1,833)	\$147,026	\$158,524	\$11,498	\$199,967	\$209,632	\$9,665
Walker E	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$137,443	\$211,732	\$74,289	\$137,443	\$211,732	\$74,289
Watkins E	\$18,628	\$18,361	(\$267)	\$462,188	\$524,268	\$62,080	\$480,816	\$542,629	\$61,813
Welleby E	\$46,492	\$46,492	\$0	\$572,378	\$722,308	\$149,930	\$618,870	\$768,800	\$149,930
West Broward High	\$192,962	\$192,962	(\$0)	\$597,807	\$835,316	\$237,509	\$790,769	\$1,028,278	\$237,509
West Hollywood E	\$80,022	\$80,028	\$6	\$336,047	\$352,481	\$16,434	\$416,069	\$432,509	\$16,440
Westchester E	\$78,280	\$78,329	\$49	\$348,882	\$437,179	\$88,297	\$427,162	\$515,508	\$88,346
Western H	\$108,138	\$117,105	\$8,967	\$740,034	\$983,998	\$243,964	\$848,172	\$1,101,103	\$252,931
Westglades M	\$141,338	\$137,196	(\$4,142)	\$355,055	\$459,926	\$104,871	\$496,393	\$597,122	\$100,729
Westpine M	\$131,030	\$137,817	\$6,787	\$413,398	\$604,937	\$191,539	\$544,428	\$742,754	\$198,326
Westwood Heights E	\$63,122	\$62,296	(\$825)	\$489,372	\$567,530	\$78,158	\$552,494	\$629,826	\$77,333
Whiddon-Rogers Ed Ct	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$248,117	\$260,194	\$12,077	\$248,117	\$260,194	\$12,077
Whispering Pines	\$1,293,058	\$1,347,301	\$54,244	\$1,764,985	\$2,210,422	\$445,437	\$3,058,043	\$3,557,723	\$499,681
Whispering Pines-Oc	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Wilton Manors E	\$298,414	\$304,184	\$5,770	\$625,928	\$737,452	\$111,524	\$924,342	\$1,041,636	\$117,294
Wingate Oaks Ctr	\$905,930	\$926,638	\$20,708	\$2,028,961	\$2,609,453	\$580,492	\$2,934,891	\$3,536,091	\$601,200
Winston Park E	\$36,187	\$36,187	\$0	\$345,420	\$494,114	\$148,694	\$381,607	\$530,301	\$148,694
Young Virginia S. E	\$21,906	\$19,810	(\$2,095)	\$151,324	\$191,234	\$39,910	\$173,230	\$211,044	\$37,815
Young Walter C. M	\$154,836	\$154,842	\$5	\$404,137	\$594,156	\$190,019	\$558,973	\$748,998	\$190,024
Total Schools	\$28,476,896	\$28,578,511	\$101,615	\$114,623,766	\$148,271,979	\$33,648,213	\$143,100,662	\$176,850,490	\$33,749,828

Source: Compiled by Evergreen Solutions based on data provided by Broward County Schools Finance Office, March 2014.

Exhibit 4.3-10
ESE Budgets and Expenditures
FY 2013-14 through March 6, 2014

Campus/ Department	2013-14 Special Revenue Budget	2013-14 Special Revenue Expenditures	2013-14 Over (Under) Special Revenue Budget	2013-14 General Fund Budget	2013-14 General Fund Expenditures	2013-14 Over (Under) General Fund Budget	2013-14 Total ESE Budget	2013-14 Total ESE Expenditures	2013-14 Over (Under) Total ESE Budget
Anderson Boyd H. H	\$95,958	\$67,037	(\$28,921)	\$838,281	\$1,039,422	\$201,141	\$934,239	\$1,106,459	\$172,220
Ann Storck Center I	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$39,657	\$39,656	(\$1)	\$39,657	\$39,656	(\$1)
Apollo M	\$120,329	\$17,845	(\$102,484)	\$502,312	\$520,042	\$17,730	\$622,641	\$537,887	(\$84,754)
Arc Broward Inc.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$62,178	\$62,177	(\$1)	\$62,178	\$62,177	(\$1)
Ashe Jr. Arthur M	\$33,284	\$4,617	(\$28,666)	\$0	(\$52)	(\$52)	\$33,284	\$4,565	(\$28,718)
Atlantic Technical C	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$976,718	\$1,046,175	\$69,457	\$976,718	\$1,046,175	\$69,457
Atlantic West E	309,847.29	\$200,718	(\$109,129)	\$731,304	\$922,079	\$190,775	\$1,041,151	\$1,122,797	\$81,646
Attucks M	\$55,854	\$20,852	(\$35,002)	\$274,961	\$322,748	\$47,787	\$330,815	\$343,600	\$12,785
Baby Boomers	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Bair M	\$67,960	\$56,426	(\$11,534)	\$373,804	\$462,346	\$88,542	\$441,764	\$518,772	\$77,008
Banyan E	\$52,866	\$31,451	(\$21,415)	\$523,765	\$670,590	\$146,825	\$576,631	\$702,041	\$125,410
Baudhuin Oral School	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$195,350	\$195,350	\$0	\$195,350	\$195,350	\$0
Bayview E	\$71,863	\$47,180	(\$24,683)	\$147,336	\$195,492	\$48,156	\$219,199	\$242,672	\$23,473
Beachside Mont Vill	\$26,825	\$19,953	(\$6,872)	\$158,975	\$164,012	\$5,037	\$185,800	\$183,965	(\$1,835)
Bennett E	\$46,860	\$44,949	(\$1,910)	\$1,030,410	\$1,302,392	\$271,982	\$1,077,270	\$1,347,341	\$270,072
Bethune E	\$24,089	\$13,752	(\$10,337)	\$194,973	\$253,792	\$58,819	\$219,062	\$267,544	\$48,482
Boulevard Heights E	\$141,624	\$136,874	(\$4,750)	\$528,709	\$699,229	\$170,520	\$670,333	\$836,103	\$165,770
Bright Horizons Ctr	\$325,170	\$187,602	(\$137,568)	\$2,624,855	\$3,360,575	\$735,720	\$2,950,025	\$3,548,177	\$598,152
Broadview E	\$23,212	\$19,675	(\$3,537)	\$583,844	\$662,645	\$78,801	\$607,056	\$682,320	\$75,264
Broward Children's C	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$18,997	\$18,996	(\$1)	\$18,997	\$18,996	(\$1)
Broward Children's C	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$20,114	\$20,114	\$0	\$20,114	\$20,114	\$0
Broward Estates E	\$25,021	\$8,612	(\$16,409)	\$89,894	\$149,243	\$59,349	\$114,915	\$157,855	\$42,940
Broward Girls Acad	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$250,888	\$253,630	\$2,742	\$250,888	\$253,630	\$2,742
Broward Virtual H	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$19,977	\$27,472	\$7,495	\$19,977	\$27,472	\$7,495
Broward Youth Treat	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$17,621	\$24,387	\$6,766	\$17,621	\$24,387	\$6,766
Castle Hill E	\$24,796	\$16,622	(\$8,174)	\$401,556	\$516,625	\$115,069	\$426,352	\$533,247	\$106,895
Central Park E	\$23,703	\$23,778	\$75	\$187,499	\$270,413	\$82,914	\$211,202	\$294,191	\$82,989
Challenger E	\$47,009	\$39,229	(\$7,780)	\$467,017	\$538,658	\$71,641	\$514,026	\$577,887	\$63,861
Chapel Trail E	\$44,185	\$39,756	(\$4,429)	\$405,973	\$470,467	\$64,494	\$450,158	\$510,223	\$60,065
City Of Coral Spring	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Coconut Creek E	277,861.38	\$232,814	(\$45,047)	\$516,698	\$596,696	\$79,998	\$794,559	\$829,510	\$34,951
Coconut Creek H	\$130,909	\$88,044	(\$42,866)	\$804,413	\$945,191	\$140,778	\$935,322	\$1,033,235	\$97,912
Coconut Palm E	\$294,255	\$215,508	(\$78,747)	\$480,957	\$467,252	(\$13,705)	\$775,212	\$682,760	(\$92,452)
Colbert E	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$528,932	\$587,922	\$58,990	\$528,932	\$587,922	\$58,990

Exhibit 4.3-10 (Continued)
ESE Budgets and Expenditures
FY 2013-14 through March 6, 2014

Campus/ Department	2013-14 Special Revenue Budget	2013-14 Special Revenue Expenditures	2013-14 Over (Under) Special Revenue Budget	2013-14 General Fund Budget	2013-14 General Fund Expenditures	2013-14 Over (Under) General Fund Budget	2013-14 Total ESE Budget	2013-14 Total ESE Expenditures	2013-14 Over (Under) Total ESE Budget
College Academy	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$54,338	\$87,232	\$32,894	\$54,338	\$87,232	\$32,894
Collins E	\$45,110	\$525	(\$44,585)	\$349,377	\$463,657	\$114,280	\$394,487	\$464,182	\$69,695
Cooper City E	\$70,762	\$42,657	(\$28,105)	\$249,610	\$307,238	\$57,628	\$320,372	\$349,895	\$29,523
Cooper City H	\$245,642	\$135,938	(\$109,705)	\$606,657	\$752,480	\$145,823	\$852,299	\$888,418	\$36,118
Coral Cove E	\$318,993	\$200,373	(\$118,619)	\$624,329	\$686,911	\$62,582	\$943,322	\$887,284	(\$56,037)
Coral Glades H	\$146,616	\$104,633	(\$41,983)	\$612,783	\$692,338	\$79,555	\$759,399	\$796,971	\$37,572
Coral Park E	\$418,110	\$267,976	(\$150,135)	\$458,933	\$673,575	\$214,642	\$877,043	\$941,551	\$64,507
Coral Springs E	44,888.85	\$16,042	(\$28,847)	\$527,909	\$699,811	\$171,902	\$572,798	\$715,853	\$143,055
Coral Springs H	\$180,271	\$103,645	(\$76,626)	\$657,355	\$858,127	\$200,772	\$837,626	\$961,772	\$124,146
Coral Springs M	\$140,248	\$92,238	(\$48,010)	\$517,546	\$620,446	\$102,900	\$657,794	\$712,684	\$54,890
Country Hills E	\$52,714	\$50,966	(\$1,748)	\$536,972	\$695,156	\$158,184	\$589,686	\$746,122	\$156,436
Country Isles E	\$280,651	\$177,207	(\$103,444)	\$681,068	\$750,531	\$69,463	\$961,719	\$927,738	(\$33,981)
Cresthaven E	\$23,212	\$3,216	(\$19,996)	\$602,796	\$767,245	\$164,449	\$626,008	\$770,461	\$144,453
Croissant Park E	\$20,256	\$29,456	\$9,200	\$536,113	\$720,755	\$184,642	\$556,369	\$750,211	\$193,842
Cross Creek School	\$1,252,898	\$786,417	(\$466,481)	\$2,684,908	\$2,463,192	(\$221,716)	\$3,937,806	\$3,249,609	(\$688,197)
Crystal Lake M	\$107,441	\$65,541	(\$41,900)	\$352,633	\$421,237	\$68,604	\$460,074	\$486,778	\$26,704
Cypress Bay H	\$237,512	\$145,605	(\$91,907)	\$1,025,392	\$1,423,069	\$397,677	\$1,262,904	\$1,568,674	\$305,770
Cypress E	44,926.88	\$29,929	(\$14,998)	\$351,459	\$451,217	\$99,758	\$396,386	\$481,146	\$84,760
Cypress Run Ed Ctr	\$61,855	\$42,727	(\$19,128)	\$277,218	\$440,887	\$163,669	\$339,073	\$483,614	\$144,541
Dandy William M	\$57,798	\$40,025	(\$17,772)	\$385,497	\$441,693	\$56,196	\$443,295	\$481,718	\$38,424
Dania E	\$420,296	\$276,363	(\$143,933)	\$900,461	\$1,026,389	\$125,928	\$1,320,757	\$1,302,752	(\$18,005)
Dave Thomas Education	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$105,949	\$153,799	\$47,850	\$105,949	\$153,799	\$47,850
Davie E	\$28,036	\$18,384	(\$9,652)	\$337,671	\$474,237	\$136,566	\$365,707	\$492,621	\$126,914
Deerfield Beach E	\$316,844	\$208,905	(\$107,939)	\$478,547	\$597,613	\$119,066	\$795,391	\$806,518	\$11,127
Deerfield Beach H	\$90,990	\$60,709	(\$30,281)	\$878,535	\$1,068,550	\$190,015	\$969,525	\$1,129,259	\$159,734
Deerfield Beach M	\$81,846	\$54,091	(\$27,755)	\$548,539	\$691,545	\$143,006	\$630,385	\$745,636	\$115,251
Deerfield Park E	\$22,489	\$18,435	(\$4,054)	\$170,879	\$226,514	\$55,635	\$193,368	\$244,949	\$51,581
Dillard E	\$24,535	\$5,655	(\$18,879)	\$302,247	\$436,844	\$134,597	\$326,782	\$442,499	\$115,718
Dillard H	\$146,907	\$2,295	(\$144,612)	\$2,637	\$2,231	(\$406)	\$149,544	\$4,526	(\$145,018)
Dillard M-H	\$0	\$100,652	\$100,652	\$671,953	\$793,605	\$121,652	\$671,953	\$894,257	\$222,304
Discovery Elementary	\$23,772	\$16,056	(\$7,716)	\$229,691	\$330,414	\$100,723	\$253,463	\$346,470	\$93,007
Dolphin Bay E	\$66,750	\$61,813	(\$4,938)	\$351,686	\$384,407	\$32,721	\$418,436	\$446,220	\$27,783



Exhibit 4.3-10 (Continued)
ESE Budgets and Expenditures
FY 2013-14 through March 6, 2014

Campus/ Department	2013-14 Special Revenue Budget	2013-14 Special Revenue Expenditures	2013-14 Over (Under) Special Revenue Budget	2013-14 General Fund Budget	2013-14 General Fund Expenditures	2013-14 Over (Under) General Fund Budget	2013-14 Total ESE Budget	2013-14 Total ESE Expenditures	2013-14 Over (Under) Total ESE Budget
Douglas Marjorie St	\$202,086	\$127,456	(\$74,630)	\$693,246	\$920,656	\$227,410	\$895,332	\$1,048,112	\$152,780
Drew Charles E	\$23,679	\$18,847	(\$4,832)	\$425,636	\$511,666	\$86,030	\$449,315	\$530,513	\$81,198
Driftwood E	\$47,557	\$29,172	(\$18,385)	\$290,391	\$356,183	\$65,792	\$337,948	\$385,355	\$47,407
Driftwood M	\$120,848	\$58,903	(\$61,945)	\$563,228	\$591,993	\$28,765	\$684,076	\$650,896	(\$33,180)
Eagle Point E	\$65,301	\$61,357	(\$3,943)	\$252,302	\$353,135	\$100,833	\$317,603	\$414,492	\$96,890
Eagle Ridge E	\$44,759	\$44,673	(\$85)	\$585,581	\$746,626	\$161,045	\$630,340	\$791,299	\$160,960
Ely Blanche H	\$136,442	\$80,744	(\$55,698)	\$785,101	\$905,131	\$120,030	\$921,543	\$985,875	\$64,332
Embassy Creek E	\$68,990	\$72,737	\$3,747	\$316,023	\$434,393	\$118,370	\$385,013	\$507,130	\$122,117
Endeavour Primary	19,313.00	\$11,536	(\$7,777)	\$351,501	\$407,250	\$55,749	\$370,814	\$418,786	\$47,972
Everglades E	\$338,499	\$240,895	(\$97,604)	\$865,790	\$956,624	\$90,834	\$1,204,289	\$1,197,519	(\$6,770)
Everglades H	\$191,586	\$125,431	(\$66,156)	\$713,770	\$939,322	\$225,552	\$905,356	\$1,064,753	\$159,396
Fairway E	\$28,547	\$36,486	\$7,939	\$400,419	\$566,401	\$165,982	\$428,966	\$602,887	\$173,921
Falcon Cove M	\$164,532	\$110,514	(\$54,019)	\$505,806	\$613,566	\$107,760	\$670,338	\$724,080	\$53,741
Flamingo E	\$22,833	\$16,924	(\$5,909)	\$145,345	\$196,918	\$51,573	\$168,178	\$213,842	\$45,664
Flanagan Charles H	\$201,881	\$152,429	(\$49,453)	\$743,411	\$1,081,368	\$337,957	\$945,292	\$1,233,797	\$288,504
Floranada E	\$291,826	\$198,869	(\$92,958)	\$578,713	\$688,854	\$110,141	\$870,539	\$887,723	\$17,183
Florida Ocean Sci	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Forest Glen M	\$108,207	\$95,333	(\$12,874)	\$514,034	\$648,102	\$134,068	\$622,241	\$743,435	\$121,194
Forest Hills E	25,287.23	\$14,996	(\$10,292)	\$415,759	\$538,041	\$122,282	\$441,046	\$553,037	\$111,990
Fort Lauderdale H	\$92,506	\$77,531	(\$14,975)	\$633,324	\$746,604	\$113,280	\$725,830	\$824,135	\$98,305
Foster Stephen E	\$26,563	\$28,650	\$2,087	\$705,355	\$778,099	\$72,744	\$731,918	\$806,749	\$74,831
Fox Trail E	\$321,989	\$218,699	(\$103,290)	\$595,473	\$745,818	\$150,345	\$917,462	\$964,517	\$47,055
Franklin Academy	\$0	\$582	\$582	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$582	\$582
Franklin Academy E	\$0	\$4,204	\$4,204	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$4,204	\$4,204
Gator Run E	\$69,156	\$61,272	(\$7,885)	\$602,362	\$738,440	\$136,078	\$671,518	\$799,712	\$128,193
Glades M	\$151,194	\$106,166	(\$45,028)	\$552,928	\$607,415	\$54,487	\$704,122	\$713,581	\$9,459
Griffin E	\$71,617	\$71,475	(\$142)	\$1,012,177	\$1,112,636	\$100,459	\$1,083,794	\$1,184,111	\$100,317
Gulfstream M	\$23,502	\$17,115	(\$6,386)	\$152,566	\$199,077	\$46,511	\$176,068	\$216,192	\$40,125
Hallandale Adult/Com	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$317,889	\$353,239	\$35,350	\$317,889	\$353,239	\$35,350
Hallandale E	\$24,874	\$16,951	(\$7,923)	\$261,236	\$308,580	\$47,344	\$286,110	\$325,531	\$39,421
Hallandale H	\$156,584	\$58,123	(\$98,461)	\$481,952	\$594,674	\$112,722	\$638,536	\$652,797	\$14,261
Harbordale E	\$105,523	\$74,265	(\$31,257)	\$305,933	\$364,421	\$58,488	\$411,456	\$438,686	\$27,231

Exhibit 4.3-10 (Continued)
ESE Budgets and Expenditures
FY 2013-14 through March 6, 2014

Campus/ Department	2013-14 Special Revenue Budget	2013-14 Special Revenue Expenditures	2013-14 Over (Under) Special Revenue Budget	2013-14 General Fund Budget	2013-14 General Fund Expenditures	2013-14 Over (Under) General Fund Budget	2013-14 Total ESE Budget	2013-14 Total ESE Expenditures	2013-14 Over (Under) Total ESE Budget
Hawkes Bluff E	\$72,032	\$58,847	(\$13,185)	\$619,942	\$750,518	\$130,576	\$691,974	\$809,365	\$117,391
Heron Heights Elem	\$21,387	\$19,249	(\$2,138)	\$194,603	\$216,596	\$21,993	\$215,990	\$235,845	\$19,855
Hollywood Central E	\$76,865	\$29,805	(\$47,060)	\$191,992	\$268,948	\$76,956	\$268,857	\$298,753	\$29,896
Hollywood Hills E	\$45,314	\$29,007	(\$16,308)	\$207,663	\$215,672	\$8,009	\$252,977	\$244,679	(\$8,299)
Hollywood Hills H	\$120,641	\$75,798	(\$44,842)	\$540,012	\$562,195	\$22,183	\$660,653	\$637,993	(\$22,659)
Hollywood Park E	\$108,592	\$58,110	(\$50,482)	\$1,144,515	\$1,341,596	\$197,081	\$1,253,107	\$1,399,706	\$146,599
Horizon E	\$289,171	\$207,911	(\$81,259)	\$564,376	\$682,407	\$118,031	\$853,547	\$890,318	\$36,772
Hunt James S. E	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$237,038	\$300,871	\$63,833	\$237,038	\$300,871	\$63,833
Imagine Charter Scho	\$0	\$1,952	\$1,952	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,952	\$1,952
Imagine Middle Sch	\$0	\$774	\$774	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$774	\$774
Indian Ridge M	\$138,725	\$120,186	(\$18,539)	\$458,127	\$580,187	\$122,060	\$596,852	\$700,373	\$103,521
Indian Trace E	\$85,439	\$58,099	(\$27,339)	\$361,277	\$384,955	\$23,678	\$446,716	\$443,054	(\$3,661)
Juvenile Detention C	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$141,151	\$149,951	\$8,800	\$141,151	\$149,951	\$8,800
King Martin Luther	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$323,300	\$371,510	\$48,210	\$323,300	\$371,510	\$48,210
Lake Forest E	\$324,235	\$230,190	(\$94,045)	\$733,226	\$895,851	\$162,625	\$1,057,461	\$1,126,041	\$68,580
Lakeside E	\$49,991	\$17,880	(\$32,111)	\$410,505	\$463,656	\$53,151	\$460,496	\$481,536	\$21,040
Lanier-James Ed Ctr	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$197,494	\$222,595	\$25,101	\$197,494	\$222,595	\$25,101
Larkdale E	\$22,737	\$10,250	(\$12,487)	\$279,972	\$381,561	\$101,589	\$302,709	\$391,811	\$89,102
Lauderdale Lakes M	\$51,265	\$18,231	(\$33,033)	\$314,875	\$500,077	\$185,202	\$366,140	\$518,308	\$152,169
Lauderdale Manors E	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$7	\$7	\$0	\$7	\$7
Lauderhill M	\$25,664	\$267	(\$25,397)	\$20	\$36	\$16	\$25,684	\$303	(\$25,381)
Lauderhill M-H	\$0	\$10,529	\$10,529	\$333,110	\$381,521	\$48,411	\$333,110	\$392,050	\$58,940
Lauderhill Paul Turn	\$253,658	\$175,604	(\$78,054)	\$710,564	\$849,844	\$139,280	\$964,222	\$1,025,448	\$61,226
Liberty E	\$296,931	\$175,378	(\$121,554)	\$612,666	\$650,251	\$37,585	\$909,597	\$825,629	(\$83,969)
Lloyd Estates E	\$27,710	\$18,924	(\$8,786)	\$357,809	\$398,606	\$40,797	\$385,519	\$417,530	\$32,011
Lyons Creek M	\$174,571	\$107,788	(\$66,783)	\$807,579	\$858,383	\$50,804	\$982,150	\$966,171	(\$15,979)
Manatee Bay E	\$118,862	\$123,198	\$4,336	\$520,562	\$650,135	\$129,573	\$639,424	\$773,333	\$133,909
Maplewood E	\$98,994	\$98,063	(\$931)	\$784,941	\$947,509	\$162,568	\$883,935	\$1,045,572	\$161,637
Margate E	45,752.20	\$26,627	(\$19,125)	\$420,609	\$551,997	\$131,388	\$466,361	\$578,624	\$112,263
Margate M	\$140,460	\$78,398	(\$62,063)	\$505,145	\$654,727	\$149,582	\$645,605	\$733,125	\$87,519
Markham Robert C. E	23,568.32	\$16,062	(\$7,507)	\$81,034	\$145,953	\$64,919	\$104,602	\$162,015	\$57,412
Marshall Thurgood E	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$218,214	\$297,544	\$79,330	\$218,214	\$297,544	\$79,330

Exhibit 4.3-10 (Continued)
ESE Budgets and Expenditures
FY 2013-14 through March 6, 2014

Campus/ Department	2013-14 Special Revenue Budget	2013-14 Special Revenue Expenditures	2013-14 Over (Under) Special Revenue Budget	2013-14 General Fund Budget	2013-14 General Fund Expenditures	2013-14 Over (Under) General Fund Budget	2013-14 Total ESE Budget	2013-14 Total ESE Expenditures	2013-14 Over (Under) Total ESE Budget
Mcarthur H	\$149,242	\$115,427	(\$33,815)	\$656,631	\$754,187	\$97,556	\$805,873	\$869,614	\$63,741
Mcfatter Technical C	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$193,283	\$156,045	(\$37,238)	\$193,283	\$156,045	(\$37,238)
Mcnab E	\$51,506	\$47,790	(\$3,717)	\$154,469	\$224,502	\$70,033	\$205,975	\$272,292	\$66,316
Mcnicol M	\$38,413	\$28,471	(\$9,943)	\$389,975	\$392,956	\$2,981	\$428,388	\$421,427	(\$6,962)
Meadowbrook E	\$272,021	\$169,468	(\$102,553)	\$967,180	\$1,139,755	\$172,575	\$1,239,201	\$1,309,223	\$70,022
Millennium M	\$162,079	\$115,898	(\$46,181)	\$438,407	\$520,352	\$81,945	\$600,486	\$636,250	\$35,764
Miramar E	\$62,625	\$30,962	(\$31,663)	\$408,342	\$512,494	\$104,152	\$470,967	\$543,456	\$72,489
Miramar H	\$160,076	\$128,185	(\$31,891)	\$689,872	\$817,912	\$128,040	\$849,948	\$946,097	\$96,149
Mirror Lake E	\$360,778	\$250,896	(\$109,882)	\$1,118,603	\$1,269,367	\$150,764	\$1,479,381	\$1,520,263	\$40,882
Monarch H	\$151,651	\$116,759	(\$34,892)	\$677,039	\$804,142	\$127,103	\$828,690	\$920,901	\$92,211
Morrow E	48,967.14	\$8,017	(\$40,950)	\$422,481	\$492,079	\$69,598	\$471,448	\$500,096	\$28,648
New Renaissance M	\$59,497	\$27,150	(\$32,347)	\$359,595	\$472,465	\$112,870	\$419,092	\$499,615	\$80,523
New River M	\$81,780	\$56,035	(\$25,745)	\$539,052	\$554,243	\$15,191	\$620,832	\$610,278	(\$10,554)
Nob Hill E	76,012.94	\$52,026	(\$23,987)	\$695,882	\$830,799	\$134,917	\$771,895	\$882,825	\$110,930
Norcrest E	\$313,593	\$226,170	(\$87,423)	\$823,257	\$895,099	\$71,842	\$1,136,850	\$1,121,269	(\$15,581)
North Andrews Garden	\$57,557	\$23,443	(\$34,114)	\$205,909	\$281,765	\$75,856	\$263,466	\$305,208	\$41,742
North Fork E	\$46,297	\$9,343	(\$36,954)	\$153,700	\$210,646	\$56,946	\$199,997	\$219,989	\$19,992
North Lauderdale E	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$208,099	\$286,389	\$78,290	\$208,099	\$286,389	\$78,290
North Side E	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$84,431	\$75,508	(\$8,923)	\$84,431	\$75,508	(\$8,923)
Northeast H	\$127,271	\$85,136	(\$42,136)	\$535,632	\$625,085	\$89,453	\$662,903	\$710,221	\$47,317
Nova Blanche Forman	\$68,297	\$45,612	(\$22,685)	\$190,245	\$228,776	\$38,531	\$258,542	\$274,388	\$15,846
Nova D Eisenhower E	\$43,185	\$43,122	(\$64)	\$265,292	\$287,737	\$22,445	\$308,477	\$330,859	\$22,381
Nova H	\$137,357	\$107,123	(\$30,235)	\$266,000	\$303,847	\$37,847	\$403,357	\$410,970	\$7,612
Nova M	\$53,732	\$36,889	(\$16,843)	\$236,012	\$318,200	\$82,188	\$289,744	\$355,089	\$65,345
Oakland Park E	\$21,387	\$27,166	\$5,778	\$469,786	\$640,117	\$170,331	\$491,173	\$667,283	\$176,109
Oakridge E	\$24,824	\$52,128	\$27,304	\$318,113	\$369,716	\$51,603	\$342,937	\$421,844	\$78,907
Off Campus Learning	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$161,800	\$113,232	(\$48,568)	\$161,800	\$113,232	(\$48,568)
Olsen M	\$96,889	\$59,738	(\$37,150)	\$456,317	\$496,842	\$40,525	\$553,206	\$556,580	\$3,375
Orange Brook E	\$47,200	\$54,160	\$6,960	\$149,368	\$162,404	\$13,036	\$196,568	\$216,564	\$19,996
Oriole E	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$116,575	\$135,494	\$18,919	\$116,575	\$135,494	\$18,919
Pace Ctr For Girls	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Palm Cove E	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$126,846	\$160,479	\$33,633	\$126,846	\$160,479	\$33,633

Exhibit 4.3-10 (Continued)
ESE Budgets and Expenditures
FY 2013-14 through March 6, 2014

Campus/ Department	2013-14 Special Revenue Budget	2013-14 Special Revenue Expenditures	2013-14 Over (Under) Special Revenue Budget	2013-14 General Fund Budget	2013-14 General Fund Expenditures	2013-14 Over (Under) General Fund Budget	2013-14 Total ESE Budget	2013-14 Total ESE Expenditures	2013-14 Over (Under) Total ESE Budget
Palmview E	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$293,993	\$389,748	\$95,755	\$293,993	\$389,748	\$95,755
Panther Run E	\$400,315	\$251,776	(\$148,539)	\$559,565	\$597,321	\$37,756	\$959,880	\$849,097	(\$110,783)
Park Lakes E	\$45,369	\$79,164	\$33,795	\$523,689	\$759,895	\$236,206	\$569,058	\$839,059	\$270,001
Park Ridge E	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$286,906	\$339,728	\$52,822	\$286,906	\$339,728	\$52,822
Park Springs E	\$301,544	\$203,375	(\$98,169)	\$878,239	\$997,815	\$119,576	\$1,179,783	\$1,201,190	\$21,407
Park Trails E	\$273,038	\$193,439	(\$79,599)	\$765,734	\$832,771	\$67,037	\$1,038,772	\$1,026,210	(\$12,562)
Parkside E	\$282,358	\$205,466	(\$76,892)	\$711,387	\$797,396	\$86,009	\$993,745	\$1,002,862	\$9,117
Parkway M	\$82,497	\$112,174	\$29,677	\$405,325	\$433,530	\$28,205	\$487,822	\$545,704	\$57,882
Pasadena Lakes E	\$342,661	\$247,883	(\$94,778)	\$1,071,745	\$1,222,267	\$150,522	\$1,414,406	\$1,470,150	\$55,744
Pembroke Lakes E	\$110,434	\$113,859	\$3,425	\$382,999	\$401,039	\$18,040	\$493,433	\$514,898	\$21,465
Pembroke Pines Chart	\$0	\$3,443	\$3,443	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$3,443	\$3,443
Pembroke Pines Chart	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Pembroke Pines E	\$351,215	\$240,155	(\$111,060)	\$463,452	\$498,646	\$35,194	\$814,667	\$738,801	(\$75,866)
Pembroke Pines M Cha	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Perry Annabel C. E	\$22,737	\$48,404	\$25,667	\$547,881	\$694,814	\$146,933	\$570,618	\$743,218	\$172,600
Perry Henry D. M	\$68,031	\$32,790	(\$35,241)	\$180,555	\$303,114	\$122,559	\$248,586	\$335,904	\$87,318
Peters E	\$69,763	\$37,392	(\$32,371)	\$456,678	\$474,960	\$18,282	\$526,441	\$512,352	(\$14,089)
Pine Ridge Ed Ctr	\$83,374	\$80,081	(\$3,293)	\$214,063	\$241,921	\$27,858	\$297,437	\$322,002	\$24,565
Pines Lakes E	\$16,405	\$28,982	\$12,577	\$577,970	\$714,013	\$136,043	\$594,375	\$742,995	\$148,620
Pines M	\$103,481	\$69,812	(\$33,669)	\$480,818	\$559,625	\$78,807	\$584,299	\$629,437	\$45,138
Pinewood E	47,824.14	\$45,430	(\$2,394)	\$751,727	\$802,605	\$50,878	\$799,551	\$848,035	\$48,484
Pioneer M	\$97,025	\$78,807	(\$18,218)	\$439,105	\$543,970	\$104,865	\$536,130	\$622,777	\$86,647
Piper H	\$121,021	\$88,796	(\$32,225)	\$792,323	\$993,346	\$201,023	\$913,344	\$1,082,142	\$168,798
Plantation E	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$239,968	\$337,237	\$97,269	\$239,968	\$337,237	\$97,269
Plantation H	\$145,602	\$120,296	(\$25,306)	\$711,966	\$799,919	\$87,953	\$857,568	\$920,215	\$62,647
Plantation M	\$123,898	\$61,986	(\$61,912)	\$324,660	\$609,486	\$284,826	\$448,558	\$671,472	\$222,914
Plantation Park E	\$21,387	\$31,650	\$10,263	\$645,504	\$763,676	\$118,172	\$666,891	\$795,326	\$128,435
Pompano Beach E	\$23,502	\$15,802	(\$7,699)	\$396,490	\$409,714	\$13,224	\$419,992	\$425,516	\$5,525
Pompano Beach H S	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$75,715	\$120,102	\$44,387	\$75,715	\$120,102	\$44,387
Pompano Beach M	\$91,282	\$76,717	(\$14,565)	\$318,632	\$435,954	\$117,322	\$409,914	\$512,671	\$102,757
Pompano Substance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$134	\$134	\$0	\$134	\$134
Quiet Waters E	\$25,956	\$46,406	\$20,449	\$288,107	\$328,311	\$40,204	\$314,063	\$374,717	\$60,653
Ramblewood E	39,380.00	\$23,020	(\$16,360)	\$485,142	\$558,743	\$73,601	\$524,522	\$581,763	\$57,241
Ramblewood M	\$158,132	\$119,023	(\$39,109)	\$496,526	\$681,639	\$185,113	\$654,658	\$800,662	\$146,004

Exhibit 4.3-10 (Continued)
ESE Budgets and Expenditures
FY 2013-14 through March 6, 2014

Campus/ Department	2013-14 Special Revenue Budget	2013-14 Special Revenue Expenditures	2013-14 Over (Under) Special Revenue Budget	2013-14 General Fund Budget	2013-14 General Fund Expenditures	2013-14 Over (Under) General Fund Budget	2013-14 Total ESE Budget	2013-14 Total ESE Expenditures	2013-14 Over (Under) Total ESE Budget
Renaissance Of N Brw	\$0	\$1,256	\$1,256	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,256	\$1,256
Rickards James S. M	\$95,140	\$71,245	(\$23,894)	\$219,139	\$279,019	\$59,880	\$314,279	\$350,264	\$35,986
Riverglades E	\$46,757	\$41,582	(\$5,175)	\$144,840	\$194,772	\$49,932	\$191,597	\$236,354	\$44,757
Riverland E	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$106,070	\$124,286	\$18,216	\$106,070	\$124,286	\$18,216
Riverside E	\$73,645	\$50,283	(\$23,362)	\$336,303	\$375,043	\$38,740	\$409,948	\$425,326	\$15,378
Rock Island E	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$173,811	\$247,095	\$73,284	\$173,811	\$247,095	\$73,284
Royal Palm E	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$370,903	\$444,651	\$73,748	\$370,903	\$444,651	\$73,748
Sanders Park E	\$73,715	\$42,420	(\$31,295)	\$455,389	\$524,600	\$69,211	\$529,104	\$567,020	\$37,916
Sandpiper E	303,033.23	\$194,334	(\$108,699)	\$443,853	\$527,775	\$83,922	\$746,886	\$722,109	(\$24,777)
Sawgrass E	\$244,644	\$175,472	(\$69,172)	\$742,615	\$810,264	\$67,649	\$987,259	\$985,736	(\$1,523)
Sawgrass Springs M	\$125,250	\$84,314	(\$40,936)	\$377,880	\$478,713	\$100,833	\$503,130	\$563,027	\$59,897
Sea Castle E	\$265,161	\$210,763	(\$54,398)	\$561,126	\$586,350	\$25,224	\$826,287	\$797,113	(\$29,174)
Seagull Adult	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$388,885	\$299,954	(\$88,931)	\$388,885	\$299,954	(\$88,931)
Seminole M	\$98,496	\$78,629	(\$19,867)	\$697,125	\$941,656	\$244,531	\$795,621	\$1,020,285	\$224,664
Sheridan Hills E	\$41,032	\$26,871	(\$14,161)	\$437,622	\$521,807	\$84,185	\$478,654	\$548,678	\$70,024
Sheridan Park E	\$346,167	\$239,312	(\$106,855)	\$734,961	\$785,389	\$50,428	\$1,081,128	\$1,024,701	(\$56,427)
Sheridan Technical C	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$704,985	\$869,444	\$164,459	\$704,985	\$869,444	\$164,459
Silver Lakes E	\$448,798	\$290,276	(\$158,522)	\$675,242	\$750,361	\$75,119	\$1,124,040	\$1,040,637	(\$83,403)
Silver Lakes M	\$81,504	\$76,768	(\$4,735)	\$502,258	\$558,081	\$55,823	\$583,762	\$634,849	\$51,088
Silver Palms E	\$66,226	\$48,969	(\$17,257)	\$435,093	\$511,170	\$76,077	\$501,319	\$560,139	\$58,820
Silver Ridge E	\$105,845	\$110,836	\$4,991	\$1,146,367	\$1,380,025	\$233,658	\$1,252,212	\$1,490,861	\$238,649
Silver Shores E	\$89,398	\$77,339	(\$12,059)	\$807,485	\$912,452	\$104,967	\$896,883	\$989,791	\$92,908
Silver Trail M	\$153,477	\$99,863	(\$53,614)	\$525,603	\$548,210	\$22,607	\$679,080	\$648,073	(\$31,007)
Somerset Acad Dav	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Somerset Pines Acdmy	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
South Broward H	\$103,290	\$71,608	(\$31,682)	\$790,004	\$953,017	\$163,013	\$893,294	\$1,024,625	\$131,331
South Plantation H	\$110,837	\$94,678	(\$16,159)	\$1,234,978	\$1,526,079	\$291,101	\$1,345,815	\$1,620,757	\$274,942
Stirling E	\$70,505	\$41,960	(\$28,545)	\$793,764	\$946,236	\$152,472	\$864,269	\$988,196	\$123,927
Stranahan H	\$113,679	\$85,720	(\$27,958)	\$487,647	\$477,256	(\$10,391)	\$601,326	\$562,976	(\$38,349)
Sunland Park E	\$25,021	\$7,672	(\$17,349)	\$239,115	\$286,471	\$47,356	\$264,136	\$294,143	\$30,007
Sunrise M	\$166,524	\$89,716	(\$76,808)	\$387,709	\$449,200	\$61,491	\$554,233	\$538,916	(\$15,317)
Sunset Lakes E	\$63,809	\$62,924	(\$885)	\$495,894	\$622,646	\$126,752	\$559,703	\$685,570	\$125,867
Sunset Learning Ctr	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$840	\$15,964	\$15,124	\$840	\$15,964	\$15,124

Exhibit 4.3-10 (Continued)
ESE Budgets and Expenditures
FY 2013-14 through March 6, 2014

Campus/ Department	2013-14 Special Revenue Budget	2013-14 Special Revenue Expenditures	2013-14 Over (Under) Special Revenue Budget	2013-14 General Fund Budget	2013-14 General Fund Expenditures	2013-14 Over (Under) General Fund Budget	2013-14 Total ESE Budget	2013-14 Total ESE Expenditures	2013-14 Over (Under) Total ESE Budget
Sunshine E	\$20,633	\$6,006	(\$14,626)	\$178,927	\$231,144	\$52,217	\$199,560	\$237,150	\$37,591
Tamarac E	21,034.09	\$0	(\$21,034)	\$796,995	\$1,058,183	\$261,188	\$818,029	\$1,058,183	\$240,154
Taravella J.P. H	\$183,153	\$117,605	(\$65,548)	\$1,089,691	\$1,217,075	\$127,384	\$1,272,844	\$1,334,680	\$61,836
Tedder E	\$79,044	\$51,914	(\$27,130)	\$518,525	\$685,722	\$167,197	\$597,569	\$737,636	\$140,067
Tequesta Trace M	\$140,551	\$116,023	(\$24,528)	\$353,858	\$424,929	\$71,071	\$494,409	\$540,952	\$46,543
The Quest	\$551,569	\$406,906	(\$144,663)	\$2,248,412	\$2,794,702	\$546,290	\$2,799,981	\$3,201,608	\$401,627
Thompson Academy	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$259,077	\$301,808	\$42,731	\$259,077	\$301,808	\$42,731
Tradewinds E	\$278,316	\$181,036	(\$97,280)	\$1,167,595	\$1,327,077	\$159,482	\$1,445,911	\$1,508,113	\$62,202
Tropical E	\$45,903	\$43,069	(\$2,833)	\$961,994	\$1,182,551	\$220,557	\$1,007,897	\$1,225,620	\$217,724
United Cerebral Pals	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$30,171	\$30,171	\$0	\$30,171	\$30,171	\$0
Village E	\$52,729	\$0	(\$52,729)	\$165,590	\$185,335	\$19,745	\$218,319	\$185,335	(\$32,984)
Walker E	\$24,009	\$15,611	(\$8,398)	\$140,273	\$205,396	\$65,123	\$164,282	\$221,007	\$56,725
Watkins E	\$23,502	\$16,091	(\$7,411)	\$568,254	\$617,038	\$48,784	\$591,756	\$633,129	\$41,373
Welleby E	45,535.89	\$30,259	(\$15,277)	\$586,785	\$677,686	\$90,901	\$632,321	\$707,945	\$75,624
West Broward High	\$199,069	\$129,167	(\$69,902)	\$796,745	\$944,136	\$147,391	\$995,814	\$1,073,303	\$77,489
West Hollywood E	\$64,927	\$50,284	(\$14,643)	\$324,582	\$312,894	(\$11,688)	\$389,509	\$363,178	(\$26,331)
Westchester E	\$74,056.19	\$50,859	(\$23,197)	\$397,615	\$481,156	\$83,541	\$471,671	\$532,015	\$60,344
Western H	\$100,391	\$97,825	(\$2,566)	\$842,472	\$734,233	(\$108,239)	\$942,863	\$832,058	(\$110,805)
Westglades M	\$153,053	\$97,889	(\$55,164)	\$291,177	\$381,823	\$90,646	\$444,230	\$479,712	\$35,482
Westpine M	\$139,156	\$81,195	(\$57,962)	\$481,771	\$624,311	\$142,540	\$620,927	\$705,506	\$84,578
Westwood Heights E	\$48,868	\$59,012	\$10,144	\$522,476	\$597,677	\$75,201	\$571,344	\$656,689	\$85,345
Whiddon-Rogers Ed Ct	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$242,973	\$268,746	\$25,773	\$242,973	\$268,746	\$25,773
Whispering Pines	\$1,704,892	\$1,143,182	(\$561,710)	\$1,962,386	\$1,844,969	(\$117,417)	\$3,667,278	\$2,988,151	(\$679,127)
Whispering Pines-Oc	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$674,095	\$752,470	\$78,375	\$674,095	\$752,470	\$78,375
Wilton Manors E	\$297,218	\$200,678	(\$96,540)	\$535,336	\$628,677	\$93,341	\$832,554	\$829,355	(\$3,199)
Wingate Oaks Ctr	\$644,044	\$374,259	(\$269,784)	\$1,136,044	\$1,513,142	\$377,098	\$1,780,088	\$1,887,401	\$107,314
Winston Park E	\$35,498	\$23,892	(\$11,606)	\$380,357	\$566,121	\$185,764	\$415,855	\$590,013	\$174,158
Young Virginia S. E	\$26,169	\$17,751	(\$8,418)	\$124,630	\$162,206	\$37,576	\$150,799	\$179,957	\$29,158
Young Walter C. M	\$157,521	\$120,585	(\$36,935)	\$477,275	\$642,398	\$165,123	\$634,796	\$762,983	\$128,188
Total Schools	\$27,577,361	\$19,070,381	(\$8,506,980)	\$119,027,872	\$141,607,407	\$22,579,535	\$146,605,233	\$160,677,788	\$14,072,555

Source: Compiled by Evergreen Solutions based on data provided by Broward County Schools Finance Office, March 2014.

Additionally, the Central Office Special Revenue accounts for 2013-14 are more than \$14 million under budget, meaning that only 43.4 percent of the budget has been expended during the first two-thirds of the school year (see **Exhibit 4.3-1**). Based on the average monthly Special Revenue expenditures to date, Evergreen estimated that more than \$8 million would go unexpended in FY 2014. The district disputed this calculation and provided a figure for encumbrances of \$17,683,735, which brings the district's projected year-end unexpended balance to \$5.2 million

District officials also provided data indicating that the roll forward amounts shown in **Exhibit 4.3-3** include the restrictive balances of Proportionate Share Roll (Private School) and Supplemental (one-time) funding. For the 2013-14 school year, the roll forward of \$5.5 million included \$1.7 million for Private Schools, and an additional \$2.1 million for Supplement funding (one-time funding distribution) received in November 2013. **Exhibit 4.3-11** shows the breakout provided by the district.

Exhibit 4.3-11
IDEA Part B Roll Breakout
2011-12 to 2013-14

	2013-14	2012-13	2011-12
District Roll	\$1,658,068.31	\$2,311,417.33	\$1,930,353.15
Proportionate Share Roll	\$1,703,654.00	\$2,000,000.00	\$1,477,719.00
Supplemental Distribution (Part B)	\$2,155,262.21	\$1,046,101.83	\$257,035.59
Total	\$5,516,984.52	\$5,357,519.16	\$3,665,107.74

Source: Broward County Schools Budget Office, 2014.

Based on the district's data, it appears that between \$1.7 and \$2.3 million is attributed to the district's roll forward.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.3-1:

More closely monitor ESE budgets and expenditures at the campus and department level for both Special Revenues and General Fund, to ensure that program dollars are effectively being used to enhance the delivery of services to students.

Special Revenues that roll into future years represent funds that could and should have been used to provide higher levels of service to children with needs in the current year. Since BCPS is currently expending a significant amount of General Fund money for ESE services, every Special Revenue dollar that rolls forward represents dollars that the district had to expend for those services from the General Fund.



Although there may be some unforeseen changes that cause one school to spend more or less than the budget allocation, the Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services should regularly research anomalies as they appear throughout the year—both at the campus and central office level—to ensure that accounts are appropriately being charged.

Although planning documents appear to be prepared annually for the use of funds at the central office level, there too may be changes that require mid-year corrective actions to ensure that the money is expended in ways that improve services for the students throughout the year.

Improved monitoring can be accomplished with existing staff and resources. By taking steps to ensure that ESE expenses that meet IDEA and other grant requirements are charged to those grants, the district should be able to save at least \$500,000 annually in General Fund expenditures, based on the one full year of data provided. This number could be significantly higher if the FY 2014 expenditures continue the current trend.

FINDING

The Evergreen Team found it difficult to obtain student counts for ESE students served by program category at each campus or location.

Exhibit 4.3-12 compares Broward's 2012-13 district level membership by program to its peers based on state-level reports. **Exhibit 4.3-13** provides student counts by disability for the district as a whole for 2011-12 and 2012-13.

BCPS provided a breakdown of students by campus and zone to support the numbers shown in **Exhibit 4.3-13**; however, because the numbers were so vastly different from those shown in the state-level reports, the Evergreen Review Team could not accurately compare spending patterns to the number or type of student served at those campuses.

No data were available from the district nor the state regarding the dollar amounts spent per student in each program category, nor was any information available on how much is being spent at each campus by program category. The assumption is that it is more cost effective to serve certain student needs in centers or through contract services; however, without accurate student counts by program and campus no conclusions could be drawn to support that assumption.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.3-2:

Gather the analytic data needed to accurately assess the cost and programmatic benefit of providing ESE services by program category and campus or location.

Since student counts are regularly gathered for state and federal reporting purposes, obtaining separately tracked student counts by category and campus or location should be possible with only minor modifications to the current tracking systems.



Exhibit 4.3-12
Comparison of Membership in Exceptional Student Education Program
2012-13 School Year

Florida Peer School District	Orthopedically Impaired		Speech Impaired		Language Impaired		Deaf or Hard of Hearing		Visually Impaired		Emotional/Behavioral Disability		Specific Learning Disability		Gifted		Hospital/Homebound	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Broward County Public Schools	301	0.1%	5,517	2.1%	3,670	1.4%	338	0.1%	68	0.03%	1,335	0.5%	8,857	3.4%	10,887	4.2%	230	0.1%
Duval County Public Schools	172	0.1%	2,799	2.2%	1,105	0.9%	227	0.2%	69	0.05%	993	0.8%	4,770	3.8%	3,788	3.0%	118	0.1%
Hillsborough County Public Schools	253	0.1%	4,087	2.0%	3,765	1.9%	390	0.2%	120	0.06%	1,367	0.7%	12,141	6.1%	9,412	4.7%	133	0.1%
Miami-Dade County Public Schools	371	0.1%	2,309	0.7%	1,229	0.3%	455	0.1%	133	0.04%	3,038	0.9%	16,622	4.7%	36,709	10.4%	339	0.1%
Orange County Public Schools	266	0.1%	980	0.5%	1,846	1.0%	309	0.2%	43	0.02%	773	0.4%	9,890	5.4%	11,169	6.1%	131	0.1%
School District of Palm Beach County	146	0.1%	3,679	2.0%	4,479	2.5%	309	0.2%	50	0.03%	810	0.5%	10,934	6.1%	9,206	5.1%	61	0.0%
Pinellas County Public Schools	107	0.1%	2,056	2.0%	2,212	2.1%	142	0.1%	43	0.04%	1,229	1.2%	3,345	3.2%	5,997	5.8%	59	0.1%
Peer Average	219	0.1%	2,652	1.4%	2,439	1.3%	305	0.2%	76	0.04%	1,368	0.7%	9,617	5.0%	12,714	6.7%	140	0.1%

Florida Peer School District	Dual-Sensory Impaired		Autism Spectrum Disorder		Traumatic Brain Injured		Developmentally Delayed		Established Conditions		Other Health Impaired		Intellectual Disabilities	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Broward County Public Schools	2	0.0%	3,435	1.3%	46	0.0%	1,999	0.8%	40	0.0%	3,664	1.4%	1,886	0.7%
Duval County Public Schools	0	0.0%	1,127	0.9%	36	0.0%	854	0.7%	NA	NA	1,461	1.2%	2,038	1.6%
Hillsborough County Public Schools	4	0.0%	1,679	0.8%	47	0.0%	936	0.5%	NA	NA	1,020	0.5%	2,231	1.1%
Miami-Dade County Public Schools	12	0.0%	3,231	0.9%	61	0.0%	2,012	0.6%	59	0.0%	3,176	0.9%	2,487	0.7%
Orange County Public Schools	3	0.0%	1,665	0.9%	29	0.0%	1,192	0.7%	10	0.0%	1,845	1.0%	1,841	1.0%
School District of Palm Beach County	2	0.0%	2,058	1.1%	48	0.0%	772	0.4%	NA	NA	999	0.6%	1,619	0.9%
Pinellas County Public Schools	3	0.0%	820	0.8%	22	0.0%	560	0.5%	NA	NA	957	0.9%	1,209	1.2%
Peer Average	4	0.0%	1,763	0.9%	41	0.0%	1,054	0.6%	35	0.0%	1,576	0.8%	1,904	1.0%

Source: Florida Department of Education, 2013.



Exhibit 4.3-12 (Continued)
Comparison of Membership in Exceptional Student Education Programs
2012-13 School Year

Florida Peer School District	All Exceptionalities		Total Disabled		District Enrollment
	#	%	#	%	
Broward County Public Schools	42,275	16.2%	31,388	12.1%	260,234
Duval County Public Schools	19,557	15.6%	15,769	12.5%	125,662
Hillsborough County Public Schools	37,585	18.8%	28,173	14.1%	200,287
Miami-Dade County Public Schools	72,243	20.4%	35,534	10.0%	354,236
Orange County Public Schools	31,982	17.5%	20,813	11.4%	183,021
School District of Palm Beach County	35,172	19.6%	25,966	14.5%	179,494
Pinellas County Public Schools	18,761	18.1%	12,764	12.3%	103,596
Peer Average	35,883	18.8%	23,170	12.1%	191,049

Source: Florida Department of Education, 2013.

Exhibit 4.3-13
Count of Students by Disability for District as a Whole
2011-12 and 2012-13 School Years

	2011-2012	2012-2013	Total Students by Disability
Autism Spectrum Disorder	409	457	866
Deaf or Hard of Hearing	37	33	70
Developmentally Delayed	852	876	1,728
Dual-Sensory Impaired	1	1	2
Emotional/Behavioral Disabilities	191	135	326
Established Conditions	1		1
Hospital or Homebound	135	160	295
Intellectual Disability	88	96	184
Language Impaired	268	245	513
Orthopedically Impaired	29	26	55
Other Health Impaired	487	452	939
Specific Learning Disabled	1,130	1,167	2,297
Speech Impaired	1,350	1,231	2,581
Traumatic Brain Injured	4	2	6
Visually Impaired	11	12	23
Total	4,993	4,893	9,886

Source: Broward County Public Schools Response to Evergreen's Preliminary Data Request, February 2014.

When one campus has found a way to provide ESE services in a cost effective and programmatically appropriate manner, these best practices should be shared districtwide and replicated. These same analytics could help to pin-point a school or specific program that is showing signs of inefficiency, or programmatically inappropriate delivery systems.



FINDING

The vast majority of campus-level General Fund budgets are budgeted and expended on salaries and benefits; however, staffing allocations appear to drive those budgets rather than clearly defined plans for how the money will be used to serve and support the students with disabilities on each campus.

The 2013-14 BCPS “School Funding Allocations & Guidelines” contains the following information regarding ESE allocations (**emphasis added**):

*The Projected ESE Funding is designed to assist principals in gaining a global picture of ESE funding at the school level. The ESE Budget Tool calculates the total funding generated by all ESE students at a school, subtracts the regular education costs, and then identifies the balance as ESE funding. The Budget Tool does not calculate the revenues by program or delivery system. The Projected ESE Funding Summary provides schools with the projected FTE revenue for basic education and ESE services, and the ESE categorical funding. It is designed to assist principals in assessing the total needs of the school and match that to the total ESE revenue. **The Budget Office provides the Projected ESE Funding to schools and it will be reviewed with the District ESE Coordinator and ESE Supervisors. The Projected ESE Funding is intended to provide general guidance regarding the level of support for ESE programs...***

The guidelines also state that schools with 300 or less ESE weighted FTE (including gifted) will be funded a 50 percent ESE Specialist position. Schools with more than 300 weighted FTE will receive 100 percent ESE Specialist position.

While technically, these straightforward allocation formulas and guidelines ensure that funds are equitably distributed to the campuses based on the number and type of students they serve, the quality and consistency of program delivery is not guaranteed.

Orange County Public Schools (OCPS) instituted revisions to the way that school administrators develop and submit their budgets, by requiring them to provide a more detailed description of how ESE guaranteed allocation funds will be used to support students with disabilities. After the beginning of the year, when OCPS knows the enrollment counts, staffing and other adjustments are made and the ESE Department reviews continuum of services to ensure that all students are receiving appropriate and consistent services.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.3-3:

Require campus administrators to develop plans for the use of the ESE Guaranteed Allocation and its impact on ESE students.



Implementing this recommendation can help to raise campus administrators awareness of the amount of the ESE Guaranteed Allocation and its intended use in terms of supplementing services for ESE students. The implementation of this recommendation also has great potential to ensure that ESE funds provide the intended support for students.

Additionally, it is imperative that BCPS leaders conduct an evaluation of the effectiveness of the ESE Guaranteed Allocation requirement and continually make refinements as needed.



4.4 COMMUNICATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS



4.4 COMMUNICATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS

Effective communication is critical to the success of any school district. Today's schools are constantly in the spotlight, expected to maintain transparent operations and at the same time under constant public scrutiny. In order to proactively mitigate these pressures, school districts must identify ways to effectively and openly provide an ongoing narrative about how positive differences in the lives of students are being made every day and how schools are succeeding in spite of reduced resources. Without this, stakeholders may form opinions from limited media coverage, biased accounts, gossip, and rumors.

Whichever communications strategy is chosen must engage all stakeholders—including students, parents, staff, legislators and the community-at-large—and accomplish the following goals in an efficient and effective manner:

- keep parents, the media and the public informed about the latest initiatives and activities;
- bolster and promote student and staff achievement;
- foster collaboration among city, county and school officials;
- build community support, business partnerships and volunteerism;
- provide accurate and reliable information daily—especially during emergencies and crises;
- maintain continual engagement with key stakeholders through events;
- maintain substantive social media messages in today's 24/7 news cycle to ensure transparency and efficient message dissemination; and
- recognize the value of building positive relationships.

These goals can be challenging to meet, as they require constant and consistent effort to ensure communications remain effective into the future. However, they do become inherent in the system as the school district puts the tools and processes in place to support positive communications outcomes.

FINDING

The Exceptional Student Education and Support Division does not have a dedicated Communications Plan, and it is apparent that communications to stakeholders (e.g., parents and schools) could be improved. Evergreen found evidence that both internal and external communications regarding ESE services within BCPS are suffering. Much of this evidence came from survey results, interviews, and focus groups with those closest to the operations of the district.



Exhibit 4.4-1 displays results from Evergreen’s parent survey regarding communications. Based on the results of the survey, the following can be determined:

- Regarding **school-based communications**, 70.3 percent of parents agreed with the statement “My child’s school promotes equal opportunities for all students and clearly communicates the expectation that all students will learn and succeed.” This is in contrast to the 15.2 percent of parents that disagreed with this statement.
- When asked about **communication at the district level**, 57.2 percent of parents agreed with the statement “BCPS effectively communicates information on available ESE programs and services to parents of students with disabilities.” This is in contrast to the 20.3 percent of parents that disagreed with this statement.
- Finally, when asked about locating information on BCPS ESE services, 40.6 percent of parents agreed that “Locating information on BCPS ESE services is not difficult.” However, 21.9 percent of parents disagreed with this statement.

Exhibit 4.4-1
Evergreen Survey Statement on
Communications – Parent Survey

Survey Statement: My child’s school promotes equal opportunities for all students and clearly communicates the expectation that all students will learn and succeed.						
Survey Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
Parents	35.4%	34.9%	12.8%	10.5%	4.7%	1.6%

Survey Statement: BCPS effectively communicates information on available ESE programs and services to parents of students with disabilities.						
Survey Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
Parents	24.7%	32.5%	16.2%	11.7%	8.6%	6.3%

Survey Statement: Locating information on BCPS ESE services is not difficult.						
Survey Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
Parents	11.6%	29.0%	25.4%	15.0%	6.9%	12.2%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.

Exhibit 4.4-2 displays results from Evergreen’s staff survey on school- and district-level administrator communications. The results show that stakeholders overwhelmingly agree with the statement “My school’s administration promotes equal opportunities for all students and clearly communicates the expectation that all students will learn and succeed. (Note: For district staff, BCPS promotes equal opportunities for all students).” All survey groups indicated agreement levels of 64 percent or higher, with some agreement levels as high as 98.1 percent (school administrators), 87.1 percent (other) and 86.7 percent (non-instructional support). The lowest level of agreement was in the district administrator survey group, at 63.6 percent.



Exhibit 4.4-2

Evergreen Staff Survey Statement on School Administrator Communications

Survey Statement: My school's administration promotes equal opportunities for all students and clearly communicates the expectation that all students will learn and succeed. [For district staff, BCPS promotes equal opportunities for all students...]						
Survey Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
District administrator	54.5%	9.1%	18.2%	9.1%	9.1%	0.0%
District program specialist	17.9%	58.2%	17.9%	4.5%	1.5%	0.0%
School administrator	75.9%	22.2%	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	1.4%
Non-instructional support	54.2%	32.5%	5.8%	2.8%	1.4%	3.3%
Special education teacher	41.8%	41.5%	9.0%	4.6%	2.5%	0.6%
Special education provider	42.0%	40.4%	10.1%	4.3%	1.1%	2.1%
General education teacher	40.7%	42.4%	9.7%	3.8%	2.4%	0.9%
Paraprofessional	38.7%	37.4%	10.2%	5.9%	2.6%	5.2%
Other	51.7%	35.4%	6.3%	2.5%	1.6%	2.5%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.

Exhibit 4.4-3 displays additional results from the Evergreen staff survey for the statement “Communications from ESE central office staff to school-based staff are timely and provide useful information.” While the results are not as overwhelming positive as for the survey statement in **Exhibit 4.4-2**, a larger percentage of respondents indicated agreement with this statement than disagreement, with the exception being the district administrator survey group—22.2 percent of district administrators agreed with this statement and 44.4 disagreed. Notably, 59.4 percent of school administrators and 45.1 percent of special education teachers agreed with this statement, compared to just 15.2 percent and 22.1 percent that disagreed, respectively.

Exhibit 4.4-3

Evergreen Staff Survey Statement on Central Office Communications

Survey Statement: Communications from ESE central office staff to school-based staff are timely and provide useful information.						
Survey Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
District administrator	11.1%	11.1%	22.2%	33.3%	11.1%	11.1%
District program specialist	12.9%	41.9%	29.0%	6.5%	4.8%	4.8%
School administrator	18.8%	40.6%	24.4%	9.1%	6.1%	1.0%
Non-instructional support	9.7%	27.8%	27.8%	9.1%	7.3%	18.4%
Special education teacher	10.8%	34.3%	25.4%	13.7%	8.4%	7.4%
Special education provider	5.3%	44.7%	24.7%	16.5%	2.9%	5.9%
General education teacher	8.6%	22.7%	32.0%	6.8%	5.0%	25.0%
Paraprofessional	10.9%	25.0%	22.6%	4.8%	5.6%	31.0%
Other	10.5%	24.5%	27.8%	11.9%	6.5%	18.8%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.



Exhibit 4.4-4 displays results for the final survey statement included on Evergreen’s staff survey regarding communications: “The BCPS ESE Department proactively provides staff, parents, and the community with needed information on ESE services and activities.” This survey statement directly addresses the effectiveness of communications from the Exceptional Student Education and Support Division to all stakeholders.

Exhibit 4.4-4
Evergreen Staff Survey Statement on
Overall Communications

Survey Statement: The BCPS ESE Department proactively provides staff, parents, and the community with needed information on ESE services and activities.						
Survey Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
District administrator	11.1%	22.2%	33.3%	22.2%	0.0%	11.1%
District program specialist	8.2%	57.4%	23.0%	6.6%	1.6%	3.3%
School administrator	21.4%	46.9%	18.9%	7.1%	3.6%	2.0%
Non-instructional support	12.4%	39.1%	25.8%	6.7%	3.0%	13.0%
Special education teacher	14.7%	38.4%	27.2%	10.6%	5.9%	3.3%
Special education provider	8.3%	47.0%	26.2%	10.7%	2.4%	5.4%
General education teacher	10.5%	28.3%	31.3%	6.1%	4.0%	19.8%
Paraprofessional	14.1%	29.3%	20.9%	6.4%	6.0%	23.3%
Other	17.9%	36.9%	20.4%	5.8%	5.1%	13.9%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.

Based on the results for the survey statement displayed in **Exhibit 4.4-4**, it can be seen that all but three survey groups provided feedback to indicate more than 50 percent agreement among group respondents. The three survey groups with less than 50 percent agreement included district administrators (33.3 percent agree/22.2 percent disagree), general education teachers (38.8 percent agree/10 percent disagree), and paraprofessionals (43.3 percent agree/12.4 percent disagree). The survey groups with the highest rates of agreement for this statement included school administrators (68.3 percent agree), district program specialists (65.6 percent agree), and special education service providers (55.3 percent agree).

Taking all survey results together, it is apparent that:

- parents of students with disabilities and BCPS staff believe that schools do an excellent job communicating expectations and promoting equal opportunities;
- there is significant room for improvement at the district level to school communications, and from school to parent communications regarding ESE services; and
- there is room for improvement in the information the Exceptional Student Education and Support Division makes available (push and pull communications).

It was noted that communications occurs separately across each of the functions under the Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services, with few instances of unified, department-wide, coordinated communications. Additionally, stakeholders noted in interviews



that correspondence is often late or past due for any action to be taken. In some instances, interviewees indicated they receive information second hand, as a result of search for information from district contacts or other parents. Finally, interviewees shared that information is difficult to locate on the BCPS website.

The Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services uses a variety of methods to communicate with stakeholders, including:

- Advertising via Broward Educational and Communications Network (BECON)
- Communicating Across Broward (CAB) Email
- E-blast mail to parents of students with disabilities
- ESE Advisory Council
- ESE Newsletter
- ESE Specialist Meetings (Monthly)
- ESE Website
- Parent Calendar
- Parent Link
- Parent Newsletter
- Press Releases to the Broward County Community
- Principal Memo Finder

The Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services has a document entitled “FDLRS Marketing Plan for Parent Services,” which serves to coagulate communication efforts across the Division, but is limited to communications to parents.

Exhibit 4.4-5 displays an excerpt from this document. The document is described as follows:

The Parent Education Workshop Calendar and disability related information are disseminated to parents through a comprehensive marketing plan. FDLRS Parent Services is committed to continuous improvement of parent outreach, communication and engagement. The purpose of these parent outreach efforts is to strengthen the home-school partnership with parents of students with disabilities. FDLRS Parent Services welcomes input from parents, school and community agency staff to continuously improve our efforts. Listed below are the various methods of distributing the Parent Education Workshop Calendar and other Special Education & Support related information to parents, staff and community organizations.

This document serves as an excellent tool for coordinating communications with parents and external stakeholders, but lacks additional common elements found in a comprehensive Communications Plan. The common denominator contributing to many of the issues surrounding BCPS ESE communications is lack of a unified and comprehensive Communications Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.4-1:

Develop a comprehensive ESE Communications Plan.



Exhibit 4.4-5

FDLRS Marketing Plan for Parent Services

Targeted Group	Mode	Action	Responsible
Parents, School Staff, Community Agencies	SES website, School District website	Post the Parent Education Workshop Calendar and any disability related information on the Special Education & Support Department's homepage and the Broward County Public School's parent involvement website.	FDLRS Parent Services, Web Designer, Educational Programs Department
Parents	SES Advisory Council Meetings	Distribute the Parent Education Workshop Calendar information at monthly SES Advisory Council meetings.	FDLRS Parent Services, SES Advisory Council
Parents	SES e-News	Send e-blasts to parents who are registered to receive SES e-News through the SES website to distribute parent information including but not limited to: Parent Education Workshop Calendar, "Weekend with the Experts" Saturday workshops, SES Advisory Council Meetings, and financial assistance scholarships available for parent conferences/workshops.	FDLRS Parent Services, Web Designer
Parents	Parent Link (automated phone call to all SES families)	Inform all parents through a Parent Link phone call to remind parents of upcoming "Weekend with the Experts" Saturday workshops (quarterly) and monthly SES Advisory Council Meetings.	FDLRS Parent Services
Parents, Public Libraries	Public Libraries (Community Bulletin Board & Youth Services Librarians)	E-mail the Parent Education Workshop Calendar to all 39 public libraries/Youth Services Librarians (to be posted on the community bulletin board in all public libraries).	FDLRS Parent Services, FDLRS Media Center
ESE Specialists, Teachers, Guidance Counselors, Family Counselors, Social Workers, Media Specialists	ESE Specialists CAB (Communicating Across Broward) Conference	Post the Parent Education Workshop Calendar and disability related information on the ESE Specialists' CAB Conference, which is an electronic method of communicating with school personnel through e-mail. The ESE Specialists can then post on the schools' Parent Bulletin Board and share with school staff (i.e. teachers, guidance counselors, family counselors, social workers, and media specialists).	FDLRS Parent Services, ESE Specialists
School Psychologists, Parents	E-mail	Distribute Parent Education Workshop Calendar and disability related information to a School Psychologist (representative), who will e-mail the information to all school psychologists.	FDLRS Parent Services, School Psychologist
Family Counselors, Parents	E-mail	Distribute Parent Education Workshop Calendar and disability related information to a Family Counselor (representative), who will e-mail the information to all family counselors.	FDLRS Parent Services, Family Counselor
Social Workers, Parents	E-mail	Distribute SE Parent Education Workshop Calendar and disability related information to a Social Worker (representative), who will e-mail the information to all social workers.	FDLRS Parent Services, Social Worker
Preschool Parents, Preschool ESE Assessment Team	Child Find Screenings	Distribute Parent Education Workshop Calendar and disability related information at all Child Find screenings and community events.	FDLRS Parent Services, FDLRS Child Find
Head Start Staff, Head Start Parents	E-mail	Distribute Parent Education Workshop Calendar and disability related information to a Head Start (representative), who will e-mail the information to Head Start staff.	FDLRS Parent Services, Head Start Disabilities Specialist
Parents	Parent Education Workshops	Distribute Parent Education Workshop Calendar and disability related information at Parent Education Workshops.	FDLRS Parent Services
Preschool Parents, Preschool ESE School & Contract Agency Staff	Preschool Parent Education Workshops, E-mail, Preschool SES Meetings	Distribute Parent Education Workshop Calendar to Preschool SES Coordinator to distribute at Preschool SES Parent Workshops, E-mail to Preschool SES School & Contract Agency Staff, and distribute at Preschool SES meetings.	FDLRS Parent Services, Preschool SES Coordinator, Preschool SES Program Specialists
Preschool SES Assessment Team	E-mail	E-mail Parent Education Workshop Calendar to the SES Preschool Assessment Team.	FDLRS Parent Services, FDLRS Child Find

Source: BCPS Exceptional Student Education and Support Division, 2014.



Every department or organization should maintain a communications strategy when dealing with a variety of stakeholders. With over 30,000 stakeholders, the BCPS Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services is no exception. While pieces are in place that will contribute to the overall communications plan, one has yet to be created.

The Division should develop a comprehensive ESE communications plan to ensure communications are strategic, and provide all the necessary information to stakeholders. This initiative should align with the overall BCPS strategy to “Communicate more effectively and with transparency.” The communications plan should also align with the overall BCPS communications plan, as appropriate.

Common elements of a comprehensive communications plan include a list of all types of stakeholders, both internal and external; information needs of each of these groups; purpose and goals of the plan; lessons learned; tools and technology used or available for the communications process; assets (e.g., trust, credibility, success) and challenges to communications and the communications process; and measures of success to assess results.

FINDING

A centerpiece of internal ESE communications in the BCPS is the Behavioral and Academic Support Information System (BASIS). BASIS is a technology system used by ESE Specialists to communicate issues and questions to District Program Specialists. BASIS also includes student information and other features not being discussed for purposes of this finding.

ESE Specialists submit issues and questions that they are not able to resolve personally into the BASIS database, and then District Program Specialists respond back to the ESE Specialist through BASIS. One benefit of BASIS is that it routes questions submitted by ESE Specialists to the correct stakeholder and keeps a historical record of issues across the district. **Exhibit 4.4-6** provides a screenshot of the BASIS system.

ESE Specialists shared that BASIS is an excellent tool through which to communicate with District Program Specialists; however, there are shortcomings to the workflow. Limitations noted include that there is no email/text notification when a District Program Specialist responds to a question in BASIS. Therefore, ESE Specialists have to constantly monitor the system for a response.

Perhaps the most prevalent complaint from ESE Specialists regarding BASIS is that the lengthy 24-hour window (or more) that District Program Specialists are allocated to respond is in many cases too long. ESE Specialists noted that most questions they submit need a more immediate response. For instance, one ESE Specialist shared that they had a parent sitting in their office who needed information that required input from a District Program Specialist, and therefore BASIS was not an appropriate mechanism for communication. Several ESE Specialists noted that, in some instances, they ignore the requirement to channel questions through BASIS, call the District Program Specialist directly, and then enter the issue into the system only after they have resolved the issue.



FINDING

The BCPS Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services produces a newsletter each semester that shares current information on ESE services with ESE stakeholders. Individuals can sign-up to automatically receive the newsletter, or download the newsletter on the BCPS website. **Exhibit 4.4-7** displays the front page of the most recent newsletter.

Exhibit 4.4-7
BCPS ESE Newsletter



Source: Broward County Public Schools, 2014.



The newsletter includes updates on each of the BCPS ESE programs, photos from ESE events, school news, history and awareness, highlights on commendable programs, parent news, district ESE contact information, ESE professional development offerings, and information on online training. The publication represents hard work and collaboration on behalf of the BCPS Exceptional Student Education and Support Division, and a desire to share good news and updates with ESE stakeholders.

COMMENDATION

The Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services is commended for its excellent ESE monthly newsletter, which acts a vehicle for sharing important and timely information regarding BCPS ESE services with all stakeholders.

FINDING

The BCPS website for the Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services is located at <http://www.broward.k12.fl.us/studentsupport/ease/index.htm>. The website was noted time and again by interviewees as a main source for information regarding ESE services available in the school district. The website contains:

- Medicaid/504 information;
- psychological services information;
- SEDNET information;
- support services information;
- a directory of ESE staff;
- advisory services information;
- an E-box with important files and documents;
- educator information;
- a FDLRS program page;
- a Florida Inclusion Network page;
- a new teacher toolbox;
- parent and student information; and
- private school services information.

Exhibit 4.4-8 displays a screenshot of the BCPS Exceptional Student Education and Support Division website.

While the website contains valuable information, it is difficult to locate the information in a timely manner, and content is sometimes old or outdated. For example, the home page banner displays information from an awards ceremony held in October 2013, and Evergreen located documents on the site dated back to 2009. With regard to accessing specific content, during the course of this evaluation Evergreen team members researching secondary transition programs found very little information via the BCPS website's topical link to transition. Anticipating that families and students will use the website to find information on the many programs available, it would benefit the district to provide easy access via direct links on the transition page. Further,



several broken links were located on the website. Interviewees also noted these concerns with the website, indicating that although the website is their main conduit for information on ESE services, they struggle to locate the information needed.

Exhibit 4.4-8 Screenshot of ESE Website



Source: Broward County Public Schools, 2014.



Evergreen conducted a review and comparison of peer school district websites to determine areas where the BCPS ESE website could improve, and to provide examples to BCPS on which peer websites offer those features. The following ten features were included in the comparison analysis:

- **"Getting Started" Information on Landing Page** – in coming to the website, new user information is readily apparent.
- **Accurate Information** – sampling of information viewed is accurate.
- **No Broken Links** – broken (dead) links could not be located.
- **Up-to-Date Banner/Content** – fresh information (e.g. banner on home page) immediately noticeable and recent updates (in last month) made.
- **Appropriate Coverage** – menu options covering all common areas of ESE services.
- **Usability** – overall user friendly, easy to navigate, and can't get lost in menus.
- **Search** – web presence high, search engine optimization apparent, and search capability on site.
- **Layout and Design/Visual** – website is visually attractive, aesthetically appealing, and flows.
- **Link to Social Media** – website is linked to social media accounts.
- **Ease of Interaction** – sign-up for newsletter is available, and parent resources are available.

Exhibit 4.4-9 displays the website comparison analysis. As can be seen, the most common features among all peer school district websites is that they contain accurate information (100 percent); they include search capabilities (100 percent); they provide appropriate coverage (82 percent); they have no broken links (66.7 percent); and they were found to be usable (73 percent).

Features or attributes included less frequently on peer school district websites include a "Getting Started" option for new parents on the home page, visually appealing design and aesthetics, and a link to social media accounts. Finally, not a single peer school district was found to have an up-to-date banner or up-to-date content scrolling on the ESE landing page. Based on the analysis of peer school district websites and stakeholder feedback, it is apparent that the BCPS ESE website could be improved to better convey information to all stakeholders.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.4-3:

Overhaul the ESE website so that information is organized logically, contains current information, and is visual appealing to BCPS stakeholders.



Exhibit 4.4-9 Peer District Website Features Comparison

Florida Peer School District	"Getting Started" Info on Landing Page	Accurate Information	No Broken Links	Updated Banner/Content	Appropriate Coverage	Usability	Search	Layout and Design/Visual	Link to Social Media	Ease of Interaction	Comments/Best Practice Features
Broward County Public Schools	x	x			x	x	x			x	
Duval County Public Schools	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	
Hillsborough County Public Schools	x	x			x	x	x			x	
Miami-Dade County Public Schools		x	x		x		x	x	x	x	
Orange County Public Schools	x	x	x		x	x	x		x	x	ESE Intro and Overview video on home page
School District of Palm Beach County		x					x			x	
Pinellas County Public Schools		x	x			x	x	x	x	x	
National Peer School District											
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools		x	x		x	x	x	x	x		
Fairfax County Public Schools	x	x	x		x	x	x			x	"Featured Videos" posted on home page
Gwinnett County Public Schools		x	x		x	x	x				
Houston Independent School District	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	
Montgomery County Public Schools	x	x			x		x	x		x	

Source: Created by Evergreen Solutions, 2014.



The website is the outward facing public storefront for the Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services, and should be properly maintained and orderly so that stakeholders can quickly and easily find the information they are seeking. BCPS should work to conceptualize a new layout that is visually appealing, as well as organize information in a more user friendly format.

FINDING

The promotion of successful ESE programs and practices is a weakness in the district. For example, several stakeholders, including both parents and BCPS staff noted that the FINS Play Pal Program has been a huge success where it has been implemented; however, it has not been successfully promoted districtwide. This is also an issue for other programs that should be considered models for duplication and expansion (e.g. Best Buddies). Further, the Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services does not recognize ESE staff who go above and beyond the call of duty. While recognition may take place in the semester newsletter, there is no channel for recognizing programs and staff in real time throughout the semester.

Several of BCPS peer school district have models in place for recognizing commendable staff practices. For example, Hillsborough County Public Schools (HCPS) has an Excellence in Action Award that recognizes individuals who have made a difference in the life of a student with special needs, including anyone within the educational setting or community groups/volunteers who work with HCPS students receiving ESE services. A nomination form is used by parents, caregivers, or students to submit nominations for individuals who have made a difference in the life of a student with special needs.

Exhibit 4.4-10 displays Part One of the HCPS Excellence in Action Award nomination form and **Exhibit 4.4-11** displays Part Two of the form. The form can be completed online or in hard copy.

In addition to an award such as this for recognizing personal accomplishments of staff or service providers, exceptional ESE programs or practices in the BCPS can be highlighted on the district website and through social media outlets on an ongoing basis.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.4-4:

Increase awareness of commendable ESE staff, programs, and practices.

The BCPS Exceptional Student Education and Support Division should develop additional outlets for constantly sharing commendable ESE staff, programs, and practices. This should include the use of the ESE website and social media outlets, as well as a mechanism for students and parents to nominate individuals for personal achievements contributing positively to a instruction or support for a student with disabilities.



Exhibit 4.4-10
HCPS Excellent in Action Award
Nomination Form – Part One

Excellence in Action Awards Nomination Form

Instructions:

Please use 1 (one) form per Nominee. Please Complete Entire Form (Front and Back pages).
It is very important that accurate contact information is provided so that your nominee can be notified.

The Nomination Form is Available Online! It's Fast and Easy!

www.surveymonkey.com/s/2014 EIA Awards Nomination Form

Nominations may also be submitted by mail to Millie Bucy, FDLRS, 4210 Bay Villa Ave., Tampa, FL 33611

Questions? Call FDLRS, Parent Services: (813) 837-7732. 250 word Maximum. **Deadline: April 4, 2014**

Reason for Nomination: Please Print Clearly - Feel Free To Use A Separate Sheet:

[illegible]

Source: Hillsborough County Public Schools, 2014.



Exhibit 4.4-11
HCPS Excellent in Action Award
Nomination Form – Part Two

2014 Excellence in Action Awards Nomination Category (select one per form) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
ESE Teachers:	<input type="radio"/> Pre-K through Elementary School <input type="radio"/> Middle School <input type="radio"/> High School - 22 yrs
General Education Teachers /Inclusion:	<input type="radio"/> Pre-K through Elementary School <input type="radio"/> Middle School <input type="radio"/> High School - 22 yrs
Administrative: (*ex: District Resource Teacher, Principal, Asst. Principal, etc.)	*Specify:
Therapist:	<input type="radio"/> Speech <input type="radio"/> OT <input type="radio"/> PT <input type="radio"/> *(Other) Specify:
Support Staff:	<input type="radio"/> Aides <input type="radio"/> Health <input type="radio"/> Food Service <input type="radio"/> Media <input type="radio"/> Clerical <input type="radio"/> Custodial
Transportation Staff:	<input type="radio"/> Driver <input type="radio"/> Attendant (Bus Number:) <input type="radio"/> Supervisor
Other / Community Agencies (*example: crossing guards, sports & recreation, etc.)	*Specify:
Volunteers:	<input type="radio"/> Peer buddies <input type="radio"/> Parents <input type="radio"/> *(Other) Specify:

Nominee Contact information: (including name of school/work location if different from the school your child is attending this year).

Nominee Name:	
School / Work Address:	
School / Work Phone:	

Nominator Information:

Name:	
Address:	
Email Address:	
Phone/Cell Number:	

Student Information:

Student Name:	
Age:	
School:	
Class/Program:	

Select your child's disability category. (Please select all that apply) ☒

<input type="radio"/> Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)	<input type="radio"/> Specific Learning Disability (SLD)
<input type="radio"/> Deaf or Hard of Hearing	<input type="radio"/> Speech and Language
<input type="radio"/> Developmental Delay	<input type="radio"/> Visually Impaired
<input type="radio"/> Emotional/Behavioral Disability	
<input type="radio"/> Gifted	<input type="radio"/> Other (Specify)
<input type="radio"/> Intellectual Disability (InD or EMH/TMH/SPMH)	
<input type="radio"/> Physically/Other Health/Orthopedically Impaired/Traumatic Brain Injury (PI/OHI/OI/TBI)	

PLEASE COMPLETE FRONT AND BACK PAGES

Source: Hillsborough County Public Schools, 2014.



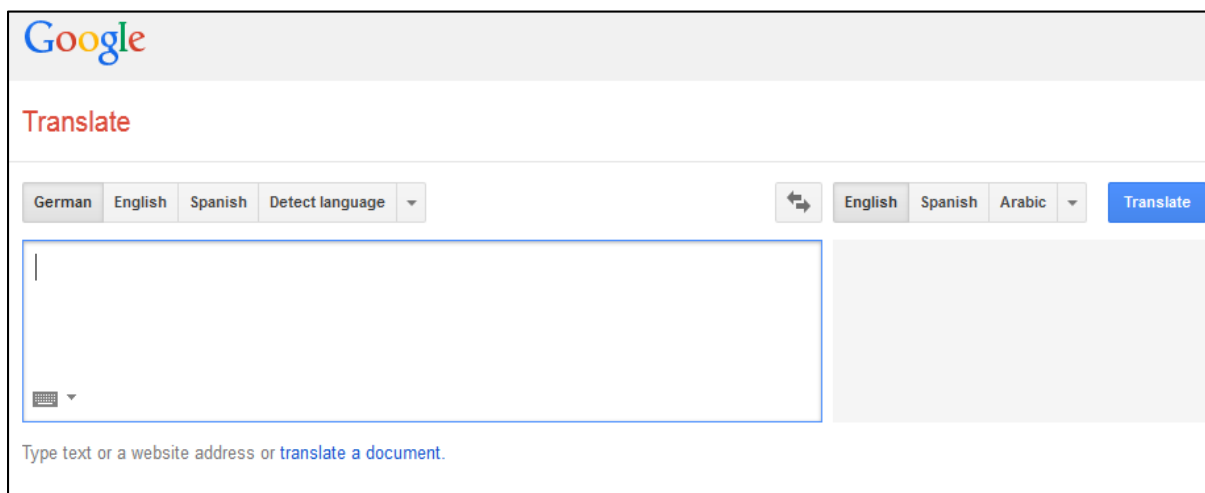
FINDING

A barrier to communication between ESE Specialists and parents in BCPS is language. Although the school district has put measures in place to overcome these barriers (e.g., interpreters), the communications gap between ESE Specialists and parents is still difficult to overcome. Because translators are provided during the IEP meeting with parents, this is not where the language barrier is an issue. Instead, ESE Specialists have difficulty in day-to-day communications with parents who are English language learners.

While ESE Specialists are able to request a translator for any and all communications with parents, there are many instances where the formal process of requesting a translator may not be appropriate. Instead, ESE Specialists turn to free, web-based tools to make translation during communications easier. Several ESE Specialists noted using Google Translate to translate correspondence received in Spanish from parents.

Exhibit 4.4-12 displays the Google Translate user interface, which is frequently used by ESE Specialists in communicating with parents. Google Translate and other similar tools allow users to talk or type text into a textbox in one language, select the language they want to translate the text into, click a “Translate” button, and copy and paste the new translated text into an email or document. The software will alternatively speak the translated text back to the user. Although ESE Specialists noted using Google Translate, they questioned the accuracy of the program, and have not been directed by the school district to use any other tool.

Exhibit 4.4-12
Google Translate User Interface



Source: Created by Evergreen Solutions, 2014.



RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.4-5:

Determine and share the most appropriate translation tools for ESE Specialists to use in daily correspondence with parents.

The BCPS Exceptional Student Education and Support Division should select and recommend a translation tool(s) to be used by ESE Specialists in day-to-day communications with parents. Google and Microsoft both offer online translation tools that are free to use, and available in mobile app versions. These tools provide users with the ability to translate 50 different languages, and are considered state of the art in terms of their ability to provide translation services. This tool can greatly increase the effectiveness of communications between staff and non-English speaking stakeholders, and all ESE Specialists may not be aware that it is available.

FINDING

Social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Google+ provide an excellent way for groups and organizations to communicate with their constituents. In today's society, everyone from small town politicians, multi-million dollar corporations, and non-profit organizations use social media platforms to engage their customers. Social media is advantageous because it has experienced widespread adoption, it is free, and many individuals are already using it and comfortable with the technology. Popular social media platforms also take the effort out of networking and provide a more intimate connection between people and groups.

BCPS as a district has an official Twitter account and Facebook page for communicating school district news to stakeholders. **Exhibit 4.4-13** displays the BCPS Twitter and Facebook pages. As can be seen, BCPS has engaged with 1,637 stakeholders via the Twitter account, and nearly 7,500 stakeholders via the Facebook page. The ESE Advisory Council also uses social media (e.g. Facebook) to communicate with its members and the public regarding ESE news and activities, and has engaged 1,165 members. The ESE Advisory Council Facebook page can be located at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/browardeseadvisory/>

The BCPS Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services does not currently use social media platforms to engage stakeholders.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.4-6:

Use social media platforms to further engage ESE stakeholders.

The BCPS Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services should create social media accounts and start engaging stakeholders using these platforms. Accounts are free, and require only periodic maintenance. These communication tools can reap almost immediate benefits in terms of reaching stakeholders once setup.



Exhibit 4.4-13 BCPS Facebook and Twitter Accounts



Link: <https://twitter.com/browardschools>



Source: Created by Evergreen Solutions, 2014.

Link: <https://www.facebook.com/browardschools>



4.5 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



4.5 **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

In recent times, the concept of professional development for teachers and administrators has undergone a paradigm shift. The old model of expert-driven, off-site workshops attended by teachers and administrators according to their interests or mandated for all by the district has been replaced by a model of collaborative, constructivist learning focused on supporting improved teaching and learning, and delivered at the school site as part of teacher regular routines. This job-embedded, research-based learning community approach requires teachers to reflect on student achievement levels as a function of their practice and collaboratively address ways to enhance instruction to promote higher levels of student achievement. The broad descriptor for this process is the Inquiry Model of Professional Development, and it is through the inquiry process that school communities can create short-term continuous improvement cycles that, when connected and focused on instructional practice and student learning, lead to whole school improvement.

In 2001, the National Staff Development Council (NSDC)—now *Learning Forward*—developed a set of standards for professional development that supports the whole school improvement effort. These standards were organized around the context, processes, and content necessary for teachers to focus their expertise on improving instruction and student learning at all levels of a school district.

According to the website (learningforward.org), the standards have since been re-envisioned a third time to outline:

...the characteristics of professional learning that lead to effective teaching practices, supportive leadership, and improved student results. Learning Forward, with the contribution of 40 professional associations and education organizations, developed the Standards for Professional Learning. The standards make explicit that the purpose of professional learning is for educators to develop the knowledge, skills, practices, and dispositions they need to help students perform at higher levels. The standards are not a prescription for how education leaders and public officials should address all the challenges related to improving the performance of educators and their students. Instead, the standards focus on one critical issue -- professional learning.

The standards now include:

- Learning Communities
- Resources
- Learning Designs
- Outcomes
- Leadership
- Data
- Implementation

These standards recognize that teacher capacity is built within learning communities committed to improving teacher skills and knowledge toward the end of increased student achievement.

The website further states that increased teacher effectiveness “requires prioritizing, monitoring,



and coordinating resources for educator learning.” Outcomes are aligned to “educator performance and student curriculum standards.” Leaders must be committed to setting the stage for ongoing professional learning among staff. Examining and using a variety of data sources underlies high quality professional learning through the planning, implementing and evaluating processes. Effective implementation applies research for sustained, supported change leading to improved student learning and teacher capacity. Florida’s new teacher and administrator evaluation systems underscore these tenets.

These educator capacity-building goals are aligned with Universal Design for Learning (UDL) which BCPS is using to expand instructional approaches beyond a “one-size-fits-all solution” to provide “flexible approaches that can be customized and adjusted for individual needs.”

Exhibit 4.5-1 shows a description from the UDL Center’s website <http://www.udlcenter.org/aboutudl/expertlearners> of “expert learners”—the characteristics of which are aligned with BCPS goals for its professional staff to address the needs of all learners within their classes.

Exhibit 4.5-1
Universal Design for Learning
Characteristics of Expert Learners

Resourceful & Knowledgeable	Strategic & Goal-Directed	Purposeful & Motivated
Bring considerable prior knowledge to new learning	Formulate plans for learning	Are eager for new learning and are motivated by the mastery of learning itself
Activate that prior knowledge to identify, organize, prioritize and assimilate new information	Devise effective strategies and tactics to optimize learning	Are goal-directed in their learning
Recognize the tools and resources that would help them find, structure, and remember new information	Organize resources and tools to facilitate learning	Know how to set challenging learning goals for themselves
Know how to transform new information into meaningful and useable knowledge	Monitor their progress	Know how to sustain the effort and resilience that reaching those goals will require
	Recognize their own strengths and weaknesses as learners	Monitor and regulate emotional reactions that would be impediments or distractions to their successful learning
	Abandon plans and strategies that are ineffective	

Source: National Center on Universal Design for Learning, <http://www.udlcenter.org/aboutudl/expertlearners>, 2014.

FINDING

Many interviewees cited as a source of pride a new online professional development program that will be implemented in 2014 for administrators and ESE Specialists. Completion of the modules for ESE Specialists will lead to credentialing for those who participate in all sessions. Upon completion of the initial self-paced courses, participants who successfully complete them will have earned 20 in-service points.

The three initial courses as a requirement for participants in the administrative (principal and assistant principal) leadership program are:



- Quality Individualized Educational Plans (IEPs)
- Due Process/Procedural Safeguards
- Building Inclusive Schools

Once the ESE Specialist credentialing module is complete, it will include the three courses above plus a course on Matrix of Services and one on Budgeting/Scheduling.

Each of the above courses has a comprehensive exam as well as follow-up activities for participants to apply learning at their individual school site. For instance, the “Due Process/Procedural Safeguards” course activity is intended to assist participants “in understanding not only the content learned in this course but also to assess the knowledge base of key staff on your school campus.”

The three modules also serve another purpose. With implementation of SB 1108 which revises requirements for teacher certification, the three modules satisfy the required 20 in-service points/ one college credit. They provide course completers an added “endorsement” that reflects their competence in the foundational principles of ESE.

Exhibit 4.5-2 shows the pop-up menu that describes the three courses on BCPS’s professional development site.

Exhibit 4.5-2 Description of Administrative ESE Courses

Quality Individual Education Plans

This **first** course in the series provides an introduction to the process of developing quality individual education plans (IEP) for eligible students with disabilities. The course consists of *Getting Started* section (directions to navigate the session, and materials to download), and three self-paced sections that explain the IEP and MTSS problem solving process, IEP components and requirements for elementary and secondary students. You will complete self-check activities in each section. There are 4 options for follow-up offered in course, select one to complete. Take the comprehensive test at the end of the module which requires a passing score of 80% or greater. Click on the link to print your course certificate. Send your follow up activity and course certificate to your module advisor. Completion of the course will earn **10** in-service points.

Procedural Safeguards

This **second** course in the series provides an overview of the Procedural Safeguards 2013 for student with disabilities. This course is designed to be a Procedural Safeguards book walk-through, highlighting all of the important points that school based administrators need to know and understand. There are two sections to this course: Procedural Safeguards and Due Process and Administrative Remedies for Students with Disabilities. There is a follow-up activity designed to assist you in understanding not only the content learned in this course but also to assess the knowledge base of key staff on your school campus. Take the comprehensive test at the end of the module which requires a passing score of 80% or greater. Send your follow-up activity and course certificate to your module advisor. Completion of this course will earn **5** in-service points.

Building Inclusive Schools

This **third** course in the series provides an overview of effective inclusive practices for students with disabilities. The course is comprised of 5 separate learning sessions that can be self-paced and contain self-check activities in each session. Upon completing the course, return to this site to take the comprehensive quiz and download the follow up activity. Send your follow activity to your module advisor. Completion of the course will earn **5** in-service points.

Source: BCPS FDLRS Office, 2014.



Participants in the principal leadership program are also offered Foundations of Exceptional Student Education which explains programs and services as well as their history in the United States. The program teaches them about IDEA, its history, ESE eligibility and steps to take before developing an IEP, legal and ethical issues, and resources to assist them. Developed by the DOE FDLRS Human Resources Department Administrative unit, activities enable participants to earn a total of 60 in-service points for completion of this course.

Some concerned principals have expressed interest in the course so it may be opened up for them as a professional growth initiative, but remain mandatory for those in the leadership program. Another course explains aspects of due process, roles, options for parents and schools, timelines, and conflict resolution. It also includes case studies that describe due process proceedings and their related costs. Participants earn six in-service points for its completion.

COMMENDATION

The Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services is commended for developing leadership modules to build the capacity of administrators and ESE Specialists regarding critical knowledge of ESE laws, regulations, and inclusive school cultures.

FINDING

While the district is beginning to make a concerted effort to equip administrators with knowledge related to key ESE issues, many staff interviewed still indicated that more consistent training for both ESE Specialists and principals is needed. Interviewees expressed a sense that more purposefully ensuring that those two sets of BCPS staff were more fully cognizant of available resources, staffing options, and budgetary implications of ESE decisions would ensure a more uniform provision of services to all ESE students in the district.

One of the identified disparities revealed during Evergreen's visits to BCPS is the belief that professional development is much stronger for teachers than it is for central office or school administrators. The modules begin to address that identified gap in professional learning opportunities.

Staff linked many concerns for ESE students to an inconsistent understanding and therefore, inconsistent acceptance of ESE students by principals and their ability to either strongly support and integrate them into mainstream programs or to erect barriers. Across the board, staff noted a need for additional principal and central office professional development even beyond the district's currently developed administrative training.

In addition, principals who were interviewed during Evergreen's site visits expressed a desire for more collegial learning opportunities. As leaders of teachers, especially in today's changing educational climate imbued with expectations and accountability for ongoing improvement, this is a critical component of professional growth and school leadership as substantiated in **Exhibit 4.5.3**.



In April 2005, the former Florida Principal Competencies were replaced by the Florida Principal Leadership Standards (FPLS)—([Rule 6B-5.0012, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.)]. These standards were adopted by the State Board in 2006-07 (Rule 6A-5.080, F.A.C.), and Educational Leadership and School Principal Certification programs were redesigned to implement the new standards in 2008. **Exhibit 4.5-3** shows a cross-walk of Florida’s FPLS with standards developed by other national educational organizations.

Exhibit 4.5-3
Comparison of Florida Principal Leadership Standards
with National Standards

Florida Standards	Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium	National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education	National Association of Elementary School Principals	Education Leadership Constituent Council
Community & Stakeholder Partnerships	Community Collaboration	Community Collaboration	Community Engagement	Community Collaboration
Management of Learning Environment	Management of Learning Environment	Manage the School Organization	Balance Management and Leadership	Manage the School Organization
Instructional Leadership	School Culture in Instructional Program	Promote a Positive School Culture	Demand Instruction that Ensures Achievement	Promote a Positive School Culture
Technology				
Learning, Accountability & Assessment			Create a Culture of Adult Learning	
Decision-Making Skills			Data and Decision-Making	
Human Resource Management			Create a Culture of Adult Learning	
Ethics	Ethics	Ethics	Ethics	Ethics
Diversity	Cultural/Political Context	Cultural/Political Context	Cultural/Political Context	Diversity

Source: Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Educator Recruitment, Development and Retention from *fasa.net*, 2014.

Some of the training that is offered by FDLRS, as shown in **Exhibit 4.5-4**, would be beneficial to principals and could be integrated into their leadership activities.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.5-1:

Build on the online training for principals and ESE Specialists and ensure that central office administrators are included.

Evergreen is not suggesting that all training for these positions be online. However, the online, self-paced studies are an effective format that can be used in conjunction with face-to-face training. Principals should be consulted regarding topics of interest or need. FPLS should also serve as a foundation for developing differing levels of training for principals at different stages in their careers. Professional learning should be embedded in administrator meetings, as well. District as well as school leaders are aware of aspects of training that would benefit the changing cadre of ESE Specialists and ensure a higher level of consistency of processes across the district.



Exhibit 4.5-4

Florida Inclusion Network Training on Effective Inclusive Practices

Collaborative teacher teams will...

Know:

- ❖ What the research says about the benefits of inclusion for students with and without disabilities.
- ❖ The general education curriculum including NGSSS and Common Core Standards for the subject(s) they teach.
- ❖ A variety of evidence-based instructional and classroom management strategies.
- ❖ How to interpret the two collaborative teaching models aligned with in-class supports: Support Facilitation and Co-teaching.
- ❖ The various collaborative teaching approaches and how/when to employ them in their classroom.
- ❖ Effective instructional and classroom management strategies.
- ❖ That collaborative teachers share responsibility for all students in the classroom.
- ❖ Effective communication methods for sharing student information and progress.

Understand:

- ❖ All students have the right to access and make progress in general education curriculum and environments.
- ❖ All students learn differently.
- ❖ All the members of the team are important and can provide valuable support and information to and for all students in the classroom.
- ❖ Communication about student progress is a shared and ongoing responsibility.
- ❖ A school-wide scheduling process is used to identify and develop collaborative service delivery models based on individual student needs. A school-wide scheduling process is used to identify and develop collaborative service delivery models based on individual student needs.
- ❖ Collaborative planning must focus on effective classroom management, assessment, and instruction on CCSS (including curricular accommodations or modifications, differentiating instruction, universal design, scaffolding, formative assessment, etc.).
- ❖ Collaborative roles and responsibilities are aligned to instruction for all students.
- ❖ Collaborative teaching approaches are identified and implemented as a result of ongoing instructional planning by collaborative partners.



Exhibit 4.5-4 (Continued)
Florida Inclusion Network Training
on Effective Inclusive Practices

Do:

- ❖ Communicate and come to consensus, with collaborative partner(s), on instructional decision-making and classroom management.
- ❖ Jointly communicate information (ongoing) about student needs to administrators, other general education teachers and ESE service providers.
- ❖ Jointly communicate information (ongoing) about student progress to parent/guardian and administrators.
- ❖ Collaborate with teachers, ESE related service providers, and families to develop/assess/revise an individual educational plan (IEP) for each student and behavior intervention plan (BIP) as needed.
- ❖ Actively participate in regularly scheduled instructional planning with collaborative partner(s).
- ❖ Provide input to assist in the development of a school-wide master schedule for collaborative service delivery models.
- ❖ Actively engage in planning, instruction, assessment, classroom management, and parent/student communication when providing in-class supports.
- ❖ Use a variety of tools and resources to assist in collaborative planning and instruction.
- ❖ Provide input and support as students transition at all levels (subject to subject, classroom to classroom, grade to grade, school to school, and school to post-school environments).
- ❖ Reflect on the effectiveness of the collaborative partnership to identify and participate in job-embedded professional development related to providing effective in-class supports and/or instruction.

Source: BCPS Florida Inclusion Network, 2014.

FINDING

Districtwide professional development initiatives in BCPS are often planned, developed, and ready dissemination without consideration of ESE students and staff. Discussions unveiled multiple examples where extensive professional development initiatives were almost, if not completely, developed and ready for implementation before ESE staff or students were considered.

When the district planned the Professional Development Redesign for BCPS last year, the entire Talent Development Department was involved. However, ESE professional developers only learned about it in January—four to five months after inception—when they discovered that other FDLRS in the State had been appointed to work on it in their areas. Again, when reading professional development was planned, the product was almost finalized before ESE was accounted for as needing to be involved. They were then given the final product to review. They



did observe, though, that becoming involved, even at that late date, had been beneficial as it had forced them to reflect on their own body of work as they edited and discussed it. Another example of an initiative planned without input from ESE staff was the Digital 5 elementary laptop project. As a consequence, the ESE students received their laptops after the general education students.

The professional developers in the ESE Department have backgrounds in curricular content areas that have been leveraged as they moved into using those experiences to impart knowledge to others in BCPS. To date, that knowledge and expertise have not been maximized in planning professional development for both general education and ESE teachers. Clearly, professional development, whatever its genesis, is intended to have improved student achievement as its end goal. However, it is currently designed, constructed, and presented in isolation when it comes to addressing the learning needs of all BCPS students.

One of the organizational barriers to greater early collaboration is the divided structure of the Talent Development Department and ESE as separate entities. The other is that the professional development side of ESE, largely residing in FDLRS, is not tied more closely to the curricular and instructional side of the Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services. Without purposeful face-to-face meetings as a matter of course between representatives of Talent Development and ESE, and between the ESE professional developers and their curriculum counterparts in ESE, the district will continue to expend funds on duplicative or even conflicting actions that have related intents, instead of blending the knowledge, experience, and will of those in similar roles.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.5-2:

Move FDLRS to a direct reporting relationship to the Executive Director of the Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services, and assemble core groups with common responsibilities to identify strategies for maximizing the use of all available resources to better meet student needs.

Placing FDLRS directly under the Executive Director will ensure that professional development for the entire Division is coordinated. It will also assure that the needs of ESE teachers and students will be considered more proactively in planned professional development across divisions.

Strengthening that organizational move with cross-divisional meetings should also assist in breaking down structural barriers and identifying human and fiscal resources to focus holistically on all children's learning needs. This practice serves as a potential model that will focus district thinking on what children need as opposed to which program they are enrolled in and any related programmatic funding restrictions.

A similar issue relates to family counselors who report to the SEDNET Coordinator being in the ESE Division and the social workers and counselors who serve families more directly being in the Student Support Initiatives Division. Although recommendations external to the ESE



Division are beyond the scope of this review, the ESE Division should consider applying this recommendation to its work with staff in that division as well.

FINDING

Collaborative efforts to integrate ESE instructional strategies with curricular professional development are not the rule in BCPS. In fact, staff stated that “there is no expectation of collaboration,” and noted that it was both an inter-departmental as well as an intra-departmental reality.

Regarding the intra-departmental side of the issue, staff in the Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services stated awareness of “three pillars” but said they had not received any communications about them. They noted a lack of communications, processes, and relationships between and within the ESE Division itself and with others. These observations reinforce the prior finding and the need for the related recommendation.

BCPS does offer some training that enables ESE and general education staff to work together. However it is initiated by the ESE branch of the district and is not a collaborative effort among Curriculum and Instruction, Talent Development, and ESE. **Exhibit 4.5-5** describes a Florida Inclusion Network offering.

The core impact that teamwork and collaboration have on a successful enterprise and innovation has long been recognized in our nation. Thomas Edison explained his prolific nature as an inventor by crediting it to the “multiplier effect.” By placing his teams near each other in their work, they were able to consult and encourage each other and create collective intelligence among themselves, making them both more efficient and effective in their output.

Tony Wagner, author of *How Schools Change*, asserted that systemic reform is collaborative inquiry among adults. Peter Senge avowed that it was teaming that empowered the collective voice to move towards organizational action. Mike Schmoker noted that, in *The Wisdom of Teams*, Jon Katzenback and Douglas Smith laud the synergy created by effective teaming:

...it is obvious that teams outperform individuals, that learning not only occurs in teams but endures...and that teams bring together complementary skills and experiences that, by definition, exceed those of any individual on the team...bringing multiple capabilities to bear on difficult issues.

Schmoker references the essential nature of collaboration when he states, “it is often the logistical and practical knowledge of teachers that makes or breaks the successful implementation of a research-based strategy or program.” Such collaboration at all levels of an educational organization creates the dynamism that leads to sustained, results-focused implementation of any reform initiative, which, in the final analysis, is the crux of educational decisions and actions.



Exhibit 4.5-5 Collaborative Teacher Training Overview*

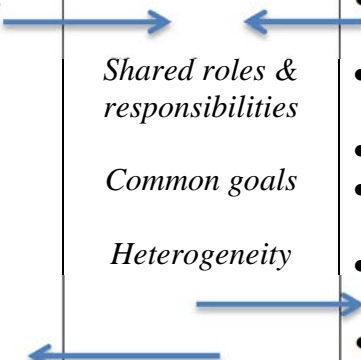
Keys to Effective Collaboration

- Communication
- Parity
- Trust and Mutual Respect
- Commitment
- Focused planning/shared decision making
- Shared ownership
- Knowledge of core content and curriculum
- Knowledge of students

Blended Expertise

General Education Teacher	ESE Teacher
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-depth knowledge of curriculum, instruction, and pre-, formative, and summative assessment • Focus on pacing of instruction in relation to a learning progress • Understanding of ‘typical’ students learning and behavior patterns • Skill in classroom management for large groups of students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-depth knowledge of differentiated instruction, accommodations, modifications, and assistive technology • Focus on mastery learning • Understanding of individual student needs across school, family, community and work domains • Knowledge of positive behavior supports • Knowledge of compliance with federal laws for students with disabilities

Comparison of Collaborative Teaching Models

Support Facilitation		Co-Teach
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set daily/weekly schedule • ESE certification only • Less intense support • Plan & deliver instruction and assessment • Flexible, ongoing co-planning • Class size stays the same 	 <p><i>Shared roles & responsibilities</i></p> <p><i>Common goals</i></p> <p><i>Heterogeneity</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set daily period, or block schedule • ESE certification and HQT in co-taught subject (areas) • More intense support • Plan and deliver instruction and assessment • Regular, ongoing co-planning • Class size may increase

Source: BCPS FDLRS/FIN, 2014.

*Notes from *The Collaborative Teaching Survival Guide*.



Other districts such as the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) have taken this philosophy one step further by intentionally hiring staff with diverse backgrounds and knowledge to further integrate perspectives and a broad base of student needs into their collaborative work. The LAUSD Special Education Branch has purposely hired teachers with elementary and secondary backgrounds to strengthen the unit's content, curriculum, assessment, and instructional perspectives. Similarly, the LAUSD Language Acquisition and Elementary Reading Offices have strategically hired specialists with special education experience. The Elementary Reading Office also includes Spanish specialists who were identified by a district reading consultant.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.5-3:

Assemble a cross-divisional task group to examine key common elements that are effective with special needs learners that should be core elements of all content, instruction, and professional development discussions, planning, and decisions.

Creating such a cross-divisional and cross-departmental group will facilitate conversations so that the representatives of the varied offices will work collaboratively and understand each other's priorities and duties. The goal is to foster greater teamwork that will nurture heightened unity of purpose and better integrate processes and products holistically toward improved student outcomes.

Principals are concerned about their teachers leaving their classroom responsibilities to attend professional development. By merging key knowledge, skills, and strategies within fewer, more comprehensive professional learning opportunities, administrators can be assured that their teachers' attendance will reap instructional benefits for students. Additionally, teachers will gain broad-based learning without spending much time away from their students.

FINDING

Reports were mixed on the availability of content-related courses for ESE teachers and, conversely, that of ESE-related courses for general education teachers. Many testified that teachers at their schools, especially those with specialized programs, received appropriate and adequate training related to the ESE students in their classes. They noted, though, that was a direct result of the principal's commitment to the teachers and students at the school and not necessarily a factor of district priorities as they saw them. Conversely, many stated the belief that the district vision is that all classes having students with similar support and needs are equitable and consistent. However, one of the frequently identified concerns relating to achieving this goal was that principals can also serve as gatekeepers preventing teacher attendance at professional development relating to their students and classrooms.

Exhibit 4.5-6 reflects the opinions of a cross-section of BCPS staff regarding the sufficiency of training for general education teachers to support ESE students. This exhibit shows that:



- While 22.2 percent of district administrators strongly agreed/agreed (SA/A) with the statement, close to 45 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed (D/SD).
- The same is true among district program specialists, with 29.1 percent of them strongly agreeing/agreeing but 51.7 percent disagreeing.
- Special education teachers, too, are more in disagreement (37.9% D/SD) than agreement (34.6%) but are closely divided.
- The same is true of special education providers with 34.7 percent strongly disagreeing/disagreeing and 34.1 percent percent agreeing/strongly agreeing.
- School administrators, in contrast, are more in agreement (57.8% SA/A) than disagreement (30%).
- The same is true of general education teachers as school administrators with 44.6 percent strongly agreeing/agreeing and 34.1 percent disagreeing/strongly disagreeing.

Exhibit 4.5-6
Evergreen Survey Statement on
Training for General Education Teachers

Survey Statement: Sufficient training is available for general education teachers to support ESE students.						
Survey Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
District Administrator	11.1%	11.1%	11.1%	33.3%	11.1%	22.2%
District Program Specialist	8.1%	21.0%	16.1%	45.2%	6.5%	3.2%
School Administrator	15.7%	42.1%	10.2%	24.9%	5.1%	2.0%
Non-Instructional Support	8.7%	31.2%	18.9%	21.3%	10.8%	9.0%
Special Education Teacher	10.5%	24.1%	20.0%	26.5%	11.4%	7.6%
Special Education Provider	6.5%	27.6%	22.4%	28.2%	6.5%	8.8%
General Education Teacher	11.6%	33.0%	19.4%	23.8%	10.3%	1.8%
Paraprofessional	14.1%	28.5%	20.1%	7.2%	6.0%	24.1%
Other	14.3%	29.7%	16.5%	21.5%	10.4%	7.5%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.

Content-related training is essential for other staff who provide support to both ESE and general education teachers as well. Evergreen received a report that curriculum training was supposed to be provided to specialists such as Assistive Technology (AT) Program Specialists. However, the training was cancelled and not re-scheduled. Those specialists did attend Re-Think Autism training, but other similar trainings did not occur.

BCPS also planned role-alike meetings that were to be held monthly. Program Specialists were asked to reserve a Friday each month this year for those meetings. However, there were none scheduled this year. In past years, those meetings were held monthly and included discussions of topics such as compliance and extended school year services. Some noted that joint training between the AT specialists and Speech/Language Pathologists (SLPs) who work closely together



does not happen, but would be beneficial to both groups of staff. There are likely other groups who work closely together who would also benefit from joint training.

Further exacerbating an assurance that all teachers with ESE students in their classes are well-prepared to address their needs is that little professional development is mandated. Continual growth of teacher and administrator knowledge of aspects of ESE important to their jobs is inhibited by this fact. This situation places BCPS and its teachers in the potential position of not being best-equipped to meet all student needs and prevents BCPS teachers and administrators from participating in ongoing, sequentially building professional learning that embeds new skills and knowledge into their practice.

The Communication Across Broward (CAB) system includes all professional development options. However, it could benefit from a different configuration so that both ESE and general education teachers can locate courses that would benefit them in teaching the ESE students for whom they are responsible.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.5-4:

Develop a teacher course catalog (much like one for high schools or colleges) that prioritizes professional development options according to critical learning needs.

Having such a sequential course offering would ensure district and school leaders as well as teachers that they have the core knowledge and skills upon which to build as they move from one phase of their careers to another, especially when they may move from a general education to a more inclusive classroom, from elementary ESE to middle schools, or from a specialized program to a more open and inclusive one. It would also enable teachers to take greater charge of their learning knowing that there was a relationship between the courses they select as time, instructional factors, and their careers progress.

This is also particularly important since the turnover rate of ESE Specialists has been cited as high. Creating a strong foundation of ESE knowledge among a broader segment of the teacher corps will ensure BCPS that it continues to have a strong cadre from which to draw in filling those vacancies.

Adding course options that could be attended by staff members who work closely together such as SLPs and AT specialists would enable both groups to support each other, support general education teachers, and reinforce content.

FINDING

Some groups of staff include professional development as an integral part of their meetings together. District Psychologist Coordinators strategically plan and provide relevant professional development for their peers and interns throughout the year. One psychologist volunteers to navigate the reportedly cumbersome BCPS processes of awarding in-service points for these sessions.



Each year these coordinators identify a theme around which professional development revolves. Last year it was grief counseling and support. This year Pearson is conducting training on response to intervention (RtI) and low incidence disabilities. Other topics have included Division of Children and Families reporting and crisis management. Next year's focus will be new assessments with test companies conducting full day trainings. They are also in discussion with an autism expert to hold a day-long workshop for all psychologists. Through CAB, they have a question/answer and resources for psychologists with PowerPoints of presentations and additional documents for reference.

Their planned professional learning opportunities include repetition of topics so that the psychologists have the opportunity to learn, practice, and then return to discuss application of their learning and hear more. They did that with English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) last spring and fall.

The bilingual psychologists have a Bilingual Learning Community to which anyone is welcome. They have made presentations to all psychologists on working with bilingual students and parents and, after conducting much research, have developed norms by which they operate.

The group also collaborates with the Broward County Association of School Psychologists to procure license-required Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for BCPS psychologists.

COMMENDATION

The Directors of Support Services and Office of Psychological Services are commended for their thoughtful approach to planning for professional growth that is likely to sustain and embed new knowledge and skills into practice.

FINDING

A number of district procedures affect ESE staff's ability to take advantage of professional learning opportunities as reported by numerous groups of staff who provide related services to ESE students. In contrast to the approach that psychologists take toward professional development, meetings among others relate more to policies and procedures with little focus on professional learning.

Staff stated that the length, paper-base, and cumbersome district processes for approval of temporary duty authorization (TDA) often place them in the position of choosing either to leave without a signed, approved form, or to miss out on key training related to their jobs. In one case, a staff member reported that the district had already paid her registration, but the TDA was not approved when she was scheduled to leave, so she did not go. This caused the district to lose the registration funds already paid. Lapses between the initial application for Teacher Development In-service Fund (TDIF) monies and TDA approval were reported to be from September to January. Paper, rather than electronic procedures, have also led to the loss of interns as papers were either lost or buried in transit to secure the needed signatures in a timely manner.



Staff in at least two areas of related services noted that their attendance at conferences is never funded by the district. They either pay themselves to attend and share rides and rooms, or receive funding for their attendance through grants such as TDIF.

Another consistent barrier to attendance at professional learning relates again to district procedures. Several stated that they had completed plans and approval to attend conferences or training especially pertinent to their roles, but at the last minute were told that they must attend a job-related meeting and had to cancel their attendance. In one case, the employee cancelled professional development to attend an IEP meeting that was called at the last minute only for the IEP meeting to then be cancelled. Stories reported to Evergreen such as this were not unique.

When groups with lower representation among BCPS staff (such as psychologists or behavior program specialists) develop their own professional learning, assignment of in-service points is reportedly a very cumbersome and lengthy process. The onerous nature of that process and, in some staff's words, discouragement from doing anything other than district-provided training, may prevent some from creatively tailoring training.

Exhibit 4.5-7 reflects the concern on the part of district administrators and program specialists regarding professional development opportunities. More district administrators and program specialists see professional development in a decline than see it improving.

Exhibit 4.5-7
Evergreen Survey Statement on
Quality and Effectiveness of Professional Learning
for Teachers and Administrators

Survey Statement: Overall, the quality and effectiveness of professional learning for teachers and administrators regarding ESE is:				
Survey Group	Improving	Staying the Same	Declining	No Opinion
District Administrator	22.2%	22.2%	33.3%	22.2%
District Program Specialist	26.2%	32.8%	34.4%	6.6%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.5-5:

Develop consistent, efficient, and effective district processes to ensure that all ESE educators are able to benefit from professional learning opportunities related to their field.

In conjunction with **Recommendation 4.5-3**, this recommendation should address external pulls on staff time that divert staff from professional development responsibilities including those for professional growth. Other procedures the district might consider include assigning a floater to cover students while related service staff is in training.

The implementation of this recommendation should also develop a means for support staff, just as school staff, to have the ability to grow professionally with attendance funded by the district. There should also be flexibility, streamlining, and moving of district processes to a web-based



platform rather than paper. These steps are some that should ensure that staff in all areas of responsibility for related services has the opportunity for professional growth through conferences and training. The approach taken by the Psychological Services Department should serve as a model for others.

FINDING

Staff almost unanimously expressed concern about the pressures from the community and its representatives bringing a less collaborative approach to IEP meetings. Concomitantly, they noted a need for there to be strong leadership among school representatives in those meetings and related training in handling different viewpoints and facilitating discourse and consensus.

District leadership, aware of those concerns and professional development needs, has enlisted Doug Little, an expert in the Facilitative IEP process. The facilitator leads a group through the requirements for IEP meetings in a way that values all members and moves in a collaborative way towards consensus based on what is important for the child—keeping the discussion child-centered.

Using data, the district has identified a core group of 40 elementary schools to attend the initial training with the intent, over time, of training all school staff in the process. Forty secondary schools will be the second target audience. Besides offering the training for school staff, BCPS also provided an overview for district staff and a cadre of principals as well as the ESE Advisory Committee. This is a proactive approach to addressing a growing need within the schools.

COMMENDATION

The Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services is commended for recognizing the need for Facilitative IEP (FIEP) training and providing it for all school teams and administrators.

FINDING

BCPS does not have a prioritized, systematic focus on professional development for district leaders, nor do they convey its importance through their actions.

Little ESE professional development is tailored towards central office administrators. However, when it has been offered, it has not been capitalized on with ESE professional development initiatives historically being short-lived in the district. With respect to the question of having sufficient skills and knowledge to effectively serve ESE students, **Exhibit 4.5-8** reinforces their perception of the extent of preparedness. Only 27.2 percent strongly agreed or agreed that they have sufficient skills. Just over nine percent disagreed with the statement with the same percentage being neutral. An overwhelming 54.5 percent responded that the statement did not apply. This perception itself is a concern regarding the provision of support for ESE students.



Exhibit 4.5-8
Evergreen Survey Statement on
Skills and Knowledge to Provide Effective Services to Students

Survey Statement: I have the skills and knowledge needed to provide effective services to the students with disabilities I serve.						
Survey Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
District administrator	9.1%	18.2%	9.1%	9.1%	0.0%	54.5%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.

In 2010, ESE professional developers planned a Spring Fling which provided a two-day overview for all Program Specialists and the five Supervisors of Curriculum. The two days were specific to their instructional and content needs and showcased instructional materials that the Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services was supporting in classes. They then decided to do more the following year with the curriculum specialists. Toward that end, they created a calendar specific for them to be able to learn about math, instructional materials, assessments, and trainings. When only four attended the first session, the initiative stopped.

Last year, the division initiated an ESE Specialist Professional Learning Community (PLC). In those sessions, each of the ESE professional development staff presented information on specific learning opportunities each of them was responsible for. They rotated the sessions for Curriculum and Program Specialists. The sessions prompted calls from others who remarked that they had never before been aware of those opportunities in the district. However, that PLC has now been disbanded.

A few years ago, an elementary math cadre invited the FDLRS professional development staff member with a math background to attend some of their meetings. It was reported to be a productive problem-solving discussion of what they all observed in the schools from their differing viewpoints. However, the cadres have now been dismantled as well, with many of the former supervisory staff having been returned to school assignments.

The day Evergreen met with ESE professional developers was the day that the overview of Facilitative IEP was presented to district and school leaders. It is clearly an initiative that is important to BCPS leaders and was intended to be an all-day training. However, interviewees had observed principals sitting at the rear of the room communicating through their tablets or phones. Because principals all had to leave at noon, at that time an insufficient number of participants remained so the training was concluded. It is unclear from the description whether the message was not well conveyed to participants about the importance of the initiative within the district or whether central leaders had chosen a time and date with a built-in conflict that caused an early dismissal. Whatever the reason, the presentation was undermined and did not achieve its intended goal.

Again, as in other areas of ESE operations, professional development trainers are given assignments either at the last minute, told to re-construct a product already created according to parameters provided, or forced to change their plans, even amid presentations of training. They report that they have literally been told to stop workshops and other activities because of a call to



perform some other task. One specific example is that district ESE staff had spent extensive numbers of hours planning summer professional development for teachers only to be told to cancel it with them having to take the brunt of phone calls and emails without a district announcement regarding what prompted the cancellation.

Staff time does not appear to be honored in terms of requests in other ways as well. Despite grant funding, the FDLRS staff calendar has been cut by the School Board from 216 days to 196. Despite this cut in work days, FDLRS employees are still called to respond to requests during the summer and on weekends.

The quality of professional development provided by ESE trainers is reported to be good. However, little direction is provided from ESE leaders in BCPS. The district relies on FDLRS to take the lead in identifying topics, organizing and scheduling training, and delivering the training. Staff interviewed agreed that the majority of ESE professional learning opportunities are directly linked to the FDLRS grant initiative. Additionally, FDLRS/FIN staff report that their direction from the district has been minimal, primarily when they are requested to respond to school specific situations rather than training related to districtwide priorities. Some districts in the state have separate professional development teams to address the specific district-identified needs relating to content, behavior, transition, and ESE preschool. In the past, BCPS is reported to have had a structure that included individuals who trained on topics related to district needs rather than a state grant.

Professional development interviewees stated that, when it is time for grant writing for renewal, they conduct a needs assessment. Professional development specifically designed by those ESE staff is generally based on a variety of data sources, and includes processes that ensure that there is meaningful follow-up to embed the new knowledge and skills into teacher practice. That provided by consultants hired by the district does not have those same assurances of follow-up and reinforcement for transfer to practice.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.5-6:

Commit to the professional growth of staff working with ESE students and communicate that commitment through word, planning, and action.

Although they will be going through a revision process this next year, the use of Florida's Professional Development Protocol Standards (<http://www.teachinflorida.com/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=wGPIOTcdi28%3d&tabid=66>), for educators, schools, and districts are an excellent source for integrating processes that bolster ongoing professional growth at all levels of a school organization. Their Planning-Learning-Implementing-Evaluating cycle reinforces professional growth across the board and is geared toward ensuring changes in educator practice that result in improved student performance. This is the process that is aligned with Florida statutes and for which all districts are evaluated periodically.

Since the entire BCPS professional development system is expected by the Florida Department of Education to use it, the ESE Division should model these processes accordingly. This will



result in a more concerted focus on ongoing professional growth and less of a start and stop intermittent approach. The district should take a more proactive stance in identifying topics specific to district teacher needs and integrating them into offerings.

Finally, district leaders should demonstrate their commitment to the professional learning of all staff by ensuring that there are no interruptions or distractions from its occurrence once it is planned and paid for. Holding training intended for a day or a summer session and cancelling it at the last minute or allowing it to be prematurely discontinued costs the district not only fiscal resources, but also human resources in terms of planning and execution. All staff should be made to understand that their own professional learning and that of others is deemed critical to district leaders. Those who are responsible for planning and delivering training, too, should know, through leadership's actions that their time is well-spent in planning and their contribution to the growth of others in BCPS is respected. All staff time towards this end should be protected. This conveys that BCPS values them as employees and is invested in their continual professional growth.

FINDING

Two employee groups were often specifically cited as needing additional training, especially as it related to student behavioral issues: paraprofessionals and bus operators/attendants.

School-level staff reported a strong need for bus staff to have regularly scheduled training related to handling students who are misbehaving. Besides understanding how to keep students calm on the bus, it would be beneficial for them to be knowledgeable of the concepts behind functional behavioral analyses (FBAs) and positive behavior intervention plans (PBIPs) so that they are familiar with cues that prompt student disruptions as well as processes to calm them. This is particularly critical on buses on which students with emotional or behavioral disabilities (E/BD) ride. Recent school closures have led to some students with E/BD who formerly attended ESE center schools having to ride buses even longer to their newly assigned schools. These are students whose behavior is most likely to degrade when they are required to spend long times on the bus. Additionally, when students begin their day emotionally upset, it sets the tone for the rest of the day and disrupts learning, often not only their own, but that of others.

As noted earlier, the Transportation Department very purposefully offers training specific to ESE students for its operators and attendants. However, it is not targeted towards the particular needs of students with specific disabilities nor does it go into FBAs and PBIPs in the detail needed for transporting students with challenging behaviors long distances.

Opportunities for paraprofessionals to receive professional development related to their ESE assignments and the students for whom they are responsible are limited. BCPS provided Evergreen with examples of training for these employees. Examples include topics that would be beneficial to their understanding of how to support education in the classroom with ESE students such as:

- Structured Methods in Language Education (SMILE) Language to Literacy;



- the University of North Carolina's Project TEACCH Structured Instructional Strategies for teachers and paraprofessionals in self-contained classrooms;
- providing behavior supports;
- supporting the educational process; and
- professional Crisis Management Initial Training.

Training for paraprofessionals in BCPS is a part of the Master In-service Plan. However, without required attendance, it is unclear the extent to which paraprofessionals take advantage of these offerings, can be released from their schools, and have the opportunity to implement them with support so that they become part of their practice.

Discussions with staff in schools and areas that provide related services to students expressed the need for additional training for BCPS paraprofessionals. They identified topics similar to those mentioned above for transportation staff and crisis intervention. They also stated a need for paraprofessionals to be trained on other skills and knowledge that would better enable them to support the education of the students for whom they are responsible.

Specific examples staff offered of ESE paraprofessional development they felt would assist those staff members include reading and understanding IEPs and how to follow a behavior plan. These are key expectations of any ESE paraprofessional so that they would benefit from expanding their training content beyond student restraint to more frequently used expertise.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.5-7:

Expand the array of training offered to ESE paraprofessionals, and create targeted training for transportation staff in Broward County Public Schools.

Thinking beyond behavior to other important daily knowledge and skills which paraprofessionals need would enhance their daily support for student academic as well as behavioral performance. Such training may also begin to create a cadre of BCPS staff who are familiar with the challenges and rewards of working with ESE students and may desire a career as teachers.

The ESE professionals should work with the ESE trainer in the Transportation Department to integrate some of the knowledge and strategies that would enable them to be better prepared to ensure a calm environment on buses into training they already receive.

FINDING

One critical reason behind moving all of the ESE professional development staff into one location, the Arthur Ashe Center, was to unify staff as a department and better facilitate trainings. This consolidation also offered them the opportunity to be in the location where they would offer their trainings. However, the move has presented more challenges than it has



solved. Staff described barriers to effectiveness both during the move and ongoing. Process pieces were not well-thought out during the move, so they had to develop strategies as the move was transpiring.

Subsequent challenges related to the location continue without any district level leader having proactively and decisively addressing them. They include:

- There is a training room in the building. However, it is on the second floor and is secure, so trainers have to go downstairs with their swipe cards to let participants in at the same time that they are preparing for their presentations. Needless to say, that is disruptive as well as likely leaving some participants unable to attend once training has begun.
- Similarly, water and other drinks are not available to participants without the use of a swipe card, which visitors to the building do not have.
- In their former locations, trainers had staff that could assist them in moving their training materials. They do not in their current location.
- They lost access to training resources that were not moved from their previous locations.
- They can no longer book their previous facilities for training but are required to offer them at their current rather inaccessible site for the reasons given above.
- Bathrooms are unsightly and not well maintained.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.5-8:

Convene a representative group of professional development providers that includes those at the Arthur Ashe Center to meet with decision makers to identify all location-specific barriers to professional learning, develop specific strategies to ameliorate them, and set a timetable by which obstacles will be resolved.

In addition to other identified barriers to a comprehensive, connected professional development plan for educators related to ESE, these additional location-based barriers that have not yet been solved convey the message to both presenters and potential participants that ongoing, reinforced professional learning related to ESE in BCPS is not a priority. Although that is not the district's intent, it is certainly the message.



4.6 PARENT ENGAGEMENT



4.6 **PARENT ENGAGEMENT**

Educators and parents alike recognize that parent involvement plays a major role in the learning and instructional process. However, barriers on both sides often times prevent the most effective relationship between the two parties from developing.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics, the most common barriers to building healthy parent partnerships include the following:

- perceived lack of time on the part of parents and staff;
- lack of parent education to help with schoolwork;
- cultural or socioeconomic differences;
- language differences between parents and staff;
- parent attitudes about the school;
- staff attitudes toward parents; and
- concerns about safety in the area after school hours.

All too often the relationship between parents and educators becomes tenuous, and ultimately affects outcomes for students in the classroom. School districts are counteracting this by exploring new ways and models to better involve parents of students with disabilities in their child's education. For most districts, this involves taking small steps to improve methods of communication, fostering a higher level of awareness regarding the importance of parent involvement in the educational process, and putting in place policies and practices that ensure parent concerns can be addressed in a transparent, fair, effective, and timely manner.

State and federal laws provide the most basic groundwork for encouraging and ensuring parent involvement. For instance, IDEA allows parents to participate in all meetings concerning their child, examine their child's school records, request an independent evaluation, and agree or disagree with placement decisions.

The following examples provide background on these laws:

- At the federal level, parent participation is central to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) framework. IDEA states that:

Almost 30 years of research and experience has demonstrated that the education of children with disabilities can be made more effective by strengthening the role and responsibility of parents and ensuring that families of such children have meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children at school and at home.

- Also at the federal level, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)/No Child Left Behind (NCLB) supports the importance of parent involvement. ESEA/NCLB defines parental involvement as "the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities."



- At the state level, legislation also speaks to the importance of and requirements for parent involvement in a child's education. Select excerpts regarding parent involvement from Florida Statutes and Florida Administrative Code include:
 - Parents, students, families, educational institutions, and communities are collaborative partners in education, and each plays an important role in the success of individual students (Section 1000.03, F.S.).
 - Opportunities for parents to be involved in the process to address the student's areas of concern must be made available. In addition, there must be discussion with the parent of the student's responses to interventions, supporting data and potential adjustments to the interventions and of anticipated future action to address the student's learning and/or behavioral areas of concern. Documentation of parental involvement and communication must be maintained (Rule 6A-6.0331, F.A.C.).
 - Regarding parental participation in the development of Individual Educational Plans (IEPs) for students with disabilities:

Each school district shall establish procedures that provide the opportunity for one or both of the student's parents to participate in meetings and decisions concerning the IEP for the student. Parents of each student with a disability must be members of any group that makes decisions on the educational placement of their student...If neither parent can attend, the School shall use other methods to ensure parent participation, including individual or conference telephone calls (Rule 6A-6.03028, F.A.C.).

The BCPS Exceptional Student Education and Support Division has several methods in place for engaging parents of students with disabilities, as follows:

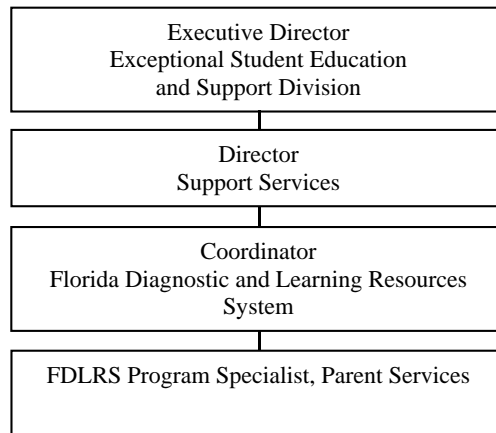
- **ESE Advisory Council** – The ESE Advisory Council is composed of parent volunteers and School Board-appointed members that meet monthly to discuss ESE issues in BCPS. The council has committees on autism and Down syndrome that also meet monthly and are focused more granularly on issues concerning these disabilities. According to district bylaws, the council serves to “inquire, inform, recommend and provide input on the effectiveness of educational programs and services for students with exceptionalities.” The ESE Advisory Council presents issues directly to the ESE Department's Executive Director, and makes motions to the BCPS School Board. The ESE Advisory Council is the strongest potential venue for affecting ESE services in BCPS.
- **ESE Specialists** – ESE Specialists are school-based staff who are the designated point of contact for both parents and staff regarding ESE activities and issues. According to the job description for this position, ESE Specialist duties include coordinating exceptional student parent conferences and conducting workshops for parents. ESE Specialists have the ability to reach out to either ESE Area Coordinators or escalate issues directly to district level ESE staff when addressing ESE parent concerns.



- **The Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System (FDLRS)** – FDLRS, housed in the ESE Department, provides parent training to parents of students of disabilities, among other activities. This acts as another opportunity to engage parents of students with disabilities. The only position within the ESE Department that is geared directly toward serving parents of students with disabilities is housed in this area. The FDLRS Parent Services Program Specialist, however, is associated with planning and conducting parent training and workshops versus acting as a dedicated parent liaison.

Exhibit 4.6-1 displays the BCPS ESE Department where FDLRS and the Parent Services Program Specialist is located.

Exhibit 4.6-1
BCPS ESE Department Organizational Chart
FDLRS Program/Parent Services



Source: Created by Evergreen Solutions, 2014.

- **Parent Teacher Association** – Many schools visited indicated that they have a parent on their PTSA who serves as the ESE representative for the school. However, the existence and role of this position varied from school to school. In all cases, this role was voluntary.

Although there are additional channels for parent engagement, these four were noted as the most frequent points of contact or engagement for parents of students with disabilities in BCPS. With an understanding of the most common points of contact for parents, a more granular analysis of parent engagement activities can be conducted, and recommendations and commendations subsequently made regarding BCPS's parent engagement efforts. Note that communications activities between BCPS and parents of students with disabilities are discussed in **Section 4.4 – Communications with all Stakeholders**.

A number of methods were used during the course of this study to collect and solicit feedback from parents of students with disabilities receiving ESE Services from Broward County Public Schools. These methods included:



- parent survey;
- peer school district comparison data;
- interviews;
- focus groups; and
- parent forums

A parent survey administered during the course of this study (between February 19 – March 14, 2014) provided Evergreen with quantitative and qualitative feedback from parents of students with disabilities receiving ESE Services from Broward County Public Schools. The survey included 23 questions, including one free response question where participants could provide general feedback on ESE Services. The survey received 1,029 responses from parents.

Exhibit 4.6-2 displays results for one of the survey statements from Evergreen’s parent survey. As can be seen, when presented with the statement, “Overall, I am satisfied with the special education services provided by BCPS,” 49.5 percent of parents indicated agreement with this statement, as opposed to 30.8 percent of parents who disagreed, and 19.7 percent who selected “neutral” or “not applicable.” While more parents are satisfied with ESE services than are dissatisfied, 30.8 percent disagreement represents a large portion of stakeholders that cannot be ignored. Survey data such as these are used throughout this section to support Evergreen’s recommendations.

Exhibit 4.6-2
Evergreen Parent Survey Statement on
Parent Satisfaction with ESE Services

Survey Statement: Overall, I am satisfied with the special education services provided by BCPS.						
Survey Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
Parents	20.9%	28.6%	13.7%	16.7%	14.1%	6.0%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.

Peer school district comparison data were also reviewed to uncover information about parent perceptions of ESE services in BCPS. **Exhibit 4.6-3** displays one comparison chart available for measurement in this area. Parent involvement rate is the percent of parents who perceive that schools facilitated parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities. These data are reported for parents of preschool children with disabilities and parents of children with disabilities in grades K-12, and are extracted from the respective state’s annual ESE survey.

As can be seen from comparison with Florida peer districts, the reported rates for parent satisfaction increased for pre-school and grades K-12 from the 2009-10 through 2011-12 school years. For preschool, the rate increased from 53 percent to 57 percent. Across all three years the BCPS rate exceeded the peer average rate for the preschool level; by 4 percent in 2009-10, by 4.6 percent in 2010-11, and by approximately 8 percent in 2011-12.



Exhibit 4.6-3
BCPS Peer Comparison
Parent Satisfaction Rates*

Florida Peer School District	Preschool			Change	Grades K-12			Change
	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12		2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	
Broward County Public Schools	53.0%	59.0%	57.0%	4.0%	35.0%	38.0%	39.0%	4.0%
Duval County Public Schools	39.0%	47.0%	39.0%	0.0%	28.0%	38.0%	32.0%	4.0%
Hillsborough County Public Schools	64.0%	64.0%	56.0%	-8.0%	43.0%	32.0%	31.0%	-12.0%
Miami-Dade County Public Schools	50.0%	57.0%	54.0%	4.0%	39.0%	35.0%	38.0%	-1.0%
Orange County Public Schools	42.0%	51.0%	46.0%	4.0%	30.0%	29.0%	48.0%	18.0%
School District of Palm Beach County	49.0%	<1%	39.0%	-10.0%	28.0%	21.0%	42.0%	14.0%
Pinellas County Public Schools	50.0%	53.0%	58.0%	8.0%	41.0%	27.0%	45.0%	4.0%
Peer Average	49.0%	54.4%	48.7%	-0.3%	34.8%	30.3%	39.3%	4.5%

Source: Florida Department of Education, 2013.

District	Preschool			Change	Grades K-12			Change
	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12		2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	
Broward	53.0%	59.0%	57.0%	4.0%	35.0%	38.0%	39.0%	4.0%
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	44.0%	NA	NA
Fairfax County Public Schools	NA	NA	NA	NA	79.0%	84.0%	69.4%	-9.6%
Gwinnett County Public Schools	NA	NA	NA	NA	32.0%	32.0%	44.0%	12.0%
Houston Independent School District	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Montgomery County Public Schools	NA	NA	NA	NA	35.0%	41.0%	43.0%	8.0%
Peer Average	NA	NA	NA	NA	48.7%	50.3%	52.1%	-9.6%

Source: Peer State Databases, 2014.

*The parent involvement rate is the number of parents who perceive that schools facilitated parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities, divided by the total number of responding parents.



For grades K-12, the rate increased from 35 percent to 39 percent from 2009-10 to 2011-12. Across all three years, the BCPS rate exceeded or met the peer average rate. The most dramatic difference was in 2010-11, when the BCPS rate was approximately 8 percent higher than the peer average. For 2009-10 and 2011-12, the BCPS rate was approximately equal to that of the peer average.

Survey data were not available at the preschool level for out-of-state comparison districts. However, for grades K-12, parent survey results were available from a few other school districts outside of Florida. The BCPS rate was approximately 14 percent lower than the peer average in 2009-10; 12 percent lower than the peer average in 2010-11; and approximately 13 percent lower than the peer state average in 2011-12.

Evergreen also reached out to peer schools districts to obtain data not readily available. **Exhibit 4.6-4** displays results from this outreach, which includes a brief description of how each district engages parents as well as of the structure of each district's ESE Advisory Council.

Evergreen scheduled 112 interviews with parents of students with disabilities at the BCPS K.C. Wright Administrative Building (600 SE Third Ave. Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33301) the week of March 10, 2014. The interviews allowed parents to share with Evergreen their main issues, concerns, or successes that their family had experienced during their child's time receiving ESE Services at Broward County Public Schools. A total of 84 parents attended their scheduled interview, while the remaining 28 did not.

In addition to these mechanisms for collecting parent feedback and comparing parent satisfaction, Evergreen conducted two parent forums (February 25, 2014, at South Plantation High School and March 10, 2014, at Blanche Ely High School) with approximately 255 participants; 37 personnel parent interviews, via phone or in person, outside of those scheduled during the week of March 10; and a focus group of 10 parents from the ESE Advisory Council.

These parent outreach activities, in tandem with survey results and comparison data, effectively allowed Evergreen to collect input from 1,415 parents. Input included recommendations for improving BCPS ESE services, concerns with services, as well as recognition of successful practices. The most prevalent trends from all forms of feedback are as follows:

- Communications was noted as perhaps the most significant concern among parents of students with disabilities. This was frequently related to the difficulty parents encounter in making contact with school-based staff regarding their child's IEP goals, services being provided, or instruction in the classroom. Parents noted that they often do not receive responses to emails or phone calls, and that in-person meetings are rare. Another example given by several parents is that there was no notification provided to them when their child's teacher was being changed, which they described as potentially detrimental to a child with special needs who has adapted to a specific learning environment.
- Accountability and transparency were the second greatest concern parents shared. Specifically, parents provided that while they appreciate the IEP document and its intentions, there is not a mechanism in place to ensure services, accommodations, and support outlined in the IEP is actually being delivered to their child.



Exhibit 4.6-4

Comparison of Advisory Council Structure and Parent Involvement Activity

Peer	Brief Description of how district engages parents of students with disabilities:	Brief Description of ESE Parent Advisory Team
State Peers		
Duval County Public Schools	First Friday with FINS - A conversation about inclusion; toll-free phone forum; provides parents an opportunity to share concerns and ideas with other families and FIN professionals. Parent Academy - promotes parental involvement and provides training, but is district-wide. ESE Parent resources are mostly through FDLRS.	Exceptional Student Education Advisory Committee; 7 Board Officers; 12 voting members; meetings are bi-monthly or less; meet in same location in the mornings.
Hillsborough County Public Schools	Parent training through FDLRS, and targeted resources available through the ESE website.	Superintendent's Advisory Council for the Education of Students with Disabilities; Council is not intended to be a forum to discuss individual and or isolated circumstances; meet bi-monthly or more at the same location, in the morning.
Miami-Dade County Public Schools	Parent training through FDLRS, and targeted resources available through the ESE website.	Superintendent's District Advisory Panel for Students with Disabilities; 31 members; monthly meetings from 3-5 in the afternoon. Publishes annual report on objectives and accomplishments.
Orange County Public Schools	Parent trainings available online and in-person; offered by a team of Parent Liaisons.	Associate Superintendent's Exceptional Community Leaders Roundtable; representatives from over 30 community providers; meet once per month
School District of Palm Beach County	Parent training through FDLRS, and targeted resources available through the ESE website.	ESE Advisory Council; 29 members; meet monthly in the morning at various locations.
Pinellas County Public Schools	Parent training through FDLRS, and targeted resources available through the ESE website. Online parent trainings available through ESE Parent Moodle site.	ESE Advisory Committee; meetings held bi-monthly at same location, in the late evening.
National Peers		
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	North Carolina Exceptional Children's Assistance Center (ECAC) provides workshops, parent educators, lending library.	None
Fairfax County Public Schools	Special Education Handbook that provides advice; Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) Program monthly parent workshops, meetings and other events; Parental Resource Center (PRC) workshops/events (ABA/PRC plan on 6 workshops/events in April)	Advisory Committee for Students with Disabilities; "a collaborative effort among school division personnel, parents, and other community representatives"; monthly meetings at the same location, additional resources to attend meetings are provided, meeting minutes are posted. 31 reps and board appointed members. Members are appointed and serve two-year terms. Two biggest annual activities: Produce annual report and FCPS staff provides a written response to the report; reviews the school division's Special Education Annual Plan.
Gwinnett County Public Schools	Parent Mentor Program; "Balanced Lunch Bunch" monthly parent support meetings	Special Education Citizen's Advisory Council
Houston Independent School District	Informational parent meetings held monthly at one location;	Parent Meeting and Advisory Committee; all meetings at same location. Meeting minutes made available in several languages.
Montgomery County Public Schools	Parent Involvement Workshops (3rd Tuesday every month); annual special education summit; parent academy;	Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC); meetings held once per month at same location; child care is made available.

Source: Created by Evergreen Solutions, 2014.



- ESE program design and offerings were shared as a third shortcoming. Parents provided that they are disappointed with the lack of programs for students with disabilities that fall somewhere in-between a cluster program and mainstream; this disappointment seems to compound as a parent's student progresses from elementary through high school. Further, continuity of staff serving students with disabilities was noted as a concern; parents understand that many staff choose to leave on their own accord, but are interested in actions the district can take to mitigate ESE staff turnover or relocation.
- Many parents commended individual teachers for their hard work and dedication to students with disabilities, indicating that there are many pockets of excellent practice within BCPS.

These trends, in addition to findings from peer comparison data and survey results, set the tone for the following recommendations to BCPS to improve parent engagement.

FINDING

The ESE Advisory Council, formed in 2002 (under BCPS Policy # 1.22 adopted November 13, 2001) is composed of seven Executive Board Members of the ESE Advisory Council, six of whom are elected at the end of the previous year from the current parent membership. The ESE Director is also included as an Executive Board Member. Any individual can become a member once they have attended two or more of the previous six meetings. Each BCPS School Board Member can also appoint a member. Currently, six of the seven Executive Board Member positions are filled, and there are approximately 30 active members. Executive Board Members and regular members are all voluntary positions receiving no compensation for their services.

The primary objective of the ESE Advisory Council is to inquire, inform, recommend, and provide input on the effectiveness of educational programs and services for students with exceptionalities. According to the Exceptional Student Education Advisory Council By-Laws established by the BCPS, the Council functions include:

- informing and advising the Broward County School District as to compliance or noncompliance with state laws, federal laws and School Board Policy regarding students with exceptionalities;
- evaluating the effectiveness of and providing input on Exceptional Student Education services, supports and programs;
- providing assistance by advocating for funding, services, and the rights of students with exceptionalities within the school district, State, County and community that results in a positive impact on student achievement;
- recommending or promoting changes to federal and state legislation and BCPS School Board policy, procedures and guidelines to ensure that the needs of students with exceptionalities are accommodated;



- advising on the allocation and/or expenditures of local, state, and federal funds and grants pertaining to ESE student education;
- representing the interests and concerns of ESE students with disabilities and their parents on county, state, local and School Board of Broward County committees and task forces;
- advocating for the purpose of ensuring that students with exceptionalities receive: support and services by qualified professionals and paraprofessionals; environments/facilities that comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA); appropriate modifications or accommodations for inclusion in school, community and extracurricular activities and clubs; and access to school extracurricular activities and clubs;
- promoting school-based training activities and community partnerships;
- collaborating with school advisory forums (SAFs); school advisory councils (SACs); District Advisory Council; ESOL, PTA, and school district advisories; committees; and other school/community organizations;
- providing information about federal, state, local and BCPS School Board issues to parents and/or guardians of students with exceptionalities which may have educational relevance; and
- providing a forum for parents with students with disabilities to discuss critical issues and concerns.

Based on stakeholder interviews and focus groups, it is apparent that the ESE Advisory Council has developed a reputation for ineffectiveness in serving its intended purpose. Both internal and external stakeholders shared that the ESE Advisory Council takes an “adversarial” approach to working with the district, as opposed to working constructively to address issues and realize change. Further, stakeholders described the ESE Advisory Council meetings as a “free for all,” “unstructured,” and “chaotic.” Many stakeholders shared that they discontinued participation in the ESE Advisory Council because it does not seem productive. Parent attendees shared their frustration that the ESE Advisory Council has become more of a platform for sharing frustrations rather than problem solving—often contributing to longer than necessary meeting times.

BCPS has bylaws in place to ensure that ESE Advisory Council Executive Board Members are knowledgeable on how to ensure meetings are effective. Specifically, Section 10 of the ESE Advisory Bylaws states the following:

Each Executive Board member shall sign off on a School Board approved statement which validates that the member accepts and will abide by proper professional conduct and the Nondiscrimination Policy Statement (4000.1). The statement will also acknowledge that the member has received training by staff, at a scheduled ESE Advisory Meeting or other designated meeting, on Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised, the Florida Sunshine Laws, Parliamentary Procedure and School Board Policies that affect the group of which he/she is a member.



As can be seen from this statement, the ESE Advisory Council is supposed to adhere to Robert's Rules of Order, a well-known and frequently used agreed upon set of rules for group discussion and decision making. Executive Board Members are also supposed to sign a form each year indicating they will abide by the proper professional conduct outlined herein. **Exhibit 4.6-5** provides of this form.

Exhibit 4.6-5
Validation Signature Form

<h2 style="margin: 0;">Template-Validation Signature Form</h2> <h3 style="margin: 10px 0 0 0;">ESE Advisory Council Statement of Acknowledgement</h3> <p style="margin: 20px 0 0 0;">As a member of the above named District Committee, I hereby acknowledge the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. I shall abide by proper professional conduct and the District's Nondiscrimination Policy 4000.1 while serving as a member of the above referenced District Committee.2. I have received district training on Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, Florida Sunshine Laws, and School Board Policy(ies), as they relate to my participation on the above referenced District committee. <div style="margin-top: 40px;"><p>Signature: _____</p><p>Date: _____</p></div>

Source: BCPS Bylaws, March 2014.



Despite Section 10 of the ESE Advisory bylaws and this acknowledgement form, it is apparent that the Council is not currently implementing Robert's Rules of Order effectively during meetings.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.6-1:

Implement of Robert's Rules of Order during BCPS ESE Advisory Council meetings to foster more productive and efficient outcomes.

The ESE Advisory Council should take steps to provide a more structured venue for meetings that will contribute to higher productivity, increase effectiveness, and promote more harmonious collaboration between the district and the Council in solving issues related to ESE services.

This agreed upon set of rules for group discussion and decision making will make meetings run smoother, garner respect from stakeholders for the meetings, and lead to increased rates of effectiveness in fulfilling the ESE Advisory Councils objectives.

A basic summary of Robert's Rules of Order are outlined in **Exhibit 4.6-6**.

Exhibit 4.6-6 Basic Summary of Robert's Rules of Order

The following summary will help you determine when to use the actions described in Robert's Rules:

- A main motion must be moved, seconded, and stated by the chair before it can be discussed.
- If you want to move, second, or speak to a motion, stand and address the chair.
- If you approve the motion as is, vote for it.
- If you disapprove the motion, vote against it.
- If you approve the idea of the motion but want to change it, amend it or submit a substitute for it.
- If you want advice or information to help you make your decision, move to refer the motion to an appropriate quorum or committee with instructions to report back.
- If you feel they can handle it better than the assembly, move to refer the motion to a quorum or committee with power to act.
- If you feel that there the pending question(s) should be delayed so more urgent business can be considered, move to lay the motion on the table.
- If you want time to think the motion over, move that consideration be deferred to a certain time.
- If you think that further discussion is unnecessary, move the previous question.
- If you think that the assembly should give further consideration to a motion referred to a quorum or committee, move the motion be recalled.
- If you think that the assembly should give further consideration to a matter already voted upon, move that it be reconsidered.
- If you do not agree with a decision rendered by the chair, appeal the decision to the assembly.
- If you think that a matter introduced is not germane to the matter at hand, a point of order may be raised.
- If you think that too much time is being consumed by speakers, you can move a time limit on such speeches.
- If a motion has several parts, and you wish to vote differently on these parts, move to divide the motion.

Source: University of Louisiana at Monroe, "Parliamentary Procedure for Meetings" (<http://tinyurl.com/n2qluuo>), 2014.



FINDING

Access to ESE Advisory Council meetings is a concern for parents wishing to attend. Monthly meetings are typically held at one location in the district (Piper High School), which is convenient only for those stakeholders in the Sunrise area of Broward County, but is a long distance to travel for those residents residing in south Broward County (e.g., Miramar or Hollywood) and even those residing in north Broward County (e.g., Pompano or Highlands) .

Dates and times of the most recent ESE Advisory Council meetings are as follows:

- October 30th, 2013 - 6:30-9:30 PM - Piper High School
- November 20th, 2013 - 6:30-9:30 PM - Piper High School
- December 18th, 2013 - 6:30-9:30 PM - Piper High School
- January 22nd, 2014 - 6:30-9:30 PM - Piper High School
- February 19th, 2014 - 6:30-9:30 PM - Piper High School
- March 12th, 2014 - 6:30-9:30 PM - Piper High School
- April 23rd, 2014 - 6:30-9:30 PM - Piper High School
- May 28th, 2014 - 6:30-9:30 PM - Piper High School
- June 25th, 2014 - 6:30-9:30 PM - Piper High School

Stakeholders suggested through both survey comments and interviews that the location of the ESE Advisory Council meeting be moved each month to accommodate parents in other areas of the District. Parents also shared that, while these meetings are accessible by phone call-in, it would be beneficial to live stream the ESE Advisory Council meetings over the Internet—a technology already in use for streaming School Board meetings.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.6-2:

Identify and schedule alternate meeting locations of the ESE Advisory Council and live stream Council meetings to ensure parents across Broward County have an opportunity to participate.

Alternating locations will allow parents to attend the meetings that may not otherwise be able to attend. Further, offering a live stream of the meetings will provide yet another channel for parents to participate. While a phone bridge is available, a live stream would be more effective as parents can become aquatinted to participant's names and faces. Recordings of these meetings can also be archived for 24/7 access via the Web.

FINDING

Parents routinely bring forward issues to be addressed during ESE Advisory Council meetings. When Evergreen inquired as to how many issues are brought forward, on average, during any given month, respondents indicated that “about 20 to 25” issues are brought forward each month. When Evergreen requested historical information on the issues brought forward, respondents referred to the meeting minutes from the previous month's meetings. In order to gather



information on issues brought forward, such as topic and frequency, Evergreen reviewed ESE Advisory Council meeting minutes from November 2012 through present; note that meeting minutes for January and February 2014 meetings were not available.

Exhibit 4.6-7 provides a sampling of the parent issues brought forward, quoted from meeting minutes. As can be seen, a wide range of topics were brought forward. Evergreen also reviewed meeting minutes for follow-up on each of these issues, in order to determine if a final resolution had been reached on the issues; however, limited information was available on issue close-out, and it was not easily apparent what issues were first and foremost on the ESE Advisory Council priority list. This finding correlated with what many parents shared about the ineffectiveness of the ESE Advisory Council in regards to losing sight of issues versus tracking issues through resolve.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.6-3:

Collect information on issues brought forward by parents during ESE Advisory Council meetings and maintain a list of priority issues.

In the September 2012 ESE Advisory Council meeting the following was stated: “The Advisory addresses systemic issues of ALL ESE 33,000 students. Looks for the commonality of issues and looks for ways to have them addressed. Unity should be the goal of the ESE Advisory.” This is an excellent proclamation by and council member on how the ESE Advisory Council should operate; however, it is apparent from anecdotes of parents attending the ESE Advisory Council meetings and from review of meeting minutes that, at any given time, the priority issues of the council are not clear and they seem to jump from issue to issue without reaching closure.

This list should include the topic of the issue (e.g. “transportation,” “field trips,” “IEP accountability”); the date the issue arose; a brief description of the issue; if a school based issue, the school at which the issue occurred; and notes on progress toward solving the issue. These data can be analyzed for trends emerging in the district, and will act as a more powerful tool in conveying and tracking issues; ultimately increasing accountability for the district and the council. The issue list should be included at the end of each month’s meeting minutes, which will establish consistency from month to month. As one parent stated, “if I could see just one issue solved per month as a result of ESE Advisory Council efforts, I would be more inclined to participate.”

The Advisory Committee for Students with Disabilities for Fairfax County Public Schools, as an example, uses this approach to develop overarching, districtwide issues which are submitted in the form of an annual report to the Board of Education. District staff then responds to this report in writing, and publish the report to the District’s website. This report acts as a transparent accountability tool between the District and parents of students with disabilities. These reports, dating back to 2004, can be found at <http://www.fcps.edu/dss/ACSD/annual-report.shtml>, and may offer the BCPS ESE Advisory Council a model for tracking issues. The Miami-Dade County Public Schools Superintendent’s District Advisory Panel for Students with Disabilities also produces an annual report, but it follows a different format and was last released for the 2010-11 school year.



Exhibit 4.6-7
ESE Advisory Council Meetings
Issues Brought Forward by Parents

September 2012
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents “suggested a Training/Workshop from the district at an ESE Advisory Meeting. -What can parents expect from an ESE Specialist? -Review the Easy IEP. -FAQ of ESE questions -Titles on IEP who is in what role and what do they do?”
November 2012
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Someone suggested that the district entice parents to fill out the survey by: example: a lunch with Mr. Runcie.” “A parent mentioned that RTI is not being used for the right reason. It is used to delay the process for identification.”
February 2013
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Transportation is a concern. Denise mentioned that more time would be allowed getting ready for transportation.” The Facebook issue was brought up and the members of the Advisory want to keep the group with monitoring and guidelines.
June 2013
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Transparency was a big concern. The Parents want transparency from the ESE department, district and School board.” "The ESE Students social life is filled with bullying." "Parents Are moving their child in private school because of no collaboration and disregard from the ESE Depart to their concerns. IEPs Are not in compliance" "A Parent from Cross Creek Mentioned that no one at that school is answering their questions or phone calls regarding their concerns with the consolidation of Sunset, Whispering Pines and Cross Creek."
December 2013
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Someone mentioned on getting a committee to get involved in putting together a group of volunteers that would be volunteering in ESE classrooms but required some training by the district because of the nature of the volunteer needs. Lynda Adderley would take on this task force.” “Since the field trip seems to be a systemic issue we created a “field trip survey” on our webpage. “A parent mentioned that her daughter (which has a mild disability) was to be secluded on a field trip with an aid and 2 other ESE students. It was prevented but the parent had to intervene in favor of the student.”

Source: ESE Advisory Council, 2014.

FINDING

Understanding stakeholder needs is critical to ensuring their satisfaction. With this in mind, each year BCPS FDLRS conducts a Parent Needs Assessment Survey to identify the training needs and desires of ESE parents. The survey is distributed one time per year through the district’s e-blast system (e-news), as well as posted on the BCPS website. Parents must complete and return the survey in hard copy format, and then BCPS staff manually compiles the results.



Exhibit 4.6-8 displays a copy of the most recent (2013-14) Needs Assessment Survey. As can be seen, the survey asks parents to:

- share basic demographic information;
- provide training topics they are in most need of in the coming school year;
- give recommendations for speakers or materials; and
- suggest the best time of day for them to attend trainings.

However, the Needs Assessment Survey does not include “School Name” in the demographics section—a question that could provide valuable insight on which trainings are being requested in certain parts of the district. A concentration of requests in one specific area may allude to bigger issues for BCPS.

Based on survey results, ESE staff delivers, at minimum, the ten most requested trainings during the coming school year. All trainings are delivered in person either by BCPS staff or by a contractor specializing in the specific types of training requested. Training evaluation sheets are also provided to participants to submit feedback on the trainings; an excellent tool to have in place to learn how to improve trainings.

Once training needs are collected and planned, FDLRS produces a semester-based calendar of all ESE parent education workshops being offered. **Exhibit 4.6-9** provides an example of this calendar for the most recent semester. As can be seen, trainings are offered at a number of locations and times, and a number of topics are addressed. It was noted that some trainings delivered are not attended by any parent; simply no one shows up.

Evergreen’s Parent Survey conducted as part of this study included two questions on these workshops. **Exhibit 4.6-10** displays the results of these survey statements.

Based on the results, it can be determined that:

- Overall, 39.7 percent of respondents have attended parent workshops offered by BCPS ESE services to learn more about the ESE program, compared to 21.4 percent who have not, and 38.9 percent who indicated “Neutral” or “Not Applicable.”
- As shown, 38.3 percent of respondents are in agreement that BCPS ESE parent workshops provide useful information, compared to just 4.9 percent who disagree and 56.8 percent who indicated “neutral” or “not applicable”.

These results shed positive light on ESE parent workshops. Based on this feedback, it appears that training attendees find the workshops useful; however, the large percentage (56.8 percent) of parents indicating “Neutral” (23.2 percent) or “Not Applicable” (33.6 percent) may mean that many parents are not hearing about the trainings, cannot or do not attend, or that they do not feel overwhelmingly pleased or dissatisfied with the content delivered during trainings. Although communications could most likely be improved (addressed in **Section 4.4 – Communication with all Stakeholders**), the BCPS model for collecting input from parents through the Needs Assessment Survey, and then delivering the most requested trainings is pleasing to those that attend.



Exhibit 4.6-8

BCPS ESE

2013-14 Needs Assessment Survey

Name of Parent/Guardian (optional): _____

Phone number: _____ Email: _____

Exceptional Student Education

- ☐ Accommodations & Modifications
- ☐ Assistive Technology:
 - ☐ Tools to help with Writing
 - ☐ Technology Tools
- ☐ Inclusion Strategies
- ☐ Individualized Education Program (IEP)
- ☐ Effective parent/teacher conferences

Curriculum

- ☐ The Common Core Sunshine State Standards (soon to be Florida Standard)
- ☐ Technology Tools available in schools
- ☐ Helping my child with:
 - ☐ reading ☐ writing ☐ math ☐ homework ☐ other (specify) _____
- ☐ Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT)/Accommodations
- ☐ The Florida Alternate Assessment (for students who are not taking the FCAT)

Transition

- ☐ Transition from Pre-K to Kindergarten
- ☐ Transition from Elementary to Middle School
- ☐ Transition from Middle to High School
- ☐ Transition from School to Adult Life
- ☐ Self-Determination (making choices, setting goals, planning)
- ☐ Trusts and Special Needs Planning

Health & Wellness

- ☐ Brain Gym® (program of physical movements to enhance learning and performance in ALL areas)
- ☐ Creative Relaxation & Stress Management Techniques
- ☐ Helping my Child Understand Sexuality Issues
- ☐ Nutrition
- ☐ Yoga Therapy

Additional Topics

- ☐ Behavior Management/Positive Behavior Supports
- ☐ Bullying Prevention
- ☐ Improving Communication with My Child
- ☐ Improving Your Child's Self-Esteem
- ☐ Improving Your Child's Social Skills
- ☐ Self-Regulation (child's capacity to plan, guide and monitor his/her own behavior)
- ☐ Helping my child cope with Test Anxiety
- ☐ HOT DOCS (Helping our Toddlers, Developing our Children's Skills)
- ☐ PreK topics _____

My Recommendations

Local, state, or national presenters: _____

Parent resources / books: _____

Comments: _____

What is the best time(s) for you to attend the ESE Parent Education Workshops?

- ☐ Afternoons (12:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.)
- ☐ Evenings (6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.)
- ☐ Mornings (9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.)
- ☐ Saturday (9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.)
- ☐ After School (4:00pm to 5:00pm)
- ☐ Prior to ESE Advisory Council Meeting (5:00pm -6:00pm)

Source: Broward County Public Schools, 2014.



Exhibit 4.6-9 FDLRS Parent Workshop Calendar

April 2014						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 HOT DOGS (4) 6-8pm Maplewood El	2 Active Parenting PreK (1) 6-8pm Horizon El.	3 Active Parenting Now (1) 6:30-8:30pm Sheridan Hills El.	4	5 "Weekend with the Experts" Understanding Problem Behaviors and Creating Real Life Strategies 9:30 to 12:00 Indian Ridge MS
6	7	8 HOT DOGS (5) 6-8pm Maplewood El	9 Positive Discipline: Mutual Respect & Problem Solving 6-7:30 Sheridan Hills El.	10 Active Parenting Now (2) 6:30-8:30pm Sheridan Hills El.	11	12 Surrogate Parent Training 8-10am BSO Plantation
13 FAMILY FUN NIGHT; Write captions for family photos!	14	15 FDLRS Library Open Lab 9:30a-12:30 Arthur Ashe Campus HOT DOGS (6) 6-8pm Maplewood El	16 Active Parenting PreK (1) 6-8pm Horizon El.	17 Active Parenting Now (3) 6:30-8:30pm Sheridan Hills El.	18 NO SCHOOL	19
20 FCAT TESTING THIS WEEK HAPPY EASTER	21 Be sure your child is well rested!	22 HOT DOGS (7) 6-8pm Maplewood El	23 Parent Advisory 6:30-9 Piper High	24 Active Parenting Now (4) 6:30-8:30pm Sheridan Hills El.	25 Surrogate Parent Training 9:30-11:30am Pre-Function Rm - KCW	26
27 FCAT CONTINUES	28	29	30 Active Parenting PreK (1) 6-8pm Horizon El.			

Source: Broward County Public Schools, 2014.

Exhibit 4.6-10 Evergreen Survey Statements on ESE Parent Training

Survey Group	SURVEY STATEMENT					
	I have attended parent workshops offered by BCPS ESE services to learn more about the ESE program.			BCPS ESE parent workshops provide useful information.		
	Strongly Agree/Agree	Neutral/NA	Disagree/Strongly Disagree	Strongly Agree/Agree	Neutral/NA	Disagree/Strongly Disagree
Parents	39.7%	38.9%	21.4%	38.3%	56.8%	4.9%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.



Understanding this, there are still some improvements that could be made to the Needs Assessment Survey and delivery of training to streamline the process.

Feedback from both Evergreen's survey and from parent interviews aligned in that BCPS training provided to parents of students with disabilities is informative and addresses the areas parents are most interested in. BCPS should strive to continue this model of assessing parent's needs, designing and delivering training that meets those needs, and collecting feedback from parents after each training is delivered.

COMMENDATION

Broward County Public Schools is commended for assessing parent training needs, and delivering on those needs.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.6-4:

Improve the Needs Assessment Survey by adding "School Name" to the demographics section of the survey tool, offering the survey in an electronic format, and ensuring that the calendar of workshops is distributed in a timely manner before the beginning of each semester.

The simple change of adding "School Name" to the Needs Assessment Survey demographics section will allow the district to analyze requests by region or school, and gain useful insight to tailor the training needs for certain areas. These data may also yield insight into weaknesses among schools in conveying information on ESE services to parents.

FINDING

Further, there are many survey tools on the Internet that are free to use, and would allow BCPS to deliver a digital version of the Needs Assessment Survey to stakeholders (e.g. SurveyMonkey, QuestionPro, or Google Forms). The most obvious advantage is that BCPS staff then do not have to aggregate all the hard copies returned, and can quickly assess aggregated survey feedback in real-time. This would free up resources for other activities. As one example, Palm Beach County Schools uses an electronic survey form for their Parent Needs Assessment Survey.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.6-5:

Prepare multimedia versions of those trainings requested or delivered frequently.

All workshops are delivered in person; however, in some instances no one shows up. FDLRS would benefit from recording or creating multimedia versions of the more frequently requested trainings and placing them on the district's website for 24/7 access. As technology has improved, producing digital trainings has become increasingly more cost-effective, if not free.



FINDING

Parents of children with disabilities who are preparing to enter Broward County Public Schools and are looking for information on ESE services are currently directed by the Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services and the ESE Advisory Council to the Florida Department of Education's (FLDOE) introductory guide on ESE services, titled "A Parent's Introduction to Exceptional Student Education in Florida" (<http://www.fl DOE.org/e se/pdf/ESE Parent.pdf>). Parents of students with disabilities already attending BCPS schools, but looking to augment their knowledge of ESE services in the state and BCPS are also directed to this guide as a starting point. Published in 2012 by the Florida Department of Education's Bureau of Exceptional Student Education and Student Services, the guide is focused on informing stakeholders on state-level ESE policy, procedures, and rights.

Exhibit 4.6-11 displays the Table of Contents for this guide. As can be seen, the guide contains useful information on ESE services, but provides little to no information on processes or additional services at the local education agency level. According to interviewees, at one point BCPS published its own parent ESE information manual which provided more specific information on ESE services in BCPS. FLDOE's manual does not provide information on navigating the BCPS ESE system and services.

Many of the complaints shared by parents during interviews were that they were left on their own to learn and educate themselves on BCPS ESE services, and that a comprehensive information resource would be extremely helpful throughout the lifecycle of their child's BCPS attendance. While it is apparent that steps have been taken to provide more resources to parents, the information is not streamlined and available in one location. For instance, the ESE Advisory Council shared a document titled "Where to go to get help," with useful contact information for ESE parents, and Evergreen located a "Parents' Guide to Broward Schools" on the district's parent website, but this contained limited information on ESE services and was dated 2012-13. This website also stated that the "Parents' Guide to Broward Schools 2013-2014" is "coming soon," despite it being half-way through the 2013-14 school year. These resources act as a great starting point for creating a more comprehensive document, but more is needed to introduce parents to BCPS services.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.6-6:

Develop a comprehensive ESE Services Manual for parents that provides information on ESE services specific to BCPS, and supplements information in the FDOE Parent Introduction Guide.

BCPS should develop an ESE Services Manual for parents that supplements the FDOE Parent Introduction Guide and provides: additional information on how parents can navigate the BCPS system; a roadmap of services available by grade level and what to be ready for (e.g. transition planning in 5th grade); and an overview of supports by disability. This document should also contain up to date information on additional supports available to parents, such as the ESE Advisory Council and subcommittees and community service providers; and parent contacts and activities. This manual should be updated annually, and also align with information presented on the website.



Exhibit 4.6-11
FDOE Parent ESE Guide
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Source: Florida Department of Education, 2014.



Exhibit 4.6-12 displays the Table of Contents from a local education agency parent guidebook, which would act as an excellent template for preparing BCPS's manual.

Exhibit 4.6-12
ESE Parent Manual
Example Table of Contents

Dear Parents	pages 1-2
Special Education - What You Should Know	page 3-4
Starting the Referral Process	page 5
Michigan Special Education One Pager: Timeline for Initials	page 6
Eligibility for Special Education Services	page 7
The Initial Evaluation Process - MET	page 8
Review of Eligibility	page 9
Developing the Individualized Education Program (IEP)	pages 9-11
If You Have a Problem	page 12
Facilitation/Mediation	pages 12-13
Special Education Supports	pages 14-15
Special Circumstances	pages 16-18
<u>APPENDICES</u>	
Helpful Hints: Making the Most of the IEP Process	Appendix A
Possible IEP Accommodations/Modifications/Addendum Supports Checklist	Appendix B
Related Information	Appendix C
Medicaid Overview	Appendix D
Special Education Acronyms	Appendix E
Glossary	Appendix F
Resources for Parents	Appendix G
WISD PAC Resources and Information	Appendix H
My Personal Directory	Appendix I
WISD Special Education Administrators & PAC Representatives	Appendix J

Source: Washtenaw Intermediate School District, 2014 (<http://wash.k12.mi.us/files/speced/parenthandbook.pdf>)

FINDING

Parent volunteers represent an excellent and many times untapped asset for school districts. Barriers to successful parent involvement programs include lack of staff to coordinate and track volunteers at the school level; hesitation on the part of staff to allow volunteers into the classroom; and disconnects between schools and families, where parents believe that they are not welcome.



According to the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Educational Research and Improvement:

When families are involved in their children's education, children earn higher grades and receive higher scores on tests, attend school more regularly, complete more homework, demonstrate more positive attitudes and behaviors, graduate from high school at higher rates, and are more likely to enroll in higher education than students with less involved families...

If families are to work with schools as partners in the education of their children, schools must provide them with the opportunities and support they need to become involved. Too often schools expect families to do it all alone. Developing effective partnerships with families requires that all school staff (administrators, teachers, and support staff) create a school environment that welcomes parents and encourages them to raise questions and voice their concerns as well as to participate appropriately in decision making. Developing partnerships also requires that school staff provide parents with the information and training they need to become involved and that they reach out to parents with invitations to participate in their children's learning... Some of the programs involve parents in school planning and governance activities and as volunteers.

An analysis of more than 25 public opinion surveys by Public Agenda—a nonpartisan public opinion research organization—found that 65 percent of teachers say their students would do better in school if their parents were more involved, and 72 percent of parents feel that children whose parents are not involved sometimes fall through the cracks in school (Johnson & Duffett, 2003).

Although there was some positive feedback shared regarding parents volunteering, the majority of ESE parents continually shared that it is too difficult to become a volunteer in their child's school, yet they have skills and abilities that would benefit their student and potentially others.

Several comments from parents in regards to volunteering included the following:

- *...I feel the school says they want volunteers and commend the volunteer's time, but I have signed up for 2 years now and have yet to volunteer. I don't know who is volunteering but I feel like I am discouraged from stepping foot behind the gates.*
- *...Parents of ESE students should be allowed to volunteer as an aid in classrooms with ESE students.*

Positives regarding the parent volunteer program were also shared by parents of students with disabilities:

- *...My husband and I volunteer over 50 hours a month to help our school. It is a joy to be at the school with the children...*



Evergreen's parent survey also addressed this area. **Exhibit 4.6-13** shares the results from the survey statement "My child's school provides outreach to encourage parents of students with disabilities to participate in school programs, IEP team meetings, and/or other activities." As can be seen from the exhibit, 59.6 percent of parents are in agreement with the survey statement, whereas only 17.2 percent of parents disagree with the statement. With this level of agreement, it appears that negative issues with parent volunteers are isolated incidents, but nevertheless they exist in BCPS.

Exhibit 4.6-13
Evergreen Survey Statement on
Parent Outreach and Participation

Survey Statement: My child's school provides outreach to encourage parents of students with disabilities to participate in school programs, IEP team meetings, and/or other activities.						
Survey Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
Parents	27.4%	32.2%	16.3%	11.1%	6.1%	6.9%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.

Parent volunteer programs are school-based in BCPS, and left in control of school-based administration. This leads to inequalities between volunteer opportunities at schools throughout the district. Evergreen found that schools open to parent volunteers were using the volunteers for lunch room detail, in the classrooms to assist with students, and to plan after school activities, to name a few. However, schools did not consistently track volunteer data, such as the number of volunteer hours donated each month or year.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.6-7:

Conduct a review of school-based volunteer programs and opportunities to ensure that all schools are capitalizing on their pool of potential volunteers.

The presence of a good volunteer program was noted over and over again as a tool schools could use to drastically improve transparency of ESE services, as well as a potential path for schools to increase resources to better serve students with disabilities. BCPS should conduct a review of volunteer programs in BCPS schools to determine if BCPS schools are utilizing parent volunteers to the extent possible, and to highlight effective volunteer programs throughout the district.

FINDING

IDEA and corresponding state statutes and rules detail procedures to be followed in the event there is disagreement between the parents of a student with a disability and the school district, or when any party believes that a district has violated a requirement of the law regarding exceptional student education. The two formal avenues for conflict resolution are state complaint investigations and due process hearings (34 CFR § 300.140).



The results of state complaint investigations and due process hearings conducted during the time period from July 2011 through February 2014 were analyzed to identify the topics or requirements that were most frequently at issue. State complaint results were reviewed to determine if there was a finding of noncompliance requiring corrective action; due process hearings were reviewed to identify the prevailing party.

Exhibit 4.6-14 presents the results for the 18 state complaint investigations completed during this time period. Complaints related to gifted education and those for which the Department of Education issued a closure letter declining to investigate are not included. The nature or topic of the alleged violation and the outcome are provided. Issues for which a finding of noncompliance was made are designated by an “x”; those for which there was not a finding of noncompliance but concerns were raised to the extent that FLDOE required specific actions are designated by “[x]”; and those for which there was no evidence of noncompliance are identified by a “✓.” For example, complaint 5 investigated two issues: Noncompliance was not found with regard to IEP development, but there was a finding of noncompliance related to IEP implementation.

Exhibit 4.6-14
BCPS State Complaint Investigations
July 2011 through February 2014

Complaint	IEP Development	IEP Implementation	*Parent Involvement	Evaluation/Reevaluation	**Other
1	✓✓✓		✓		
2	✓✓✓✓	x		x✓	
3				xx	
4			✓	x	
5	✓	x			
6	x		✓	✓	
7	✓	✓			
8		✓✓	✓✓		
9	x	x			
10	✓✓		✓✓	✓	✓
11		✓			
12	✓				
13	✓✓	x✓	✓✓		
14	✓✓			✓	
15	✓	[x] [x]		x	
16	✓		✓		
17	✓✓				✓✓
18			✓		
Total Issues	22	11	11	9	3

Source: Created by Evergreen Solutions, 2014.

* Includes participation in IEP team meetings and parent access to student’s educational records

**Functional Behavior Assessment/Positive Behavior Intervention Plan (FBA/PBIP); matrix of services funding document; participation in assessment

Within the 18 state complaint investigations completed between the 2011-12 school year and the time of this evaluation, 56 discreet allegations were made. The category with the greatest number of issues was IEP Development (22), followed by IEP Implementation and Parent Involvement



(11 each), Evaluation/Reevaluation (nine), and Other (three). For the purposes of this finding, Parent Involvement includes issues related to parent participation in meetings, parent input into IEP content, and parental access to student records. The three issues under the category of “Other” were: functional behavior assessment/positive behavior intervention plan (FBA/BIP); the matrix of services funding document; and the student’s participation in the state assessment program.

Findings of noncompliance or significant concerns were identified in five of the 18 complaint investigations (33 percent) related to 13 of the 56 discreet issues (23 percent). The allegations for which noncompliance or concern was most likely to be identified were related to IEP Implementation (6 of 11, or 55 percent) and Evaluation/Reevaluation (five of nine, or 56 percent). Only two of the 22 allegations related to IEP development resulted in findings of noncompliance (nine percent), and there were no findings of noncompliance related to Parent Involvement or within the category of “Other.”

Exhibit 4.6-15 presents the results for the ten due process hearings for which final orders were issued during this time period. The subject(s) at issue for and the prevailing party for each issue are provided. Within the ten due process hearings for which final orders were issued between the 2011-12 school year and the time of this evaluation, 17 discreet allegations were made. The greatest number (8 of 17, or 47 percent) were related to IEP development, including whether the IEP provide a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment (FAPE in the LRE). Four were related to evaluation and eligibility (24 percent), and three were related to disciplinary and behavioral issues (18 percent). The remaining two issues were related to IEP implementation and general procedures. The district was the prevailing party in eight of the ten hearings (80 percent); the parent prevailed in two (20 percent).

Exhibit 4.6-15
BCPS Due Process Hearing
Summary of Issues and Prevailing Parties
July 2011 through February 2014

Due Process Hearing	At Issue	Prevailing Party	
		Parent	District
1	Independent Educational Evaluation		✓
2	Independent Educational Evaluation		✓
3	FAPE in the LRE		✓
4	Placement		✓
5	Eligibility		✓
6	FAPE – Transportation	✓	
7	Independent Educational Evaluation		✓
8	IEP Implementation		✓
	IEP Educational Benefit		✓
	IEP Least Restrictive Environment		✓
	IEP State Assessment		✓
	Procedural Violations		✓
9	Transfer Student – Comparable Services	✓	
	Change in Placement – Discipline	✓	
	Manifestation Determination	✓	
	FBA/PBIP	✓	
10	FAPE in the LRE		✓

Source: Created by Evergreen Solutions, 2014.



Based on the analysis of state complaint investigations and due process hearings, it is apparent that the parent is rarely the “winner” in either state complaints or due process hearings. This implies that the problem isn’t the district being noncompliant, which would be solved by following the law, but rather the problem is in communication and relationships currently present between the district and parents. The question then becomes how the district can improve its outreach and interaction with parents of students with disabilities, so that issues are not escalated to the level of a state complaint investigation or due process hearing.

In addition to analyzing the ratio of parent versus district favored outcomes in state complaint investigations and due process hearings, Evergreen conducted an analysis of the ratio of special education students to state complaints. **Exhibit 4.6-16** displays the results of this analysis, which shows the total number of state complaint reports compared to the total ESE population over a three-year period. The ratio is attained by dividing the number of complaints by total ESE student population.

As can be seen, BCPS had 6 complaints in 2010, 1 complaint in 2011, and 8 complaints in 2012. The ratio for BCPS exceeds the average peer ratio in 2010 and 2012, but is substantially lower than the peer average ratio in 2011. In 2012 it was substantially higher than the peer average, indicating that when adjusted for enrollment levels, BCPS had a greater number of state complaint reports than its peers.

Exhibit 4.6-16
Comparison of State Complaint Report Ratios

Peer	2010			2011			2012		
	Complaints	ESE Pop.	Ratio	Complaints	ESE Pop.	Ratio	Complaints	ESE Pop.	Ratio
Broward County Public Schools	6	30,777	0.00019	1	31,014	0.00003	8	31,228	0.00026
Duval County Public Schools	5	16,119	0.00031	2	16,310	0.00012	3	16,336	0.00018
Hillsborough County Public Schools	6	29,153	0.00021	5	27,580	0.00018	3	28,040	0.00011
Miami-Dade County Public Schools	0	38,215	0.00000	1	35,023	0.00003	1	35,424	0.00003
Orange County Public Schools	8	22,878	0.00035	10	21,599	0.00046	4	20,132	0.00020
School District of Palm Beach County	3	26,199	0.00011	1	24,766	0.00004	5	25,129	0.00020
Pinellas County Public Schools	2	13,520	0.00015	2	13,482	0.00015	2	12,432	0.00016
Average	4.3	25,266	0.00017	3.1	24,253	0.00013	3.7	24,103	0.00015

Source: Created by Evergreen Solutions, 2014.

Based on analysis of outcomes for state complaint investigations and due process hearings, as well as a comparison of state complaint report ratios, it seems that there are more complaints brought forward in BCPS than in other districts, but a large majority of these complaints do not lead to an outcome that suggests BCPS is noncompliant. Therefore, it seems that there is a potential breakdown in communications and relationships between parents and the district which 1.) does not allow for informal complaints to be handled promptly and effectively 2.) leads to an unnecessary number of informal complaints being escalated by parents to more formal processes

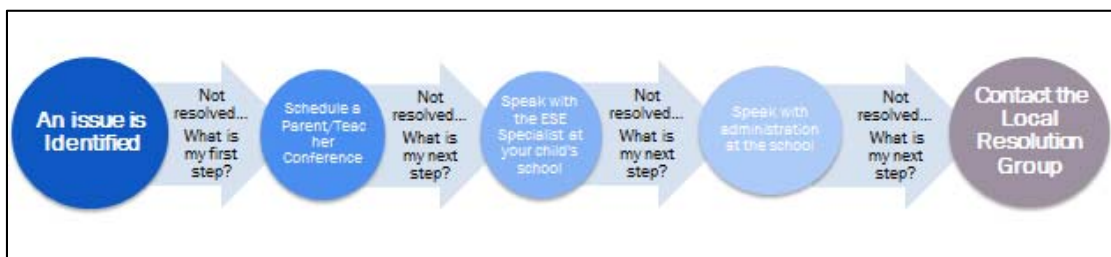


3.) makes parents feel that the only way they can solve issues is to escalate complaints to the state level.

The number of complaints escalated to the state level is still low compared to the number of ESE students present in BCPS. However, when complaints reach this level, they many times act as a catalyst in driving more distance between the district and parents, and could be addressed more effectively to avoid escalation.

Exhibit 4.6-17 displays the current process an ESE issue goes through in BCPS as it is escalated. As can be seen, there are several levels through which the issue must progress. Complicated by varying degrees of responsiveness at the school and regional levels, as well as a lack of accountability mechanisms at each level, this process can be lengthy and can lead to some issues being dragged out for many weeks. Based on anecdotal evidence from BCPS stakeholders, this process is not effective as it leaves room for the “ball to be dropped,” so to speak, as an issue moves between hands.

Exhibit 4.6-17
BCPS ESE Issue Resolution Work Flow



Source: BCPS Exceptional Student Education and Support Division, 2014.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.6-8:

Develop stringent business rules for issue escalation, and implement a tracking system for entering and tracking parent issues through closure.

In the project management and information systems industries, issue tracking and resolve time is a main performance metric used to measure client satisfaction. No problem or issue is too small when it comes to a child’s education, and the district must show a good faith effort to resolve all parent complaints in a timely and effective manner. The district should implement specific business rules that define which level issues should be solved at. There are undoubtedly issues that should immediately move on through to the local resolution group or district staff without a need for involvement of staff at lower escalation points. Conversely, some issues should be handled at the school-level, and setting clear parameters will ensure staff are clear on their responsibilities.



FINDING

The Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services does not have a dedicated staff member responsible for contact with parents, ensuring parent issues are resolved, and for promoting the importance of parent involvement and engagement throughout the district. These duties are currently seen as a responsibility of the school-based ESE Specialists. While the ESE Specialist should maintain some level of responsibility for communicating with parents, the lack of a central office staff member to continually monitor parent issues is a concern.

Evergreen contacted peer school districts to determine how many have ESE Parent Liaisons in place. **Exhibit 4.6-18** displays a comparison of the types of support peer districts have in place to fulfill this role. As can be seen, nine out of 11 peers have ESE Parent Liaisons in place. Two districts with unique ESE Parent Liaison programs include Palm Beach and Orange County Public Schools, where this roll is filled with parents of students with disabilities currently in the school system, who are trained to work with other parents and provide support. They are also contracted employees to ensure, to the best degree possible, they are working in the best interest of the parents and students.

Exhibit 4.6-18
Peer District Comparison
ESE Parent Liaisons

National Peer School District	Overview of ESE Parent Liaisons
State Peers	
Duval County Public Schools	None
Hillsborough County Public Schools	Yes; one per area across 8 areas. Full-time district employees
Miami-Dade County Public Schools	Yes
Orange County Public Schools	Yes; 7 contract employees; mostly part time.
School District of Palm Beach County	Yes; Parents As Liaisons (PALs) administered through FDLRS provides parents of students with disabilities with training who are then contracted.
Pinellas County Public Schools	Yes
National Peer School District	
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	None
Fairfax County Public Schools	Yes, but they serve parents of students with disabilities and mainstream students alike. They are part-time, and school-based.
Gwinnett County Public Schools	Yes, school-based and serve majority ESOL/LEP students.
Houston Independent School District	Yes, Parent Liaison is district level employee.
Montgomery County Public Schools	Yes, but not specific to students with disabilities

Source: Created by Evergreen Solutions, 2014.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.6-9:

Establish the role of ESE Parent Liaison within the Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services to facilitate and improve parent engagement, and monitor parent issues through resolve.



BCPS should create the position of ESE Parent Liaison, with the sole purpose of monitoring parent issues and concerns from the time they arise, through the time they are resolved. This position should interface with the ESE Local Resolution Group, the ESE Advisory Council, school-based ESE Specialists and Area Specialists, and the leadership team.

FINDING

The ESE Department recently started conducting a “New ESE Parent Open House” to provide useful information to parents of students with disabilities entering BCPS, or for parents with students currently in BCPS ESE programs seeking to learn more about the services. The first open house was held on February 22, 2014, and featured speakers from BCPS ESE leadership as well as guests from the community serving students with disabilities.

Exhibit 4.6-19 displays the agenda from the presentation given at the open house by these individuals. As can be seen, the agenda included topics such as developing an understanding of the work performed by the Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services; an overview of ESE curriculum, programming, and support services; and an overview of ESE guidance, support, and strategy.

Exhibit 4.6-19 BCPS ESE Open House Presentation

EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT EDUCATION & SUPPORT SERVICES
Kathrine Francis, Executive Director

❖ Today's event	✓ Develop an understanding of the work
❖ Division's Work	✓ Curriculum, programming, support services ...
❖ District's Leaders	✓ Guidance, support, educating and leading the way.

Mission Statement:
The division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services is committed to preparing students for success in a global society

Source: BCPS Exceptional Student Education and Support Division, 2014.

The event was well attended, and offered an excellent opportunity for new parents to get introduced to BCPS ESE services. The Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services intends to continue this activity in the coming years, which offers an excellent opportunity for communication between parents and district staff.



COMMENDATION

The Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services is commended for planning and delivering an ESE open house for new parents.



4.7 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT/PARTNERSHIPS



4.7 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT/PARTNERSHIPS

Teachers and administrators, research literature, and areas of best practice speak widely about the need for community understanding of and involvement in the public schools in order for achievement to improve for all students. It is through significant partnerships between the schools and their many stakeholders that the resources and perceptions, policies, and practices will evolve to support 21st century schooling that is powerful enough to have an impact on every student. Classroom teachers, principals, schools, and school districts working in isolation from their communities cannot achieve the goal of higher achievement and more fully developed young citizens.

A school district is accountable to many different groups: its staff, its teachers, the federal government, its students, their parents, local businesses, and the community at large—all have invested time and money into the school district, and all have a stake in its success. In return, the school district is obligated to demonstrate that it has spent the time and money afforded to it wisely, and is making its best effort to produce well-educated, work-ready, civic-minded graduates.

Compounding this challenge is the increasing competition for every public dollar, a common situation in every local government agency. The era of “big government” is over and so is public indifference to the use of limited tax dollars. Today, citizens demand the most out of every cent contributed to public coffers. A school district can only be successful in this environment if it can consistently prove that it has a product, namely a valuable education, which is worth continued public investment, and involve community members to ensure that these stakeholders support their successes.

These scenarios hold true across all stakeholder groups involved in the education of many different types of students—including those with disabilities.

FINDING

There is not a central unit or staff member in the Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services solely responsible for developing community partnerships. Under the school-based management model, schools are able to establish their own connections with community organizations that benefit students with disabilities, leading to various levels of community engagement and types of partnerships across BCPS schools. Despite this, community engagement and partnerships are a strength within BCPS.

As noted, engagement and sustainment of community partnerships benefiting students with disabilities in the BCPS takes place at both the school and district levels, and are supported through the following channels at the district level:

- **ESE Advisory Council** – BCPS Policy 1.22 states that one of the functions of the ESE Advisory Council is to “promote school-based training activities and community partnerships.” It was noted that the ESE Advisory Council is more or less a general venue

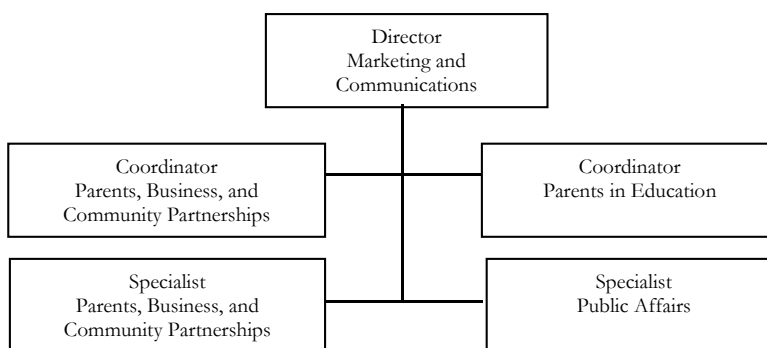


for interaction between the community at large and the BCPS, versus a platform for creating community partnerships.

- The BCPS Multi-agency Service Network for Severely Emotionally Disturbed Children and Youth (SEDNET)** – SEDNET is a State of Florida Department of Education endeavor designed to improve the service delivery system to a targeted population of children in Florida who are experiencing serious emotional disturbances. The program is a cooperative effort between the School Board of Broward County, the Department of Children and Families, parents/caregivers, children agencies, community mental health centers, and other organizations which serve children and adolescents with serious emotional disturbances. Although SEDNET acts to engage community partners and service providers, the program does so with a very specific goal in mind.
- Florida Diagnostic & Learning Resources System (FDLRS)** – FDLRS connects parents with ESE resources, such as community partners that provide diagnostic, instructional, and technology support services to district exceptional education programs and families of students with disabilities. Like SEDNET, FDLRS engages community partners and service providers with a very specific goal in mind versus for the overall ESE function.
- BCPS Office of Parents, Business, and Community Partnerships** – The Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services receives direct and indirect support from the Marketing and Communications Division of BCPS, which includes the Office of Parents, Business, and Community Partnerships. This Office is tasked with engaging and maintaining community partnerships.

Exhibit 4.7-1 displays the organizational chart for the Marketing and Communications Division of the BCPS. While this division does not provide services specifically for students with disabilities, it does support the engagement of community members for all divisions across the BCPS.

Exhibit 4.7-1
BCPS Marketing and Communications Division
Organizational Chart



Source: Broward County Public Schools, 2014.



During a recent districtwide ESE open house conducted by the BCPS for new ESE parents, the Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services shared a presentation that included a slide that succinctly visualizes its community partnerships.

Exhibit 4.7-2 displays this slide.

Exhibit 4.7-2
BCPS Community Partnerships
Exceptional Student Education and Support Division



Source: Broward County Public Schools, 2014.

As can be seen, existing community partnerships acting to benefit students with disabilities in the BCPS include:

- Department of Children and Families
- Department of Juvenile Justice
- Foster Care services
- 211 – First Call for Help
- Family Safety Planning Team
- Behavioral Health Providers



- Community SEDNET meeting
- FDLRS Child Find
- Community Case Management
- Hospitals
- Local Funders

In addition to these, specific community partnerships noted as being especially beneficial to students of disabilities during onsite visits included the following:

- Children's Services Council of Broward County
- Project 10
- United Way
- Atlantic Technical Center
- Child Net
- Center for Autism and Related Disorders
- Chrysalis Health
- College Living Experience
- Family Network on Disabilities
- Florida KidCare
- Henderson Behavioral Health
- Nova Southeastern University
- The EPPY Group
- The Starting Place
- United Cerebral Palsy
- Florida Atlantic University
- Broward College
- Lynn University
- Sheridan Technical Center
- Atlantic Technical Center
- Goodwill Industries

Exhibit 4.7-3 displays an overview of peer school district approaches to community engagement; whether it is a responsibility of the ESE central office or is handled in an alternative fashion. Overall, ESE departments in peer school districts do not have a central function concerned with community engagement and partnerships; rather, they rely on the efforts of another department or allow programs and units housed under ESE services to cultivate community partnerships as needed, with no overall strategy or approach.

At the school level, Evergreen's site visits revealed that individual schools in BCPS develop partnerships with organizations and businesses in the area; however, many of these relationships lead to benefits for all students, not just for those students with disabilities.



Exhibit 4.7-3
Peer School District Comparisons on
Community Partnerships and Engagement

	Does the ESE Department internally oversee community engagement and partnerships?	Comments
Florida Peer School District		
Duval	No	Limited engagement efforts through Exceptional Education and Student Service Department. District level community engagement is handled by the Department of Community and Family Engagement.
Hillsborough	No	Engagement of community partnerships is handled by district office separate from the ESE Services Department. ESE Services Department has parent involvement responsibilities.
Miami-Dade	No	Community engagement is located in the Office of Community Engagement, which works strategically to engage partners who benefit all students.
Orange	No	The OCPS central office has a Department of Community Relations and Department of Community Resources. The ESE Department encourages community engagement but it is based on each programs need, and is not centralized within the department.
Palm Beach	No	The district's Community Involvement Department handles growth of community partnerships.
Pinellas	No	The ESE Department does not have a centralized community engagement function; this is left up to individual programs or coordinated at a high-level by strategic communications.
National Peer School District		
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	No	The Community Partnerships and Family Engagement coordinates district-level efforts to work with the private sector, foundations, and other public agencies regarding supporting educational initiatives.
Fairfax County Public Schools	No	FCPS' Division of Communications and Community Outreach oversees this effort; the Special Education Department provides outreach to parents only.
Gwinnett County Public Schools	NA	NA
Houston Independent School District	No	Office of Family and Community Engagement works with all departments to coordinate community engagement efforts.
Montgomery County Public Schools	NA	NA

Source: Created by Evergreen Solutions based on phone calls, 2014.

Examples of community partnerships at the school level include:

- partnership with Publix Supermarket for donation of supplies;
- partnerships with local restaurants who provide donations in return for advertising space in the form of banners; and
- schools advertising in local sports and activities brochures/directories.



Evergreen's ESE Parent Survey included two statements on community involvement. **Exhibit 4.7-4** displays the results for these survey items. As can be seen, 35.3 percent of parents agreed with the statement "The BCPS ESE Department ensures that community partnerships benefiting ESE students are continuously cultivated and nurtured." For this same statement, 23.2 percent of respondents disagreed and 41.5 percent indicated "Neutral" or "No Opinion."

For the survey statement "Existing community partnerships have a positive impact on students with disabilities," 40.9 percent of parents agreed, 14.0 percent disagreed, and 45.1 percent of parents indicated "Neutral" or "No Opinion." The survey results show that while a larger percentage of parents agree that community partnerships are cultivated and nurtured by the BCPS, and that these partnerships have a positive impact on students with disabilities, many parents do not seem to be aware of what the BCPS is doing to promote partnerships, or if these partnerships are beneficial to students with disabilities.

Exhibit 4.7-4
Evergreen Parent Survey Statements on
Community Partnerships

Survey Group	SURVEY STATEMENTS					
	The BCPS ESE Department ensures that community partnerships benefiting ESE students are continuously cultivated and nurtured.			Existing community partnerships have a positive impact on students with disabilities.		
	Strongly Agree/Agree	Neutral/No Opinion	Strongly Disagree/Disagree	Strongly Agree/Agree	Neutral/No Opinion	Strongly Disagree/Disagree
Parents	35.3%	41.5%	23.2%	40.9%	45.1%	14.0%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.

Survey statements addressing community partnerships were also included on Evergreen's staff survey. **Exhibit 4.7-5** displays the results for these statements.

Based on the survey results, the following can be determined:

- For the survey statement "The BCPS ESE Department proactively provides staff, parents, and the community with needed information on ESE services and activities," 50 percent or more of respondents agreed with the statement for all but three survey groups (district administrators, general education teachers, and paraprofessionals). For all survey groups except for district administrators, less than 20 percent of respondents disagreed with the survey statement. A high percentage of respondents in all survey groups responded "Neutral" or "Not Applicable." Based on these results, the majority of staff feel that the BCPS is appropriately communicating with the community regarding ESE services and activities.



Exhibit 4.7-5 Evergreen Survey Statements on Community Partnerships

Survey Statement: The BCPS ESE Department proactively provides staff, parents, and the community with needed information on ESE services and activities.						
Survey Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
District Administrator	11.1%	22.2%	33.3%	22.2%	0.0%	11.1%
District Program Specialist	8.2%	57.4%	23.0%	6.6%	1.6%	3.3%
School Administrator	21.4%	46.9%	18.9%	7.1%	3.6%	2.0%
Non-Instructional Support	12.4%	39.1%	25.8%	6.7%	3.0%	13.0%
Special Education Teacher	14.7%	38.4%	27.2%	10.6%	5.9%	3.3%
Special Education Provider	8.3%	47.0%	26.2%	10.7%	2.4%	5.4%
General Education Teacher	10.5%	28.3%	31.3%	6.1%	4.0%	19.8%
Paraprofessional	14.1%	29.3%	20.9%	6.4%	6.0%	23.3%
Other	17.9%	36.9%	20.4%	5.8%	5.1%	13.9%
Survey Statement: The BCPS ESE Department ensures that community partnerships benefiting ESE students are continuously cultivated and nurtured.						
Survey Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
District Administrator	22.2%	0.0%	44.4%	22.2%	0.0%	11.1%
District Program Specialist	3.3%	36.1%	44.3%	4.9%	0.0%	11.5%
School Administrator	12.4%	37.1%	32.0%	5.7%	3.1%	9.8%
Non-Instructional Support	9.5%	33.9%	32.4%	5.2%	2.8%	16.2%
Special Education Teacher	10.7%	30.4%	33.4%	11.9%	4.7%	8.8%
Special Education Provider	9.4%	29.6%	39.0%	6.3%	1.9%	13.8%
General Education Teacher	8.4%	24.0%	37.0%	4.7%	2.6%	23.4%
Paraprofessional	12.0%	30.0%	27.0%	3.9%	4.3%	22.7%
Other	11.9%	27.8%	33.0%	6.3%	4.8%	16.3%
Survey Statement: Existing community partnerships have a positive impact on students with disabilities.						
Survey Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
District Administrator	22.2%	11.1%	33.3%	22.2%	0.0%	11.1%
District Program Specialist	4.9%	39.3%	37.7%	4.9%	0.0%	13.1%
School Administrator	16.4%	41.5%	27.7%	4.6%	1.0%	8.7%
Non-Instructional Support	11.3%	39.6%	29.1%	4.0%	0.9%	15.0%
Special Education Teacher	12.7%	33.6%	34.3%	6.8%	2.6%	10.1%
Special Education Provider	8.1%	36.9%	36.9%	3.1%	1.3%	13.8%
General Education Teacher	9.3%	26.0%	38.1%	3.4%	2.1%	21.1%
Paraprofessional	14.6%	28.3%	30.0%	3.4%	2.6%	21.0%
Other	14.8%	33.0%	29.6%	5.9%	3.7%	13.0%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.

- For the survey statement “The BCPS ESE Department ensures that community partnerships benefiting ESE students are continuously cultivated and nurtured,” results were more positive than negative, but the greatest number of survey respondents indicated “Neutral” or “Not Applicable.” Notably, 52.8 percent of special education teachers and 60.4 percent of general education teachers responded “Neutral” or “Not Applicable.” Further, approximately 50 percent of all school administrators agreed with this statement. Disagreement with this statement ranged from a low of 4.9 percent for district program specialists, to a high of 22 percent for district administrators; overall, disagreement with this statement was low across all respondent groups.



- The last survey statement on Evergreen’s staff survey regarding community partnerships was: “Existing community partnerships have a positive impact on students with disabilities.” Following the same trend as in the previous two survey statements, a higher percentage of respondents across all groups indicated agreement with this statement when compared to the percentage that indicated disagreement with this statement. Notably, 57.9 percent of school administrators, 50.9 percent of non-instructional support staff, and 47.8 percent of other staff indicated agreement with this statement, compared to 5.6 percent, 4.9 percent, and 9.6 percent, that disagreed with the statement, respectively.

Taken together, the majority of staff indicated positive feedback in regard to communications with community partners, cultivation of community partnerships, and benefits of community partners in the BCPS; however, the high percentage of respondents indicating either “Neutral” or “Not Applicable” seems to indicate that more could be done to communicate information regarding community partnerships (addressed in **Section 4.4 – Communication with Stakeholders**).

COMMENDATION

The Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services is commended for cultivating, maintaining, and nurturing community partnerships that benefit students with disabilities.

Note: While the BCPS is commended for this accomplishment, communications to stakeholders regarding community partnerships appears to be weak. This weakness is addressed in **Section 4.4**.

FINDING

One of the services provided by the Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services is referral of students to family health counselors. School based ESE Specialists initiate referrals of students; once referred, vetted community service providers come onsite and provide services to students.

According to the BCPS SEDNET website, these services are described as follows:

The purpose of the Behavioral Health Partnership between the school district and community providers is to provide school based personnel with a list of behavioral health providers who have met the standards set by the Behavioral Health Partnership (BHP) Committee. These Behavioral Health Partners are to provide behavioral health services to students on school campuses when school personnel have referred the student.

Exhibit 4.7-6 displays the BCPS staff and provider assigned responsibilities for student referrals to these mental health services.



Exhibit 4.7-6

Student Referral for SEDNET Mental Health Services

Staff and Provider Responsibilities

SCHOOL/PRINCIPAL RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. The principal must give approval for any provider approved agency to provide services on campus and provide the agency with appropriate space to provide behavioral health services.
2. The principal or designee must monitor procedures of the provider approved agency.
3. The principal or designee must ensure the agency and agency staff have received proper school district approval to deliver services to students. Staff of provider agencies are not issued SBBC Vendor I.D. badges, therefore identification and approval can be completed by matching the staff member's agency ID badge with the Mental Health Provider List found at: www.broward.k12.fl.us/studentsupport/sednet/html/mhdatabase.htm. It is recommended that the school photocopy the staff member's agency ID badge.
4. Confidentiality must be enforced to protect the student's privacy.
5. Obtain a signed parental Release of Information form prior to the referring student to the agency.
6. It is very important for school staff to obtain a signed Release of Information Form from the parent and/or guardian before you make a referral when making the referral to one of our partners. Obtaining a signed release is important for two reasons; first, it is a breach of federal educational confidentiality laws (FERPA) to give an outside agency student information without a release, and second, by obtaining the release you and the provider of service may then discuss freely the issues that relate to the student and can work together to improve the student's educational and emotional achievement. The partners are responsible for turning the completed Referral Forms, which provides the Committee with the ability to track the students and collect data.
7. The school staff member referring a student for on-campus behavioral health services will complete the Student Referral Form and forward it with a signed Release of Information form to the approved agency. (A suggestion: Make a 2-sided form, on one side the Referral Form and on the other side the Release of Information Form).
8. The school will not deny any educational service(s) to the student due to the lack of participation by the student and/or the family in the behavioral health service for which they are referred.
9. Maintain an updated list of students served by the agency (ies) on your campus.
10. Regularly check the Mental Health Provider Database for changes in agency services or personnel.
11. The principal or designee will review and approve all student handouts prior to the agency's distribution to the students.
12. If the Principal or designee is aware students on their campus are being denied services for any reason, including but not limited to the lack of Medicaid eligibility, they should immediately notify Barbara Myrick, SEDNET-KCW @ 754-321-2564.
13. Schools who wish to refer an ESE student to an approved partner agency should determine if "counseling" is listed on the student's IEP. If counseling is on the IEP this student should be receiving counseling services from a designated ESE Family Counselors. If additional counseling is determined to be helpful, school personnel should consult with the ESE Family Counselor providing the IEP services or with their Area ESE Office, prior to making the referral to the partner agency. (Area ESE Offices: North – 754-321-3450; North Central – 754-321-6871; South Central – 754-321-3850; and, South – 754-321-3620.)
14. Attached are the Behavioral Health Partnership Student Referral Form and Release of Information Form, which are to be used for referral students to approved behavioral health agencies.



Exhibit 4.7-6 (Continued)
Student Referral for SEDNET Mental Health Services
Staff and Provider Responsibilities

AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Begin the application process to become a Behavioral Health Partner by calling Lisa or Thema at 754-321-2564 to receive an application and Partnership Guidelines.
2. Complete the application and submit it with all required attachments to the Behavioral Health Partnership Committee for approval. After your agency receives approval and your staff has been approved to provide direct services you may proceed, as follows.
3. Meet with and obtain approval from school principal(s) to provide services.
4. Receive a Student Referral Form from the referring school personnel specifying the need(s) of the student, along with a signed Release of Information form.
5. Provide all students with equal access to services. Note: The school district is required to provide equal access and free and appropriate services to all students. This means that if your Agency, as a Behavioral Health Partner, accepts a student/family as a client through a referral from a school you may not charge the student/family/client for those services.
6. No student should be denied access to services based on the parent's level of income/insurance coverage or the agency's ability to obtain reimbursement from any funding sources.
7. If for some reason your Agency cannot accept the referral from the school, the agency staff will work with the school personnel and the family to refer the student to another agency that can accept the referral.
8. Fax a completed copy of the Student Referral Form to Barbara Myrick @ 754-321-2724 within two weeks of the case being accepted by the agency and provide a copy to the school staff making the referral.
9. Monitor agency staff to insure compliance with procedures established by the school principal for providing services on campus including but not limited to, adhering to agreed upon schedules, always having school district vendor badge, signing in and out of school, identifying students served during visit and coordinating with school designee.
10. Provide information requested by the Committee within the given timeframe. Data on students will be requested on a quarterly basis.
11. On a quarterly basis provide a list of students being seen by agency and notify school when students complete services or are terminated.
12. Submit all student handouts are to be approved by the principal or designee, in advance of giving them to students.
13. Share with school staff the materials and methods to be used with students and identify expected outcomes of the services.
14. Develop with input and approval of the parent or guardian a service or treatment plan for each student.
15. Immediately notify the school and fax to the BHP Committee c/o Lisa Clarke @ 754-321-2724 any changes in agency staff or services your agency provides in the schools. Submit resumes and Level 2 Clearance letters of new staff to the BHP Committee prior to the delivery of services to students.
16. Agree to comply with all School Board of Broward County standards of nondiscrimination: age, color, disability, gender, national origin, marital status, race, religion, or sexual orientation.
17. Agree to participate in a monitoring and evaluation process for quality control.

Source: Broward County Public Schools, 2014.



While conducting interviews with ESE Specialists, speed of response for family health counselors was noted as an area of great concern, leaving teachers or ESE Specialists to fulfill the role of counselor in crisis situations. ESE Specialists noted that the “red tape” for getting students the mental health services needed, especially in lower grades, is excessive. School staff noted that they have to repeatedly follow-up with the mental health providers over the course of several hours to get someone to come out to provide services to a student, even in crisis situation.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.7-1:

Increase the speed of response for students needing immediate mental health services.

It is all too common for students to escape identification or not receive timely mental health services in the school environment; often leading to tragedies. BCPS should review policies and procedures surrounding students receiving mental health services, as well as response times for these services, and determine how the school district can improve access to and timeliness of them.

FINDING

BCPS mental health community service providers very seldom refer students to receive additional support, and often do not provide adequate documentation on student meetings to school staff. It was noted that there is frequently no evidence that providers were delivering services to a student onsite. School-based ESE Specialists shared the desire to better document services provided to students by outside providers, and to assess the care provided through outcome and performance measures.

A recent report by the National Institutes of Health titled “Challenges and Opportunities in Measuring the Quality of Mental Health Care,” (Kilbourne, Keyser, and Pincus) stated the following regarding performance measures for mental health services:

Within the past ten years, there has been a dramatic growth in the development of performance (or quality) measures to assess and redress gaps in evidence-based health care in general. Experts have recognized that quality measurement is a key driver in transforming the health care system, and routinely measuring quality using performance measures derived from evidence-based practice guidelines is an important step to this end. Notably, national and provincial governments as well as regulatory, accreditation and other non-governmental organizations around the globe have proposed and implemented performance measures to be used by different health plans and organizations for a broad range of services and conditions. In the U.S., these organizations have included the National Committee on Quality Assurance (NCQA) and the National Quality Forum (NQF). Performance measures have been increasingly used in health care to compare and benchmark processes of care in order to remediate gaps between evidence-based care and actual practice, and hold providers accountable for improving quality of care.



Further, the report speaks to the types of performance measures that are commonly implemented:

...health care structure measures evaluate characteristics of the treatment setting's services, including program fidelity, staffing, and infrastructure (i.e. are quality services available?). Process measures examine interactions between consumers and the structural elements of the health care system (i.e. are consumers actually receiving high quality services in a way that conforms to the evidence base?). Outcome measures examine the results of these interactions for patients, including functioning, morbidity, mortality, quality of life, and patient satisfaction (i.e. is the care making a difference for individuals and society?)... Each type of quality measure has its strengths and limitations. Structure measures are relatively simple to ascertain through reports from program or clinic leaders...

Although implementation of a robust performance management initiative surrounding mental health services provided to students may not be feasible for the BCPS, the BCPS can take steps to ensure services provided are better documented, and that the most basic measurements are monitored for provider care.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.7-2:

Develop basic performance measures for community service providers delivering mental health services to students in Broward County Public Schools.

Implementing basic performance measures and collecting data on those measures for family health providers serving BCPS students will lead to improved services across the district. BCPS should, at a minimum, establish basic performance measures, such as response time; determine current performance levels in the district; set goals for improving on those performance levels; and ensure documentation is maintained at the school level for services provided.

FINDING

In order for a community service provider to provide services to students in BCPS, all providers have to go through a training delivered by SEDNET staff at the BCPS central office. The training provides information on what community service providers need to know before they go into a school, and is titled "What every community provider should know when providing services to students on Broward County School Board property." The training is delivered in-person as new staff are brought in by the providers. BCPS staff noted that this training is delivered to community service provider staff about once per week.

Exhibit 4.7-7 displays the training PowerPoint. The topics included in the training are exhaustive and include:

- Access to schools
- Student Support Services Locator (SSSL)
- BASIS

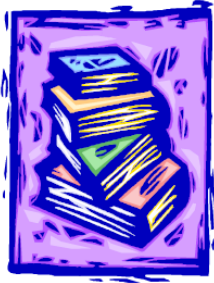


- Bullying
- Threat Assessment
- Suicide Assessment
- CPS/RtI
- Overview Student Support Services

Exhibit 4.7-7
BCPS SEDNET
Community Service Provider Training

Topics

- Access to schools
- SSSL
- BASIS
- Bullying
- Threat Assessment
- Suicide Assessment
- CPS/RtI
- Overview Student Support Services



Source: Broward County Public Schools, 2014.

Once the training is completed, attendees are instructed to take an online questionnaire on the BCPS behavioral partnership website. Individuals must pass the test with an 80 percent or higher, and information on test completion is sent automatically to the district.

The training is delivered by a single BCPS staff member—the SEDNET Coordinator. While this training is an important part of the process for allowing community service providers into schools, in the district, it covers relatively basic topics and consumes a large portion of staff time on an annual basis. With technology, this training could be converted into a multimedia version and delivered online to reduce BCPS staff time.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.7-3:

Create a multimedia version of the “What you need to know before you go into a school?” training.



BCPS should convert the in-person training already in place to a multimedia version for delivery via computer. The training should include pre- and post-test measures to ensure that providers fully understand the training. The computer based training should also continue to be administered onsite, in case providers receiving the training have questions regarding their responsibilities after they have completed the training. This action will reduce necessary BCPS staff time, while still ensuring providers receive the appropriate training.

FINDING

There are eligibility requirements that BCPS students must meet in order to begin receiving services from community service providers. These eligibility requirements are important for ensuring students receive the correct services, and only when needed. BCPS community service providers interviewed shared that they are not familiar with eligibility requirements and prerequisites set by the BCPS for students referred to them. When eligibility requirements were available, they were more focused on high-level eligibility for overall ESE services; rather than eligibility requirements for receiving services through outside service providers.

Examples of eligibility requirements were found scattered throughout the BCPS ESE website; however, there is not one central place where they are all located.

Exhibit 4.7-8 displays one example of eligibility requirements listed on the BCPS website. As can be seen, the BCPS website simply lists Rule 6A-6.03016, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.), *Exceptional Education Eligibility for Students with Emotional/Behavioral Disabilities*. This is not definitive, easy to interpret information on BCPS eligibility requirements for referring students to third-party community service providers.

Exhibit 4.7-9 displays a slightly more user friendly list of eligibility requirements located on another section of the BCPS website. More than anything, the eligibility requirements displayed act as an effective outline for describing which students can receive certain services. As can be seen, this overview of eligibility requirements contains the following sections:

- Introduction
- Definition
- Criteria for Eligibility
- Service Models
- Curriculum
- Instructional Supports
- Dismissal Criteria

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.7-4:

Communicate to community service providers the BCPS student eligibility requirements that lead to student referrals for their services.



Exhibit 4.7-8

ESE Eligibility Requirements for Emotional/Behavioral Disabilities

6A-6.03016 Exceptional Student Education Eligibility for Students with Emotional/Behavioral Disabilities

(1) Definition. Students with an emotional/behavioral disability (E/BD). A student with an emotional/behavioral disability has persistent (is not sufficiently responsive to implemented evidence based interventions) and consistent emotional or behavioral responses that adversely affect performance in the educational environment that cannot be attributed to age, culture, gender, or ethnicity.

(2) General education interventions and activities. Prior to referral for evaluation, the requirements in subsection 6A-6.0331(1), F.A.C., must be met.

(3) Evaluation. In addition to the provisions in subsection 6A-6.0331(5), F.A.C., the evaluation for determining eligibility shall include the following:

(a) A functional behavioral assessment (FBA) must be conducted. The FBA must identify the specific behavior(s) of concern, conditions under which the behavior is most and least likely to occur, and function or purpose of the behavior. A review, and if necessary, a revision of an FBA completed as part of general education interventions may meet this requirement if it meets the conditions described in this section. If an FBA was not completed to assist in the development of general education interventions, one must be completed and a well-delivered scientific, research-based behavioral intervention plan of reasonable intensity and duration must be implemented with fidelity prior to determining eligibility. Implementation of the behavioral intervention plan is not required in extraordinary circumstances described in paragraph (4)(e) of this rule;

(b) The evaluation must include documentation of the student's response to general education interventions implemented to target the function of the behavior as identified in the FBA;

(c) A social/developmental history compiled from a structured interview with the parent or guardian that addresses developmental, familial, medical/health, and environmental factors impacting learning and behavior, and which identifies the relationship between social/developmental and socio-cultural factors, and the presence or non-presence of emotional/behavioral responses beyond the school environment;

(d) A psychological evaluation conducted in accordance with Rule 6A-6.0331, F.A.C. The psychological evaluation should include assessment procedures necessary to identify the factors contributing to the development of an emotional/behavioral disability, which include behavioral observations and interview data relative to the referral concerns, and assessment of emotional and behavioral functioning, and may also include information on developmental functioning and skills. The psychological evaluation shall include a review of general education interventions that have already been implemented and the criteria used to evaluate their success;

(e) A review of educational data which includes information on the student's academic levels of performance, and the relationship between the student's academic performance and the emotional/behavioral disability; additional academic evaluation may be completed if needed; and,

(f) A medical evaluation must be conducted when it is determined by the administrator of the exceptional student program or the designee that the emotional/behavioral responses may be precipitated by a physical problem.

(4) Criteria for eligibility. A student with an emotional/behavioral disability must demonstrate an inability to maintain adequate performance in the educational environment that cannot be explained by physical, sensory, socio-cultural, developmental, medical, or health (with the exception of mental health) factors; and must demonstrate one or more of the following characteristics described in paragraph (4)(a) or (4)(b) of this rule and meet the requirements of paragraphs (4)(c) and (4)(d) of this rule:

Source: Florida Administrative Code, 2014.



Exhibit 4.7-9

BCPS ESE Eligibility Requirements for Intellectual Disabilities

Introduction: The Broward County Public School District is committed to providing quality services to students with intellectual disabilities. Children with intellectual disabilities require varying degrees of support in academics and skill development. Children with intellectual disabilities take longer to learn the alphabet, numbers, and to read, write, and compute simple mathematics than do other children their age. Some children with very significant cognitive disabilities may not read, write, or do mathematics in their lifetime to any significant degree. Many people with an intellectual disability, however, live full and productive lives, holding employment and raising families. Each individual is unique and should be valued as a person with gifts, strengths, and abilities.

Definition: An intellectual disability is defined as significantly below average general intellectual and adaptive functioning manifested during the developmental period, with significant delays in academic skills. Developmental period refers to birth to eighteen (18) years of age.

Criteria for Eligibility: A student with an intellectual disability is eligible for exceptional student education if all of the following criteria are met:

1. The measured level of intellectual functioning is more than two (2) standard deviations below the mean on an individually measured, standardized test of intellectual functioning;
2. The level of adaptive functioning is more than two (2) standard deviations below the mean on the adaptive behavior composite or on two (2) out of three (3) domains on a standardized test of adaptive behavior. The adaptive behavior measure shall include parental or guardian input;
3. The level of academic or pre-academic performance on a standardized test is consistent with the performance expected of a student of comparable intellectual functioning;
4. The social/developmental history identifies the developmental, familial, medical/health, and environmental factors impacting student functioning and documents the student's functional skills outside of the school environment; and
5. The student needs special education as defined in Rules 6A-6.0331 and 6A-6.03411, F.A.C.

Service Models: A child with an intellectual disability will receive services from a teacher who specializes in Exceptional Student Education (ESE). Teachers certified to teach students with intellectual disabilities may deliver the services in a variety of settings, from the regular classroom to a special class designed for students with significant disabilities. The child with an intellectual disability will have an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) that will identify the specific educational services for that individual child and where the education will occur.

Curriculum: The curriculum for each student with an intellectual disability will be determined by the IEP team and will be initiated with the assumption of access to the general curriculum (Sunshine State Standards) with appropriate accommodations. Curriculum decisions reflect progress toward a standard high school diploma for most students with disabilities and progress toward a special diploma for those students for whom the IEP Team determines a special diploma to be appropriate.

Instructional Supports: Students receive instructional support as determined through the IEP process. Special education teachers and speech pathologists provide instruction in special education including curriculum and learning strategies, speech/language therapy, independent functioning, social/emotional behavior, and communication. Skill development is available through related services including orientation and mobility, physical therapy, occupational therapy, and assistive technology.

Dismissal Criteria: The decision to dismiss a student from the Intellectual Disabilities program is based on the reevaluation process and IEP team determination. A student may be dismissed from program if upon reevaluation the IEP team determines that the student is successful in the general education curriculum without special education support, or the disability no longer interferes with the student's ability to participate in the educational program.

Source: Broward County Public Schools, 2014.



BCPS should provide all community service providers with an easy to read overview of the circumstances that lead to BCPS referring students for their services.

FINDING

SEDNET at one time conducted monthly meetings with community service providers to coordinate activities and discuss districtwide concerns. This meeting acted as an excellent venue for coordination of activities and discussion of issues. The meetings took place on the fourth Thursday of every month from noon to 2:00 p.m.

Evergreen found various descriptions and benefits of these community meetings in BCPS documentation and community service provider reports. For instance, the Broward County One Community Partnership (OCP) described their relationship with the BCPS Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services (specifically, SEDNET) in a 2008 report on six year progress as follows:

OCP was invited to report to the children's behavioral health community at monthly SEDNET (Multiagency Service Network for Children with Severely Emotional Disturbances) meetings, where members fostered interagency cooperation to enhance service provision. These meetings enabled OCP to collaborate with the community and presented an opportunity to provide regular updates on System of Care change.

These meetings were discontinued in September 2013 due to a lack of resources in the BCPS Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.7-5:

Commence monthly meetings of community service providers.

Based on staff, community service provider interviews, and reports from community agencies involved in providing services to students with disabilities, the BCPS should re-engage with these partners through regular monthly meetings. These meetings will act as a hub for interaction between the BCPS and community service providers, strengthen the partnerships, and provide a conduit for addressing community concerns and issues.



4.8 REVIEW CHILD FIND – BIRTH TO AGE 5



4.8 CHILD FIND – BIRTH THROUGH AGE FIVE

Child Find is the component of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) that requires states to identify, locate, and evaluate all children with disabilities, aged birth through 21, who are in need of special education services. The Child Find mandate applies to all children who reside within a state, including children who attend private schools and public schools, highly mobile children, migrant children, homeless children, and children who are wards of the state.

Early intervention services, including Child Find, for infants and toddlers from birth through age two are provided in accordance with Part C of IDEA. Early Steps is Florida's statewide Part C program. The Children's Diagnostic Treatment Center (CDTC) is the lead agency for implementing Early Steps in Broward County, with the exception of the community phone referral process. The Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System (FDLRS), operated by the School Board of Broward County, functions as the entry point for community referrals to CDTC/Early Steps.

FDLRS is also responsible for conducting Child Find for prekindergarten children ages three through five to determine if they are eligible for ESE services under Part B of IDEA. This includes coordinating the process for children transitioning from Part C Early Steps to Part B district-based services to ensure that every eligible child has an IEP in place no later than the third birthday as well as coordinating screenings, referrals, evaluations, and eligibility determinations for prekindergarten children ages three through five.

FINDING

A seamless transition from Part C services under Early Steps to IDEA Part B services through requires a coordinated effort by local Early Steps teams and districts Child Find teams. The relationships cultivated by FDLRS/Child Find in its role as the point of contact for infants and toddlers entering Part C services assists in ensuring a smooth transition process from Part C to Part B when the children turn three years of age.

The interagency agreement between CDTC/Early Steps and the School Board of Broward County outlines the referral and evaluation procedures and describes the roles and responsibilities of each agency as follows:

- **School Board of Broward County FDLRS/Child Find**
 - FDLRS is the point of contact for Early Steps referrals; FDLRS staff complete a one-page information form for each applicant.
 - Twice daily FDLRS faxes referral forms to CDTC and enters the children into the Children's Registry and Information System (CHRIS) for tracking purposes.
- **CDTC/Early Steps Program** (Note: Parental consent is obtained prior to proceeding with each of the following action steps):



- Early Steps notifies FDLRS/Child Find on the Child Find Referral Form of each child at intake who is referred by another source (e.g., neonatal intensive care units; ChildNet).
- CDTC Service Coordinator provides feedback to FDLRS on the referral form in the event the child is not eligible for Part C services or if the child is closed to Early Steps prior to the third birthday for any reason.
- CDTC notifies FDLRS at least nine months prior to a child's third birthday (27 months old) that a child in Broward County is receiving services through Part C. A Notification Report is sent by CDTC to FDLRS monthly indicating those children whose parents have consented to the sharing of information.

When this data element became part of the State Performance Plan in 2006, Florida's rate for ensuring that each eligible Part C toddler had an IEP in place by the third birthday was only 29 percent. As a result of a concerted effort on the part of FLDOE, Early Steps, and the state's school districts, the goal of 100 percent was met in 2011-12. The percentage of toddlers with disabilities under Part C who have been evaluated and, if eligible for services under Part B, have an IEP in place no later than their third birthday in BCPS, its enrollment group peers, and national comparators are presented in **Exhibit 4.8-1**.

Exhibit 4.8-1
Transition from Part C to Part B Services
2011-12 and 2012-13 School Years

Florida Peer School District	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	Change
Broward County Public Schools	99.86%	100.0%	100.0%	0.14%
Duval County Public Schools	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	0.0%
Hillsborough County Public Schools	98.67%	100.0%	100.0%	1.33%
Miami-Dade County Public Schools	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	0.0%
Orange County Public Schools	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	0.0%
School District of Palm Beach County	99.16%	100.0%	100.0%	0.84%
Pinellas County Public Schools	100.0%	99.29%	100.0%	0.0%
Florida Peer Average	99.67%	99.9%	100.0%	0.33%
National Peer School District				
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	NA	98.9%	98.0%	NA
Fairfax County Public Schools	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	0.0%
Gwinnett County Public Schools	95.4%	98.8%	99.6%	4.2%
Houston Independent School District	NA	NA	NA	NA
Montgomery County Public Schools	100.0%	99.7%	100.0%	0.0%
National Peer Average	98.5%	99.4%	99.4%	0.9%

Source: Florida Department of Education, 2013 and Peer State Databases, 2014.

As can be seen, Broward County School District's performance meets or exceeds that of its peers for the past three years. In fact, as a result of effective collaboration and communication between the two groups, the district has maintained a record of 100 percent timely transition from Part C to Part B for four of the past five years, beginning in 2007-07. Several staff members indicated that co-location of PreK Child Find at Wingate Oaks with Early Steps should serve to enhance the effective processes and procedures already in place.



Effectively implemented, Child Find for children from birth through age five requires a continuous process of public awareness activities, screening, and evaluations designed to locate, identify, and refer as early as possible all children with disabilities and their families who are in need of early intervention services or prekindergarten (PreK) special education services. Outreach activities include participation in and sponsorship of the annual DisAbilities Expo and other informational days sponsored by community agencies; parent education workshops; flyers and brochures disseminated through local early childhood programs, public health agencies and others; and links to FDLR/Child Find on websites of organizations such as Family Central and South Florida Parenting.

Examples of information provided through a print advertisement and an informational brochure are provided in **Exhibits 4.8-2** and **4.8-3**.

Exhibit 4.8-2
FDLRS/Child Find Print Advertisement



CHILD FIND - FINDS THAT SPECIAL CHILD

Are you concerned about a child's
Hearing? Speech? Vision?
Walking? Behavior? Learning?

If so and the child is between the ages of birth and 5 years old...

Call 754-321-2204

CHILD FIND provides:

- Free screening in the areas of speech, language, motor development, vision, hearing, and learning.
- Information about other programs available in the community for preschool children with special needs.
- Professional consultation for parents.
- Books, videos and learning kits for loan to parents of children with special needs through the Florida Diagnostic & Learning Resources System (FDLRS) Media Center.

Prekindergarten programs are available for children with disabilities.
All services are provided at no cost to parents.

www.browardschools.com/ece

If you would like a poster or flyers, please call 754-321-2204.

Florida Diagnostic & Learning Resources System
Support for Florida Education

Broward County
Public Schools

Source: <http://www.cscbroward.org/Documents/BRO-FRG2013.pdf>



Exhibit 4.8-3 FDLRS/Child Find Informational Brochure



Who can refer a child?
Anyone who has a concern about a child's development may make a referral. This includes: parents, guardians, foster parents and family members; professionals such as physicians, social workers, child care providers; or others who are familiar with the child. If someone other than the child's parent makes the referral, the parents will be contacted for permission to proceed.

How do I refer a child?
The single point of entry for all referrals in Broward County is Child Find / FDLRS (FLORIDA DIAGNOSTIC & LEARNING RESOURCES SYSTEM), operated by the School Board. The referral phone call takes only a few minutes and all referrals are forwarded to CDTC within 48 hours.

To make a referral,
PHONE: (754) 321-2204

What happens next?
An Early Steps Service Coordinator will contact the family to arrange an in-home visit. At that visit, parents will review their concerns and provide background information about their child and family.

For more information
about Early Steps,
PHONE: (954) 728-1083



Children's Diagnostic & Treatment Center
Early Steps Program for Infants & Toddlers
1401 South Federal Highway
Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33316



Early Steps
Florida's System of
Early Intervention
Supports and Services
for Infants & Toddlers



with Developmental
Disabilities or Delays



EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAM

Sponsored by the CHILDREN'S DIAGNOSTIC & TREATMENT CENTER, INC. (CDTC) and the State of Florida, Department of Health, Children's Medical Services



Florida continues to adopt early intervention services to reflect amendments to the federal, Individual with Disabilities Education Act, Part C, and to recognize best practices for providing early intervention. Early Steps recognizes that:

- Family members are a child's primary teachers, consistent source of care and comfort and most effective advocates.
- Family members have the greatest opportunity to encourage and strengthen their child's development.
- Opportunities for teaching and learning occur throughout the day as children explore their environment and family members interact with them.
- Family members can use everyday activities and routines to encourage a child's functional development, meaningful skills and independence.
- Parents and professionals need to work as a team to develop an intervention plan based on each child's strengths and needs.
- Services and supports are most successful when provided in the child's natural environments: places where the child lives, learns and plays and in which children without disabilities participate.
- Early intervention services that are family-guided allow families to make informed decisions and increase their confidence and care-giving competence.





Early Steps is a federal, state, Medicaid/Insurance funded early intervention program. It serves families whose children, ages birth to three years, have significant delays in development or who have been diagnosed with a medical condition associated with delays.

Research shows that the first three years are the most important time for learning in a child's life. Beginning interventions early establishes the window of opportunity for a child to develop and learn. Early Steps engages and encourages families' participation in helping their children with special needs develop to their full potential.

The Children's Diagnostic & Treatment Center will arrange a comprehensive evaluation to measure a child's development, to determine Early Steps eligibility and to help families make decisions for their child and family. The evaluation considers these domains:

- Communication:** babbling, language, speech, conversation
- Physical:** health, hearing, vision
- Cognition:** thinking, learning, problem solving
- Gross & fine motor skills:** moving, walking, grasping, and coordination
- Social/emotional:** playing and interacting with others, peers and adults
- Adaptive development:** self help skills, such as feeding and dressing





When a child develops at a slower pace than is considered typical, or has a medical condition known to affect development, Early Steps can help.

A Service Coordinator will be assigned as the family's primary contact and liaison to community services and supports. Goals will be identified to address their child's developmental needs and their own concerns and priorities. Working with an early intervention team, family's will then decide on strategies they can implement daily.

When a family has a child with special needs, life may become more complicated than they expected. Families often report that their understanding of their child's possibilities and disabilities are shaped by the specialists on their early intervention team.

Once the family and team agree on specific functional outcomes and what services and supports will be provided to address them, these will be recorded on an IFSP, Individualized Family Support Plan. This plan will be reviewed periodically and changed as the child grows and develops.

Family members will be coached in ways to promote the child's optimal growth and development and will be expected to implement those strategies. These strategies will be built around the family's routines, activities and settings.

It is the role of Early Steps to help each family learn ways to support the well-being, development and learning of their children.

Source: <http://www.broward.k12.fl.us/studentssupport/ease/PDF/ESbrochurerev.pdf>.



COMMENDATION

Broward County Public Schools is commended for its seamless transition of toddlers with disabilities served by the local Early Steps to the district's Part B PreK ESE program.

FINDING

Broward County Public School's Child Find Program is run by two Child Find Specialists. One works primarily with infants and toddlers through FDLRS, providing intake for new referrals and case managing the process for toddlers transitioning from Early Steps/Part C to the district's Part B PreK ESE program. The second focuses primarily on prekindergarten children ages three through five, coordinating the screenings for children who are suspected of having a disability and being in need of special education services. Together they oversee the PreK Assessment Teams, each of which includes school psychologists, speech language pathologists, an audiologist, and a developmental specialist.

Prior to 2013-14 the Child Find process for children ages three through five was conducted by four PreK Assessment Teams, each located in a different geographical area of the county. As part of a district-wide initiative to centralize operations and use resources more efficiently, those teams were consolidated in a single location at Wingate Oaks Center. The Wingate Oaks site is shared with Early Steps and an ESE center school program for medically fragile students with significant cognitive disabilities, ages three through 21. However, given the size of the district (approximately 1,320 square miles), consolidating the assessment teams in a single location presents a potential barrier to families with limited access to transportation. Eliminating the regional sites adds potential barriers to options such as asking friends or family for a ride, using public transportation, or paying for a taxi.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.8-1:

Request that parents and/or guardians complete a customer service poll at each point of contact to solicit feedback regarding barriers they may have experienced in accessing the Child Find services.

In addition to gauging the impact location has on a family's ability to access services, information gleaned from a brief questionnaire can be used to inform decisions regarding ways to improve or enhance the system (e.g., more effective methods of advertising or informing the public about the Child Find process; scheduling preferences and challenges; addressing common misconceptions about the purpose of Child Find).

FINDING

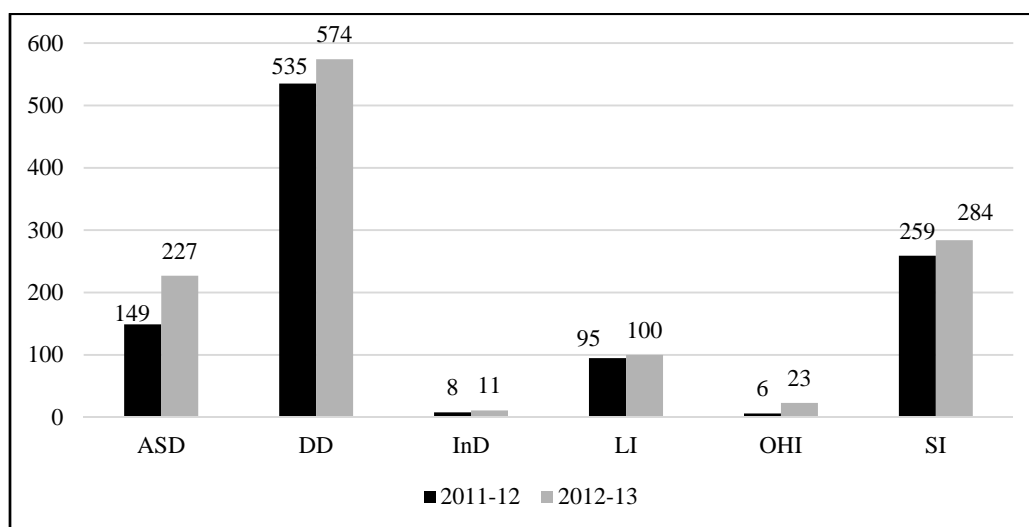
The number of prekindergarten children ages three through five referred through Child Find has steadily increased within the district over the past several years. The majority of PreK children were found eligible under the categories of autism spectrum disorder (ASD), developmental



delay (DD), intellectual disability (InD), language impairment (LI), other health impairment (OHI), and speech impairment (SI). As the number of ESE eligible prekindergarten age children has increased, the most significant growth has been in the disability category of ASD, which increased from 149 children in 2011-12 (representing 14 percent of all PreK children found eligible for ESE) to 227 in 2012-13 (representing 18 percent of all PreK children found eligible for ESE).

The number of children found eligible for the most prevalent disability categories during the past two years are provided in **Exhibit 4.8-4**.

Exhibit 4.8-4
Prevalence by Primary Disability Category
2011-12 and 2012-13 School Years



Source: Created by Evergreen Solutions and based on Data provided by BCPS.

In addition to the higher incidence disabilities noted above, during the 2011-12 and 2012-13 school years, 12 and 13 children respectively were found eligible for ESE services under the following categories combined: deaf/hard-of-hearing (DHH), dual-sensory impaired (DSI), emotional/behavioral disability (E/BD), orthopedic impairment (OI), specific learning disability (SLD), traumatic brain injury (TBI), and visual impairment (VI). Between July 2013 and January 2014 the total for these disabilities was 10.

Reports provided by BCPS indicate that the number of evaluations conducted has increased from approximately 1,236 in 2011-12 to 1,432 in 2012-13, with 928 conducted as of January 2014 (the most current data available at the time of this evaluation). During both the 2011-12 and 2012-13 school years, approximately 86 percent of PreK evaluations resulted in children being found eligible for services under IDEA and 14 percent resulted in children being determined ineligible. In contrast, of the 928 evaluations conducted during the first seven months of 2013-14, more than 88 percent of children were found eligible and fewer than 12 percent were determined ineligible.



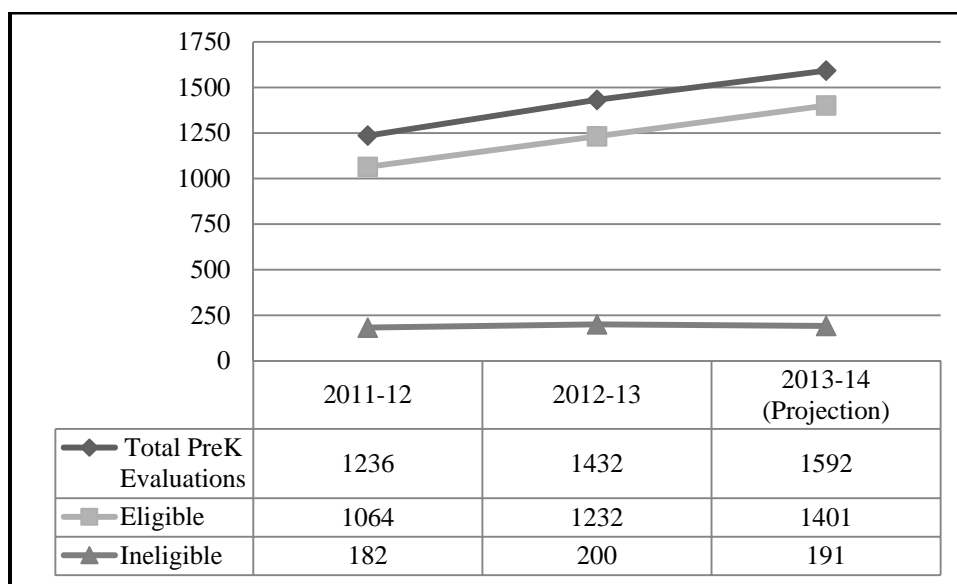
Data reflecting PreK evaluations and eligibility staffings for the previous two years, the first seven months of the current year, and estimated projections calculated by extrapolating the current rate through the end of 2013-14, are presented in **Exhibit 4.8-5**.

Exhibit 4.8-5
Prekindergarten Evaluations and Eligibility Staffings
2011-12 through 2013-14 (projected) School Years

	2011-12	2012-13	July 2013 through January 2014	2013-14 (Projected)
Eligible	1,064 (86.1%)	1232 (86.0%)	818 (88.2%)	1401 (88%)
Ineligible	172 (13.9%)	200 (14.0%)	110 (11.8%)	191 (12%)
Total Evaluations	1,236	1,432	928	1,592

Graphical results depicting the upward trend for the three-year period are presented in **Exhibit 4.8-6**.

Exhibit 4.8-6
Prekindergarten Evaluations and Eligibility Staffing Trends
2011-12 through 2013-14 (Projected) School Years



Source: Created by Evergreen Solutions, 2014. Data provided by BCPS.

*Projections calculated based on monthly rate for first seven months of 2013-14 continuing for remaining five months.

Staff involved in the Child Find process for children ages three through five also report that the move to a centralized location has resulted in increased communication and collaboration among members of the assessment teams. This has enabled them to streamline the screening, referral, and evaluation processes and has increased consistency among the teams. For example, they recently instituted a rolling schedule during which all team members engage in screenings for six days followed by a three week period during which evaluations are conducted. The previous



system required constant juggling of obligations and functions, with evaluators continually transitioning back and forth between screenings, evaluations, report writing, and other duties. Described by one respondent as “all hands on deck screenings followed by all hands on deck evaluations,” the hope is that alternating periods of intensive, targeted, common activities will increase the team’s efficiency and productiveness.

Because of high demand, appointments for screening and evaluation often are set weeks or even months ahead. Realizing that the limited flexibility provided by this kind of alternating cycle schedule might be problematic, the PreK Child Find team tries to keep open some number of slots within each stage of the cycle to handle emergency situations. For example, if a child is ill and has to miss an appointment, they can reschedule within a week or two using a “reserved” slot rather than having the child revert back to the end of the line and being rescheduled for a date weeks or months out.

Despite efforts such as these, every stakeholder group – district administrators, PreK ESE staff, parents, and advocacy groups – expressed great concern regarding the timeliness of the referral, evaluation, and eligibility process for the population of three- through five-year-olds.

The BCPS PreK Child Find process as illustrated in a promotional brochure entitled *The Road through Child Find* is provided in **Exhibit 4.8-7**.

As can be seen from the graphic, parents initiate a referral by contacting FDLRS/Child Find by phone, and their contact information is obtained. Child Find staff follow up at a later date and obtain from the parent copies of any existing evaluations or other information related to the child’s development or challenges. It is unclear from the information obtained how much time passes between the parent’s initial contact and the district following up, or the specific type of information parents are provided during that first call. It is possible that a more sophisticated triage system could be established to increase the amount and type of information discussed at the parents’ first contact in an effort to streamline the process.

Once the district has obtained existing information from the family, the data are reviewed and a screening appointment is scheduled. The percentage of children scheduled for screening subsequent to this data review was not reported. If it reflects all or almost all of the children whose parents reach out, application of a triage system that allows for more children to be scheduled for a screening when the parents first make contact may be a more efficient use of time and resources.

Staff reported that at the start of the school year screening is usually scheduled within one month of the parent’s original contact, but as the school year progresses and backlogs develop this timeline can stretch several more weeks. This is confounded by the fact that, while school districts operate on a nine- or ten-month “school-year” calendar, families operate on a 12-month calendar.



Exhibit 4.8-7
The Road through Child Find as Illustrated by
Broward County Public Schools



Source: Retrieved from http://www.broward.k12.fl.us/studentsupport/ese/html/child_find_road2.html April 2, 2014.

Referral for Evaluation

Parents are informed of the results on the day of the screening. If the child does not pass the screening, a referral is made to the Prekindergarten Assessment Team. However, consent for evaluation is not obtained at this time. Instead, within several days the parents are contacted by the assessment team to schedule the evaluation. Again, staff report that as the school year progresses it can be as long as two months or more before an evaluation slot is available. Given that the whole of the screening, referral, and evaluation process are completed by staff assigned to FDLRS/Child Find, it should be possible to eliminate one of the delays by scheduling an appointment for evaluation when the parent is informed of the screening results. If the team is aware that the child did not pass the screening and that an evaluation is recommended, it should be scheduled without the additional delay inherent in requiring the evaluation team to make contact at a later date.



Under the current system, the district does not provide the parent with prior written notice of its proposal to evaluate the child and request parental consent at the time the child fails to pass the screening and staff know they will be pursuing evaluation; instead, consent is obtained on the day of the evaluation appointment. Given the requirements under IDEA and State Board of Education rules regarding timely completion of initial evaluations once parental consent is obtained, by default this practice ensures the district meets the technical requirement without regard for the amount of time between screening and evaluation. Once the evaluation report is completed, an eligibility staffing is scheduled.

District staff report that the current timeline from screening to evaluation typically ranges from three to six months, but there were reports of situations later in the school year in which nine months or more have passed between a parent's initial contact with the district and the eligibility determination. Although Florida's State Board of Education Rule 6A06.0331, F.A.C., established 60 school days as the timeframe within which an evaluation must be completed once the parent has given consent, until now there has not been a clearly defined timeline for when (or the circumstances under which) parental consent must be requested.

Effective March 25, 2014, Rule 6A-6.0331, F.A.C., was amended to include the following with regard to prekindergarten children (emphasis added):

(3)(a) The school district must seek consent from the parent or guardian to conduct an evaluation whenever the district suspects that a... child age three (3) to kindergarten entry age, is a student with a disability and needs special education and related services. Circumstances which would indicate that a student may be a student with a disability who needs special education and related services include, but are not limited to, the following:...

3. When a parent requests an evaluation and there is documentation or evidence that the... child age three (3) to kindergarten entry age may be a student with a disability and needs special education and related services.

*(3)(c) As described in subparagraph (3)(a)3. of this rule, **if a parent requests that the school conduct an evaluation** to determine the child's [age three (3) to kindergarten entry age] eligibility for special education and related services as a student with a disability, **the school district must within twenty (20) school days**, unless the parent and the school agree otherwise in writing:*

1. Obtain consent for the evaluation; or

2. Provide the parent with written notice in accordance with Rule 6A-6.03311, F.A.C., explaining its refusal to conduct the evaluation.

The 20-school-day limit on the amount of that may pass before consent is sought is intended to be an outer limit – the maximum amount of time allowed – and not a recommended amount of time.

It would not be expected that every initial contact from a parent to the Child Find office should be construed as a formal request for evaluation; however, in many instances this is in fact what



the parent is asking. However, good practice would include procedures to ensure the intent of the parent is solicited. Further, when a child does not pass a screening, current district policy is to refer the child for evaluation. This is a clear implication that the district has interpreted failure to pass the screening as evidence that the student may have a disability, and that an evaluation should be pursued.

Timeline for Evaluation

Beginning in 2004, IDEA required that an initial evaluation must be completed within 60 days of receiving parental consent, or, if the state had already established a different timeframe for evaluation, then within that timeframe. Florida had previously set “60 school days” (i.e., approximately 12 weeks or three months, exclusive of school holidays and breaks) as the timeframe for prekindergarten children and “60 school days of which the student is in attendance” as the timeframe for children enrolled in kindergarten through grade 12.

The percent of students evaluated within the required timeline for BCPS, its within-state enrollment group peers, and its national peer districts are provided in **Exhibit 4.8-8**.

Exhibit 4.8-8 Three-Year Comparison of Students Evaluated within 60 Days of Receipt of Parent Consent or State-Established Timeline 2009-10 through 2011-12 School Years

Florida Peer School District	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	Change
Broward County Public Schools	97.65%	98.33%	99.24%	1.59%
Duval County Public Schools	98.80%	99.62%	99.64%	0.84%
Hillsborough County Public Schools	96.39%	98.05%	95.98%	-0.41%
Miami-Dade County Public Schools	95.50%	97.39%	98.11%	2.61%
Orange County Public Schools	97.06%	98.81%	100.0%	2.94%
School District of Palm Beach County	98.07%	98.33%	98.32%	0.25%
Pinellas County Public Schools	98.67%	96.84%	98.40%	-0.27%
Peer Average	97.45%	98.19%	98.53%	1.11%
National Peer School District				
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	NA	NA	NA	NA
Fairfax County Public Schools	NA	NA	NA	NA
Gwinnett County Public Schools	97.7%	97.8%	98.9%	1.2%
Houston Independent School District	NA	NA	NA	NA
Montgomery County Public Schools	96.0%	97.6%	99.4%	3.4%
Peer Average	96.9%	97.7%	99.2%	2.3%

Source: Florida Department of Education LEA Profiles <http://www.fldoe.org/ese/datapage.asp>, 2013, and Peer ESE Databases, 2014.

As a result of IDEA’s allowance for states to establish their own timeline for initial evaluations, the following required timelines are reflected in the data for the national peer districts. In most cases the timeframe is shorter than Florida’s or extends beyond completion of the evaluation itself to include writing the report and holding the eligibility staffing.

- North Carolina (Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools) – Ninety (90) calendar days from receipt of the referral to the placement determination.



- Virginia (Fairfax County Public Schools) – Sixty-five (65) business days from receipt of consent to eligibility determination.
- Georgia (Gwinnett County Public Schools) – Sixty (60) calendar days from receipt of consent to eligibility determination.
- Texas (Houston Independent School District) - Sixty (60) calendar days from parental consent to the completion of the evaluation report.
- Maryland (Montgomery County Public Schools) – Ninety (90) calendar days from referral to eligibility determination.

Based on the consent-to-evaluation data, Broward County Public Schools has made significant strides toward ensuring initial evaluations are completed within the required timeline. Available data back to 2006-07 reveal that the rate at that time was 93.1 percent, and the district has steadily improved its performance to the most recently reported 99.24 percent. However, the established procedures for prekindergarten children stipulate that the district delay obtaining consent for evaluation until weeks or even months after staff are aware the child meets the criteria for referral. Instead, for this population of children written consent is obtained on the day of the evaluation, thus ensuring 100 percent compliance with the technical timeline.

Respondents were universal in their belief that insufficient numbers of staff to conduct evaluations is the primary, overriding source of the pattern of delay in evaluating prekindergarten children. FDLRS/Child Find staff were compelling in their concern for the children and their desires to find a solution. District leaders have been creative in meeting timelines. They have re-assigned psychologists to ensure compliance with timelines, and added Saturday and summer testing. They have also staggered calendars so that psychologists start and stop their 216-day calendars at different times to ensure availability for evaluating. Additional proposals discussed by district leadership included adding an additional PreK evaluation team; shortening the evaluation report format to make it more concise or succinct, thus decreasing the time it takes to write and allowing eligibility staffings to be scheduled more quickly; and, piloting a one-day system in which an evaluation would be conducted on the same day that a child failed to pass the screening.

COMMENDATION

The FDLRS/Child Find staff and PreK Assessment Team members are commended for the unwavering commitment they demonstrate to the program, the children, and their families.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 4.8-2:

Revise the policy regarding obtaining consent for evaluation from parents of PreK children who do not pass the screening to include seeking consent as soon as possible, preferably on the same date as the screening.



Acknowledging that amendments to Rule 6A-6.0331, F.A.C., allow up to 20 business days to lapse between the district's knowledge that a student may be a student with a disability and requesting parental consent, this is intended to be the maximum timeframe. For children brought before a school's collaborative problem solving (CPS) team as well as for children whose parents have initiated the request, it allows the school time to schedule a meeting with the parents and the team. The situation is different for children coming through FDLRS/Child Find. In these cases, the parents are onsite with the evaluation team at the time the decision is made for referral, and there does not appear to be a compelling reason for delay. In addition, while the CPS team should ensure that school age children who need it are provided intensive and individualized instruction and intervention up to and beyond the evaluation, most PreK children have no such "safety net," and are at a very vulnerable developmental stage where intervening as early as possible is key.

Recommendation 4.8-3:

Establish an internal workgroup to solicit input from size-alike peer districts and/or regional neighboring districts to identify aspects of the district's PreK Child Find System that require or would benefit from redesign or restructuring.

Areas to consider include such things as infrastructure; policies, procedures, and actual practices; staffing patterns, including use of 10-, 11-, or 12-month positions; and roles and responsibilities of assessment team members and others involved in Child Find.

Recommendation 4.8-4:

Add at least two permanent PreK Assessment Teams to those currently in place.

The current number of evaluators will be unable to sustain high quality evaluation practices at the rate necessary to eliminate the existing backlog and keep up with the current rate of increase. The number of children coming into ESE through PreK Child Find does not appear to be leveling off. Given the additional immediate pressure of complying with the new timeline requirements established in Rule 6A-6.0331, F.A.C., a single additional team is unlikely to provide the necessary manpower to close the gap and maintain a reasonable schedule going forward.

Recommendation 4.8-5:

Make all contracts of staff required for preKindergarten evaluations 216-day contracts and evaluate the possibility of compressing screening and evaluation sessions.

As the process now stands, staff come in on a voluntary basis in the summer to conduct the evaluations. About half of the team members are able to do so even though the district would benefit from having the full complement of all team members for those additional 20 days. Should BCPS extend the contracts of all involved staff, it would be assured of having full staffs to conduct summer evaluations and likely increase its rate of compliance to 100 percent.



Each year, the district has addressed the issue of budgetary considerations for summer evaluations, but this year is the first year leadership has developed a plan with a proposed budget that was presented soon after Evergreen's site visit. The costs of paying staff at contracted costs for the extra-hours evaluations or paying them the additional 20 days on a 216-day calendar instead of their current 196 days are estimated to be relatively comparable.

FINDING

Documentation of evaluation and eligibility determinations were reviewed for a sample of 30 PreK children with disabilities who were found eligible for services under one or more of the following disabilities: developmental delay (DD); language impairment (LI); intellectual disability (InD); autism spectrum disorder (ASD); emotional/behavioral disability (E/BD); and specific learning disability (SLD). The most recent evaluation record was reviewed, so the sample included reevaluations as well as initial evaluations

The records reflected evaluation and/or reevaluations conducted in accordance with the district's SP&P and State Board of Education rules governing each of the relevant disability categories. Assessment instruments and evaluation procedures were sufficient to "identify all of the child's special education and related services needs, whether or not commonly linked to the disability category in which the child has been identified" as required by IDEA and best practice in the field. It was apparent that the specific types and categories of assessment administered were selected based on the unique characteristics and areas of concern for each child.

COMMENDATION

The PreK Assessment Team members are commended for the individualized attention evident in the evaluations reviewed, particularly in light of the strain on resources resulting from the high volume of evaluations completed.

FINDING

The BCPS prekindergarten ESE model relies on district-operated ESE classrooms, contracted placements in community agency programs for children with the most significant needs, and a limited number of integrated (i.e., inclusion) classrooms. In every discussion of the challenges the district faces regarding the time it takes to move a child from initial referral through evaluation and eligibility, and then finally to placement in the program, respondents stated that the challenges are exacerbated by the fact that the number of potentially eligible children significantly exceeds the PreK ESE slots available within the district. During 2013-14 Broward County Public Schools supported 214 PreK ESE classrooms, with an additional 27 proposed for 2014-15. Despite the concerted efforts of the PreK ESE staff, maintaining a sufficient number of slots for the increasing number of children and providing support in the least restrict environment is a challenge.

This conflict contributes to frustration on the part of evaluation team members and PreK staff. Additional contracted staff were brought in last summer to assist with eliminating backlogs and the evaluation teams exerted a tremendous amount of pressure on themselves to complete evaluations within the required 60-day timeline. Despite these efforts, respondents reported



feeling a sense of futility in that meeting that compliance goal does not necessarily translate into services for children – that ultimate goal is not met until the eligibility staffing is held and an open slot in a program is identified.

District and school staff reported that, while the district office proposes locations for special programs such as PreK ESE classrooms, the final decisions regarding the nature and extent of ESE services to be provided within each school are at the discretion of the principal. Lack of available space in elementary schools that is adequate or appropriate for a PreK classroom in conjunction with what was described as an “unwritten policy” of unilateral decision making by principals were identified as critical barriers to the district being able to meet the needs of its prekindergarten children with disabilities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 4.8-6:

Implement policies to provide for stronger district control of basic ESE programmatic decisions, including the location of specialized program clusters or classrooms such as PreK ESE classrooms.

Establish a stakeholder group of district- and school-based administrators and/or specialist as well as parents or other community representatives to study projections and advise the district on issues of program location.

Recommendation 4.8-7:

Focus efforts to expand the capacity of the PreK ESE program on providing more inclusive placements, including providing services and supports to children in community-based early care/child care programs.

Discussed in more detail in **Section 4.13** of this report, BCPS’s continuum of placements for PreK children provides limited access to inclusive settings. Given the lack of available space in schools, sending services into existing community programs in lieu of building more classrooms may be a viable option for ensuring timely provision of services.



4.9 REFERRAL, EVALUATION, AND ELIGIBILITY – AGES 6-21



4.9 REFERRAL, EVALUATION, AND ELIGIBILITY – AGES SIX THROUGH 21

As described in **Section 4.8**, state and district obligations regarding referral, evaluation, and eligibility determinations for students suspected of having a disability are referred to as the Child Find mandate under IDEA. In order to ensure that students who may need ESE services are identified, Florida's State Board of Education Rule 6A-6.0331, F.A.C., requires school districts to develop and implement coordinated general education intervention procedures for students who need additional academic and behavioral support to succeed in the general education environment. With a few stated exceptions, the rule states that, prior to referring a student for evaluation as a student with a disability the district must implement evidence-based interventions that are:

(1)(e)...developed through a process that uses student performance data to, among other things, identify and analyze the area of concern, select and implement interventions, and monitor the effectiveness of the interventions. Interventions shall be implemented as designed for a reasonable period of time and with a level of intensity that matches the student's needs. Pre-intervention and ongoing progress monitoring measures of academic and/or behavioral areas of concern must be collected and communicated to the parents in an understandable format.

In Broward County Public Schools the school-based collaborative problem solving (CPS) team is the entity that supports teachers in assisting hard-to-teach students make more progress within the general education classroom, and for ensuring they are referred for evaluation as a student with a disability when warranted. An exception to the general education interventions requirement is allowed when the CPS team and the parent determine that they are not appropriate for a student who demonstrates a speech disorder or severe cognitive, physical or sensory disorders, or severe social/behavioral deficits that require immediate intensive intervention to prevent harm to the student or others. In addition to the district, parents also may request an evaluation.

FINDING

Florida's school districts are expected to implement a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) that incorporates systematic use of assessment data to most efficiently allocate resources in order to improve learning for all students. Utilizing a collaborative problem solving/response to intervention (CPS/RtI) approach, high-quality instruction and intervention matched to student needs is provided, with learning rate overtime and level of performance used to make important instructional decisions. Broward County Public Schools has a strong history as an innovative and forward-thinking district, particularly with regard to the development of a comprehensive MTSS to support schools' collaborative problem solving teams.

Intended to ensure that every student is provided effective instruction and interventions to enable him or her to achieve grade level achievement and behavioral standards, a district's MTSS framework is fundamentally an "all students" general education construct. However, management and oversight of MTSS often is confounded by the fact that its implementation is an



essential component of the ESE referral process, and the information gleaned from it is critical for determining if a student is eligible for ESE services. Specifically, in order to be eligible for ESE services as a student with a disability under IDEA, the student must (1) have a disability and, (2) as a result of the disability, need special education and related services. Progress monitoring data reflecting the student's response to research-based targeted general education interventions and instruction implemented through the CPS/RtI process provide the clearest evidence of that need. As a result, once a school team begins the process of referring a student for an evaluation, the documentation and procedural safeguards requirements related to exceptional student education apply, and these functions are the responsibility of the BCPS Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services.

To ensure efficient use of resources, schools begin with the identification of trends and patterns using schoolwide and grade-level data. Students who need instructional interventions beyond what is provided universally through schoolwide positive behavior initiatives or within academic content areas are provided with targeted, supplemental interventions delivered individually or in small groups at increasing levels of intensity. Within an MTSS, all school-based efforts such as lesson study, universal design for learning, and continuous school improvement are unified and accelerated by collaborative teaming to result in increased student achievement. Although Rule 6A-6.0331, F.A.C., codifying interventions required prior to referral for exceptional student education is an ESE rule, the requirements themselves are intended to reflect existing general education functions conducted as part of MTSS.

Instruction and interventions implemented through MTSS also reflect the district's commitment and obligation to ensure that students are not inappropriately labeled or identified as having a disability when they may simply be "different learners" or have not had access to effective instruction. This is accomplished by utilizing all of the skills and resources available within the general education program to provide effective research based interventions to students who need them. In its role as the framework for continuous improvement from the district level down to the individual student level, MTSS is ideally suited to serve as the mechanism through which districts meet this component of their child find obligation.

District and school staff reported that number of individuals providing support to schools in implementing MTSS has decreased significantly in recent years, and that this has resulted in a significant gap in guidance and technical assistance in this area. While individual school leaders most often reported that the CPS/RtI processes implemented within their own schools effectively support child find by providing the general education interventions and progress monitoring required for students suspected of having a disability, this opinion was contradicted by a significant number of instructional staff, CPS/RtI team members, district-based staff, and parents.

Lack of districtwide processes or procedures to ensure fidelity of implementation in all schools was reported to be a critical factor that has impeded an effective and consistent referral system from being implemented. Many staff reported that, in general, a fully functional MTSS is implemented more effectively at the elementary level, but when students transition to middle and high school, where they are most often served in general education, the supports are no longer



available. An additional challenge for secondary students is a lack of time for tier two or tier three supports and services due to course scheduling and lack of flexibility within the school day.

The significant variation districtwide in CPS/RtI implementation described by district staff who have the opportunity to interact with multiple schools was evident during the onsite visits to schools. For example, within the elementary schools visited the frequency of CPS/RtI team meetings ranged from once per week, or more often if case load demands, to twice monthly or every other week, to once per month.

Exhibit 4.9-1 presents guidance related to the frequency of CPS team meetings that is included in two BCPS training modules – *What’s New in CPS/RtI for 2010-11? Elementary Level* and *What’s New in CPS/RtI for 2010-11? Secondary Level*. The expectation stated in the module is that in order to be considered “fully functioning,” each school’s CPS/RtI team must meet “at least twice a month (never less, but more frequently if needed).” However, in at least three of the 32 schools visited, although smaller grade level teams met more frequently to discuss current issues or concerns and engage in collaborative planning, the schools’ formally designated CPS/RtI teams reported meeting only monthly.

Exhibit 4.9-1
Expectations for Collaborative Problem Solving Teams

Expectations: CPS

1. All schools must have a duly constituted and fully functioning CPS team

A. Duly constituted means: a core team of administrator(s), teacher(s), school psychologist, school social worker, guidance counselor, reading specialist or coach (for all cases involving reading), math specialist or coach (for all cases involving math); other specialists may be added to the team as needed; parents and the student may participate when and how appropriate

B. Fully functioning means: (1) meets at least twice a month (never less, but more frequently if needed), (2) has a clearly identified and consistent professional who serves as coordinator of the CPS team, (3) has a consistent method for case management of all Tier 2 and Tier 3 cases, (4) provides assistance to all general education teachers with intervention development, implementation, progress monitoring, and evaluation of intervention effectiveness for students at Tier 2 or Tier 3 with problems in reading, math, and/or behavior, and (5) engages in data-based decision making at Tier 1 (through “data chats”) and at Tiers 2 and 3 (through use of district-mandated *Intervention Records* and progress monitoring).

Source: http://www.broward.k12.fl.us/STUDENTSUPPORT/psychologicalservices/html/CPS_RTI.htm, 2014.



With regard to the description of a “duly constituted” CPS/RtI team, the district’s guidance identifies a core team of participants that must include administrator(s), teacher(s), a school psychologist, a school social worker, guidance counselor, and a reading or math specialist or coach, depending upon the student’s presenting areas of concern. The guidance further states that “other specialists may be added to the team as needed” and parents and the student should participate “when and how appropriate.” Although the position of ESE Specialist is not referenced directly in the list of team members, this individual was included as a core team member in all of the schools visited. In fact, in several of the schools, the ESE Specialist was the individual designated to lead and/or coordinate the actions of the CPS/RtI team.

The level of structure imposed upon CPS/RtI teams and team member roles also varied widely across the district. Some of the schools have established very clearly defined responsibilities and expectations for each CPS/RtI team member based on their areas of expertise and experience, while other were much more loosely organized with broadly defined roles. Finding sufficient time to meet when all necessary staff are available was widely reported as the most significant challenge. One school described a schedule that includes multiple team meeting times within a given day to facilitate participation by teachers.

Another significant difference observed across the district was the extent to which school-based MTSS leadership teams and CPS/RtI teams incorporated ESE concerns into their regular activities. A few schools described formal tracking of referral rates and eligibility determinations to assess the extent to which they were accurately identifying students who might have a disability, but the majority did not. Two schools reported that their CPS/RtI teams engaged in intervention planning and progress monitoring of struggling already-identified ESE students when the circumstances warranted it. In contrast, several others indicated that the IEP team would be the entity to address lack of progress for those students.

As part of the general district reorganization discussed in more detail in subsection 4.1 of this report, the Chief Academic Officer position was created to oversee BCPS’s recently formed Academic Division. That division is focused on student outcomes and comprises early childhood education; instruction and interventions; special education and support; and student support initiatives. During interviews with Jose Dotres, the district’s newly appointed CAO, he discussed CPS/RtI as it is implemented within BCPS, indicated that this would be a primary focus for the division, and reflected on the importance of cross-disciplinary communication, collaboration, and responsibility moving forward. Examples of actions taken thus far include adding two additional district-level staff members in addition to the single individual who had been assigned to work in this area, and revising the BCPS Student Progression Plan to include RtI for any student being considered for retention.

COMMENDATION

Broward County Public Schools is commended for committing to a renewed focus on the development and implementation of a fully functioning districtwide multi-tiered system of supports that incorporates clear and consistent procedures for school-based collaborative problem solving teams and gives them the resources necessary to provide effective data-based instruction and interventions to all students.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 4.9-1:

Develop an infrastructure to create and support a seamless CPS/RtI system within a framework of MTSS across all BCPS schools.

Some schools in the district have created a number of effective processes for implementing CPS/RtI and MTSS. However, no systemic framework is in place to capture these processes and integrate them into a systematic and cohesive districtwide framework, nor are there consistent and universally applied support mechanisms such as communication and regular meetings among key staff responsible for implementation. BCPS leadership is encouraged to coalesce on the importance of interventions for students in all schools.

Recommendation 4.9-2:

Ensure all stakeholder groups are represented in the committee or workgroup engaged in developing CPS/RtI procedures and resources, and monitor the process to ensure the individuals selected to participate are knowledgeable, committed, and actively involved.

Given the history of CPS/RtI in Broward County Public Schools, it is particularly important that staff involved in redesigning or enhancing MTSS districtwide believe in the district leadership's commitment to seeing it through. Strong support from the administration, including allocation of time and resources, is needed for stakeholders to trust their efforts will result in positive change.

Recommendation 4.9-3:

Incorporate resources to support social/behavioral development in addition to academic achievement into all MTSS and CPS/RtI reforms.

Recent cuts in behavioral support staff have had an impact on general education students as well as ESE students. Teachers' and administrators' knowledge about and willingness to work with students whose challenges are behaviorally-based varied widely across schools. District and school staff expressed the need for assistance with school-wide as well as student-specific behaviors.

Recommendation 4.9-4:

Expand the existing body of CPS/RtI tools to include explicit guidance and technical assistance on the establishment and consistent implementation of decision rules for assessing intervention effectiveness as well as a uniform understanding of what constitutes reasonable and/or sufficient intervention efforts prior referring a student for evaluation.

Standard decision rules help CPS/RtI teams determine when instructional changes are warranted or goals should be raised. While most teams are comfortable establishing and applying decision rules to determine if a student's response to intervention is positive, questionable, or poor, they



are not always consistent or considered in the actions they take when the response is determined to be poor. There are often delays in making substantive changes to the intervention, or to pursuing a referral for evaluation, even with the data indicate that a condition warranting referral is evident.

FINDING

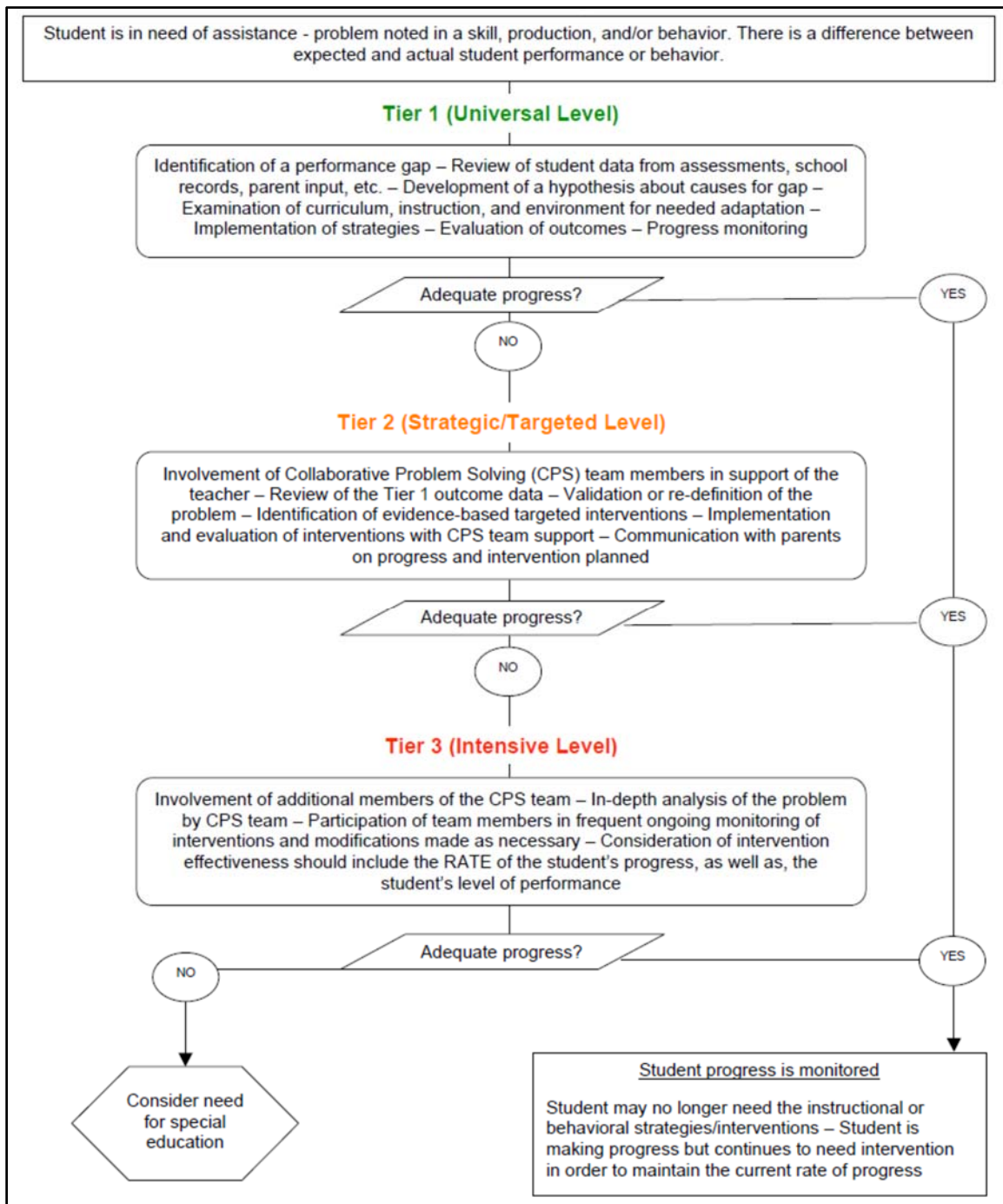
The Psychological Services section of the Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services maintains on its website a wealth of resources related to the district's collaborative problem solving/response to intervention (CPS/RtI) process. Materials include but are not limited to:

- Manuals and other supporting documents such as:
 - *Collaborative Problem Solving and Response to Intervention (CPS/RtI): A Multi-Tiered System of Supports*
 - CPS/RtI informational brochures for parents in English, Spanish, Creole, and Portuguese;
 - the district's collaborative problem solving flowchart;
 - Struggling Reader charts for elementary and secondary grades and a Struggling Math chart for K-12 that guides users to identify the source of a student's difficulty and select appropriate instructional materials or interventions based on the student's needs;
 - diagnostic and tracking tools (such as benchmark checklists, oral reading fluency norms, an ELL oral reading fluency chart); and
 - *Guide to Management of Problem Behaviors: Resources and Strategies for Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 Interventions.*
- Training modules on:
 - *CPS/RtI Basics*
 - *RtI Essentials*
 - *RtI Essentials for Behavior*
 - *Progress Monitoring*
 - CPS/RtI planning and implementation.
- Forms and graphing tools such as:
 - academic intervention records (hard copy and electronic);
 - behavior intervention records (hard copy and electronic);
 - individual and group classroom graphs; and
 - links to various electronic graphing tools.



Examples of these tools are provided in **Exhibit 4.9-2** (*CPS Process Flowchart*), **Exhibit 4.9-3** (*Guide to Management of Problem Behaviors – Tier 1*), **4.9-4** (*Guide to Management of Problem Behaviors – Tier 2*), and **Exhibit 4.9-5** (*Guide to Management of Problem Behaviors – Tier 3*).

Exhibit 4.9-2 BCPS Collaborative Problem Solving Flowchart



Source: http://www.broward.k12.fl.us/STUDENTSUPPORT/psychologicalservices/html/CPS_RTI.htm, 2014.



Exhibit 4.9-3
Tier 1:
Identifying Universal Management Strategies to Respond to Behavior Problems

ESSENTIAL BEHAVIORS	DATA COLLECTION AND ASSESSMENT TOOLS	INTERVENTION CRITERIA	STRATEGIES
Appropriate/respectful interactions with adults Appropriate/respectful interactions with peers Compliance with school/classroom rules Compliance with adult directions Attention to task Work completion	Comparison of behavior with typical cohort Consultation with previous teacher(s) Anecdotal information Perceived Teacher Satisfaction CHAMPs Implementation Rubric How many students do you have in the classroom at one time? What level of structure do your students need? Tool: Management & Discipline Planning Questionnaire, CHAMPs , Pg. 37 Complete the CHAMPs Classroom Management Plan (CHAMPs , Module 1) Complete the Self-Assessment Checklists from CHAMPs Modules 1, 2, 3, (4), and 5.	Teacher Satisfaction Level Consistent implementation of CHAMPs strategies as documented on CHAMPs Implementation Rubric at Application Level or higher in each Area of Management. Continued inability of student(s) to demonstrate essential behaviors and continued teacher dissatisfaction may indicate a move to Tier 2 strategies	CHAMPs Intervention Rubric (see attached)

Source: *Guide to Management of Problem Behaviors*

(<http://www.broward.k12.fl.us/STUDENTSUPPORT/psychologicalservices/html/CPSRTI.htm>), 2014.

Exhibit 4.9-4
Tier 2:
Identifying Targeted Management Strategies to Respond to Behavior Problems
Essential Behavior – Compliance with School/Classroom Rules

ESSENTIAL BEHAVIORS	DATA COLLECTION AND ASSESSMENT TOOLS	INTERVENTION CRITERIA	STRATEGIES
Compliance with school/classroom rules	Classroom observations Consultation with previous teacher(s) Review of student records, discipline data, CUM folder, attendance, etc. CHAMPs data collection tools (Module 6): Tools 1, 2, 3, and 5 At what percentage do students respond positively to adult direction on the first time? Tool: frequency record How many students do you have in the classroom at one time? Tool: Management & Discipline Planning Questionnaire, CHAMPs , Pg. 37 Interventioncentral.org a) Teacher Behavior Log b) Narrative ABC Record c) Frequency d) Behavioral Scatter Plot FBA completion, when needed; depending on FBA results, development and implementation of PBIP.	Tool 1: If less than 70% of 4's and 5's, modify environment with Tier 2 strategies. Tool 2: If less than 3:1 ratio, modify environment with Tier 2 strategies. Tool 3: If more than 90% of misbehavior can be attributed to a couple of students, move to Tier 3 for those students / if less than 90% of the misbehavior can be attributed to a couple of students, modify the environment with Tier 2 strategies. Tool 5: Less than 80% requires Tier 2 strategies Data indicate that student(s) has a significantly higher rate of noncompliance with school/classroom rules than other students. Goal(s) met; or significant progress toward meeting goal(s) on PBIP or other intervention plan.	RIDE Elementary School Strategies: a) Attending School b) Participating c) Following Directions d) Compliance e) Out-Of-Seats f) Aggression RIDE Middle School Strategies: a) Attending School b) Participating c) Compliance d) Out-Of-Seats e) Aggression CHAMPs Strategies: a) Teaching Expectations: Pgs. 112-146 b) Classroom Rules: Pgs. 76-77 The Teacher's Encyclopedia of Behavior Management: Determine specific problem and implement corresponding plan (use index) Interventioncentral.org a) Behavioral interventions b) Classroom management

Source: *Guide to Management of Problem Behaviors*

(http://www.broward.k12.fl.us/STUDENTSUPPORT/psychologicalservices/html/CPS_RT1.htm), 2014.



Exhibit 4.9-5
Tier 3:
Identifying Targeted Management Strategies to Respond to Behavior Problems
Essential Behavior – Appropriate/Respectful Interactions with Peers

ESSENTIAL BEHAVIORS	DATA COLLECTION (USED IN ALL CASES)	ASSESSMENT TOOLS	INTERVENTION CRITERIA	STRATEGIES
Appropriate/respectful interactions with peers	<p>Obtain baseline data through observation, frequency or duration measures, review of work products, FBA/PBIP, etc.</p> <p>Conversation with child/student interview.</p> <p>Parent conference</p> <p>Review data collected during application of Tier 2 strategies (consider whether the student(s) failed to respond or there were implementation flaws).</p> <p>Identify a focused target problem in behavioral terms</p>	<p>Progress monitoring with measurements on the same behaviors used to establish a baseline; evaluate progress on PBIP, if implemented.</p> <p>Interventioncentral.org</p> <p>F) Teacher Behavior Log</p> <p>G) Narrative ABC Record</p> <p>H) Daily Behavior Report Card</p> <p>I) Frequency</p> <p>J) Behavior Observation System for Schools</p>	<p>Goal(s) met; or significant progress toward meeting goal(s) on PBIP or other intervention plan.</p> <p>If no or limited progress on goal(s), does problem warrant referral for a comprehensive evaluation?</p>	<p>RIDE Elementary School Strategies:</p> <p>f) Social Skills</p> <p>g) Cooperating with Others</p> <p>h) Shyness</p> <p>i) Aggression</p> <p>j) Bullying</p> <p>RIDE Middle School Strategies:</p> <p>e) Social Skills</p> <p>f) Cooperating With Others</p> <p>g) Aggression</p> <p>f) Bullying</p>

Source: *Guide to Management of Problem Behaviors*

(http://www.broward.k12.fl.us/STUDENTSUPPORT/psychologicalservices/html/CPS_RTI.htm), 2014

Through a series of district reorganization initiatives, implementation and oversight of MTSS and CPS/RTI has been moved to different departments during the past several years. As a result, the district has struggled with determining “ownership” of the process. This has had a significant impact on team functioning and operations, and overall momentum for developing a model system has waned. Despite ongoing efforts to provide support to schools through face-to-face interactions as well as resources such as those currently available through the Psychological Services website, the majority of respondents (both district- and school-based) reported disappointment with the level of programmatic support the district provides to schools. School and district staff expressed concern regarding the resources available to teams to use with students with academic and behavioral challenges, and indicated that many otherwise effective tools are being used in the wrong way.

Respondents provided anecdotal evidence of CPS/RTI team decisions and actions that reflect lack of knowledge about or understanding of a tiered framework and strategic decision making with regard to instruction and intervention. Many of the concerns that were reported dealt with issues of efficacy, specifically the extent to which decisions are often based on flawed data (i.e., not valid or reliable). Most of the examples provided fall into the following categories:

- implementing part of an intervention of program that is only effective when implemented in full;
- measuring progress on one skill when the intervention is intended to address another skill;



- using programs designed to provide core or supplemental instruction as intensive individualized interventions; and
- considering tools used to measure or track progress to be the actual intervention.

The integrity of the CPS/RtI process is compromised when there a disconnect between the students' educational needs and the instruction provided.

COMMENDATION

Psychological Services staff are commended for ongoing support of schools and CPS/RtI teams as they strive to provide appropriate and effective instruction and intervention to students and produce accurate and meaningful RtI data to inform evaluation and eligibility decisions for students with disabilities.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.9-5:

Use the significant knowledge base and expertise within Psychological Services to assist in the development of an effective support structure for schools as they development more effective CPS/RtI processes.

The onus of conducting ESE evaluations is primarily on school psychologists. As a group, they need to be immersed in the process as CPS/RtI in Broward County evolves to better serve its role as a primary component of a comprehensive evaluation for many students – and perhaps the most critical factor to be considered when determining if a student has a specific learning disability, language impairment, or even emotional/behavioral disability.

FINDING

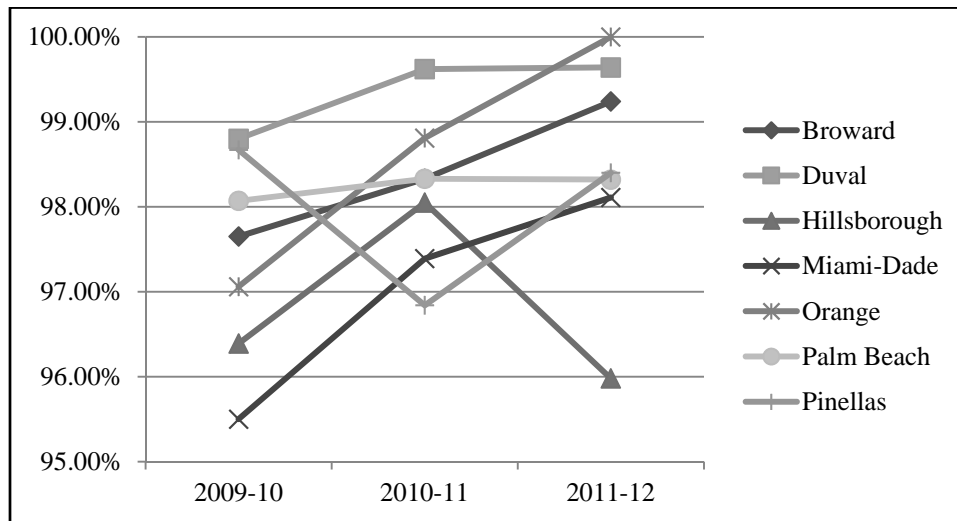
Florida's timeline for completion of an evaluation for a student who may have a disability is 60 school days for children ages three through five who are not yet enrolled in school and 60 school days of which the student is in attendance for students enrolled in kindergarten through grade 12. The 60-day timeline commences once the district proposes an evaluation in writing to the parent, and the parent provides consent. In accordance with IDEA and State Board of Education rules, Florida school districts must ensure that students suspected of having a disability are evaluated within 60 days from receipt of consent from the parent.

The percent of students evaluated within the required timeline for BCPS, its within-state enrollment group peers, and the national peer district comparators are provided in **Exhibit 4.8-5** under subsection 4.8 of this report. During the past several years Broward County Public Schools has worked diligently to meet the goal of ensuring 100 percent of evaluations are completed within required timeline. As a result, the district increased its rate of timely evaluation from 93.1 percent in 2008 (based on 2006-07 school year data) to 99.24 percent in 2013 (based on 2011-12 school year data).



Data reflecting completion of initial evaluations within the required timeline for BCPS and the Florida peer districts for the three-year period are presented in **Exhibit 4.9-6**.

Exhibit 4.9-6
Students Evaluated within 60 Days of Receipt of Parent Consent or
State-Established Timeline
2009-10 through 2011-12 School Years



Source: Florida Department of Education LEA Profiles <http://www.fldoe.org/ese/datapage.asp>), 2013, and Peer ESE Databases, 2014

While the progress monitoring results of general education interventions are used to inform the team's eligibility decision, they are not included in this timeline. IDEA is clear with regard to SLD eligibility, and the concept applies to other categories as well, that a district should not refer a student for evaluation as a student with a disability unless and until, for example, there is evidence that the student is not making adequate progress after an appropriate period of time when provided appropriate instruction and intense, individualized interventions. However, districts also are directed not to delay evaluating a student solely for the purpose of completing a prescribed set of activities. As a result, if there is a real or perceived delay in the CPS/RtI team's decision to propose an evaluation, parents or teachers will likely interpret it as an evaluation that is taking longer than allowed.

The referral and evaluation process are described in detail in Rule 6A-6.0331, F.A.C. At the time of this evaluation the rule stated the following regarding a district referral for evaluation:

(3)(a) Prior to a school district request for initial evaluation, school personnel must make one (1) of the following determinations and include appropriate documentation in the student's educational record to reflect that:



- 1. For a student suspected of being a student with a disability, the general education intervention procedures have been implemented as required under this rule and indicate that the student should be considered for eligibility for ESE; or*
- 2. The nature or severity of the student's areas of concern make the general education intervention procedures inappropriate in addressing the immediate needs of the student.*

Regarding a parent's request for evaluation, the rule states:

(3)(b) If the parent of the child receiving general education interventions requests, prior to the completion of these interventions, that the school conduct an evaluation to determine the student's eligibility for specially designed instruction and related services as a student with a disability, the school district:

- 1. Must obtain consent for and conduct the evaluation; and*
- 2. Complete the activities described in subsection (1) of this rule concurrently with the evaluation but prior to the determination of the student's eligibility for specially designed instruction; or*
- 3. Must provide the parent with written notice of its refusal to conduct the evaluation that meets the requirements of Rule 6A-6.03311, F.A.C.*

While not explicitly stated, in accordance with the Child Find obligation to ensure that every eligible student be identified, the implied expectation was that a student would be referred for evaluation without undue delay when the student's response to intervention is not sufficient to meet grade level standards.

In an effort to ensure the intent that evaluation referrals are initiated within a reasonable amount of time, the rule was amended to state directly that the district must initiate a referral and established a timeline governing the referral process. Effective March 25, 2014, the following applies to referral and evaluation procedures for school age students (emphasis added):

(3) (a) The school district must seek consent from the parent or guardian to conduct an evaluation whenever the district suspects that a kindergarten through grade 12 student... is a student with a disability and needs special education and related services.

Circumstances which would indicate that a student may be a student with a disability who needs special education and related services include, but are not limited to, the following:

- 1. When the [student's] response to intervention data indicate that intensive interventions implemented in accordance with subsection (1) of this rule are effective but require a level of intensity and resources to sustain growth or performance that is beyond that which is accessible through general education resources; or*
- 2. When the [student's] response to interventions implemented in accordance with subsection (1) of this rule indicates that the student does not make adequate growth given effective core instruction and intensive, individualized, evidence-based interventions; or*



3. When a parent requests an evaluation and there is documentation or evidence that the [student] may be a student with a disability and need special education and related services.

(b) Within twenty (20) school days of a school-based team's determination that a circumstance described in subparagraphs (3)(a)1., or (3)(a) 2., of this rule exists..., the school district must request consent from the parent to conduct an evaluation, unless the parent and the school agree otherwise in writing.

(c) As described in subparagraph (3)(a)3. of this rule, if a parent requests that the school conduct an evaluation to determine the [student's] eligibility for special education and related services as a student with a disability, the school district must within twenty (20) school days, unless the parent and the school agree otherwise in writing:

- 1. Obtain consent for the evaluation; or*
- 2. Provide the parent with written notice in accordance with Rule 6A-6.03311, F.A.C., explaining its refusal to conduct the evaluation.*

Both teachers and parents expressed concerns regarding the amount of time many students spend receiving tier two supplemental instruction and support and tier three intensive individualized interventions that are ineffective or only result in only minimal improvement. Reasons cited for delays included CPS/RtI teams that don't meet frequently enough or for a long enough time to handle the number of students who need to be discussed; lack of follow through from year to year (i.e., starting each year as a blank slate, no matter the students' status at the end of the prior year; lack of clarity about what resources are available, and which are truly effective; and unwillingness on the part of teams to refer students for evaluation.

Although teams are directed to ensure that they implement appropriate interventions with fidelity for a reasonable amount of time before making a decision to refer a student for evaluation, the intent is to prevent the "rush to test/rush to place" that in the past caused students to be placed in special education without finding out whether, in fact, they only needed a "different kind" of general education. Despite this, during interviews at school sites statements were made that reflected significant misperceptions about MTSS and RtI. On several occasions, teachers referred to "six weeks" or "at least one quarter" or even more as the amount of time an intervention must be implemented before the team will review student progress, revise an the intervention, or consider if the student should be referred for evaluation.

When asked to expand on the reasons CPS/RtI teams might be hesitant to refer a student for an evaluation, respondents were unable to provide an answer. Several stated that the system is designed to keep circling back to try something new – that even if a team determines a student isn't making adequate progress "after four, six, nine months or even a year or more," they don't feel confident in making the referral.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 4.9-6:

Analyze the referral and eligibility data for all schools, disaggregated by level, to determine the extent to which schools are successfully identifying students with disabilities and to ensure that there are no patterns of either over- or under-referral across schools.

When reviewing the data, schools with low referral and eligibility rates should be closely analyzed as well as those with high rates to ensure students who are eligible for ESE services are appropriately identified.

Recommendation 4.9-7:

Conduct a review of student referral records to identify the extent to which teams engaged in the problemsolving process adhere to the criteria for referring students for evaluation without unnecessary delay.

Specifically, determine whether there is a pattern of delaying referral for evaluation even when the data indicate the student has not made adequate progress after an appropriate period of time when provided appropriate instruction and intense, individualized interventions; or intensive interventions are demonstrated to be effective but require sustained and substantial effort that may include the provision of specially designed instruction and related services. Review documentation of the collaborative problem solving process to assess the length of time the students were under review and intervention by the CPS/RtI team, including the total time from initial consideration by the team and referral. Recommended factors to consider include: if applicable, the impact of summer break on the process; length of time between sessions (i.e., being the subject of a CPS/RtI team discussion); length of time with each intervention; number of times interventions were revised; and decision rules for referral for ESE evaluation.

Recommendation 4.9-8:

Provide technical assistance and support to foster team member confidence in the integrity and validity of the data produced through CPS/RtI, in conjunction with actions taken to revise and/or enhance MTSS and the CPS/RtI process.

As team members become more confident in the process and are able to observe positive results when appropriate and effective interventions are identified and implemented through PS/RtI, they will also be more confident in their determinations regarding what constitutes the transition point between general education supports and the need for consideration of special education services.



FINDING

When IDEA was reauthorized in 2004, the method used to identify students with SLD was changed significantly. It had previously relied upon a discrepancy model that assessed whether a substantial difference, or discrepancy, existed between a student's scores on an individualized test of general intelligence and his or her scores on a standardized test of academic achievement, and the extent to which that discrepancy reflected a cognitive processing deficit as measured by a standardized assessment. Beginning in 2004, states were expected to transition to response-to-intervention model based on systematic assessment of the student's response to high quality, research-based general education instruction. This represented a paradigmatic shift in thinking about learning disabilities and how they should be identified.

In 2009 State Board of Education Rule 6A06.03018, F.A.C., was revised to incorporate RtI as the primary method of evaluation for SLD, with required evaluation procedures embedded in the criteria for eligibility as follows (emphasis added):

(4) Criteria for eligibility. A student meets the eligibility criteria as a student with a specific learning disability if all of the following criteria are met.

(a) Evidence of specific learning disability. The student's parent(s) or guardian(s) and group of qualified personnel may determine that a student has a specific learning disability if there is evidence of each of the following:

1. When provided with learning experiences and instruction appropriate for the student's chronological age or grade level standards pursuant to Rule 6A-1.09401, F.A.C., the student does not achieve adequately for the student's chronological age or does not meet grade-level standards as adopted in Rule 6A-1.09401, F.A.C., in one or more of the following areas based on the review of multiple sources which may include group and/or individual criterion or norm-referenced measures, including individual diagnostic procedures:

- a. Oral expression;*
- b. Listening comprehension;*
- c. Written expression;*
- d. Basic reading skills;*
- e. Reading fluency skills;*
- f. Reading comprehension;*
- g. Mathematics calculation; or*
- h. Mathematics problem solving.*

2. The student does not make adequate progress to meet chronological age or grade-level standards adopted in Rule 6A-1.09401, F.A.C., in one or more of the areas identified in subparagraph (4)(a)1. of this rule when using one of the following processes:



- a. A process based on the student's response to scientific, research-based intervention, consistent with the comprehensive evaluation procedures in subsection (5) of Rule 6A-6.0331, F.A.C.; or*
 - b. A process based on the student's response to scientific, research-based intervention, and the student exhibits a pattern of strengths and weaknesses in performance, achievement, or both, relative to age, grade level standards pursuant to Rule 6A-1.09401, F.A.C., or intellectual development, that is determined by the group to be relevant to the identification of a specific learning disability, using appropriate assessments, consistent with the comprehensive evaluation procedures in subsection (5) of Rule 6A-6.0331, F.A.C.*
- 3. The group determines that its findings under paragraph (a) of this subsection are not primarily the result of the following:*
 - a. A visual, hearing, or motor disability;*
 - b. Intellectual disability;*
 - c. Emotional/behavioral disability;*
 - d. Cultural factors;*
 - e. Irregular pattern of attendance and/or high mobility rate;*
 - f. Classroom behavior;*
 - g. Environmental or economic factors; or*
 - h. Limited English proficiency....*
- (c) Observation requirement. In determining whether a student needs specially designed instruction and has a specific learning disability, and in order to document the relationship between the student's classroom behavior and academic performance, the group must:*
 - 1. Use information from an observation in routine classroom instruction and monitoring of the student's performance that was completed before referral for an evaluation; or*
 - 2. Have at least one member of the group conduct an observation of the student's performance in the student's typical learning environment, or in an environment appropriate for a student of that chronological age, after referral for an evaluation and parental or guardian consent has been obtained.*

In addition to the evaluation requirements set forth in the rule, districts are required to describe in their ESE Policies and Procedures how the district documents a student's response to intervention to determine the student's eligibility as a student with a specific learning disability. BCPS ESE Policies and Procedures state:

In all Broward schools, a school-based collaborative problem-solving team will document a student's response to intervention using the district-developed Academic Intervention Record as a guide. Charts and/or graphs of progress monitoring data and peer comparisons will be



generated by school personnel conducting the interventions. All intervention data will be reviewed in conjunction with additional educationally relevant assessments at the eligibility determination meeting. The IEP team will complete the Specific Learning Disabilities worksheet as data are reviewed to determine if the student is eligible as a student with a specific learning disability.

Districts also are given the option of including in Appendix B any additional information regarding evaluations, qualified evaluators, or unique philosophical, curricular, or instructional considerations for students with specific learning disabilities. The BCPS ESE Policies and Procedures include the following additional information with regard to SLD (emphasis added):

*In Broward County, the student who is eligible for services under the category of specific learning disability (SLD) must be evaluated in a manner that will clearly demonstrate the student: (1) has a primary deficit in basic learning processes, the impact of which is underachievement in one or more of the eight recognized areas pertaining to SLD identification (**requires an individually administered test of achievement, and may include individually administered tests of cognitive abilities as deemed necessary by the school-based collaborative problem-solving team**); and (2) has not responded to well-designed instructional interventions, implemented with sufficient intensity and fidelity, as referenced by on-going progress monitoring (requires continuous collection of RtI data at the strategic and/or intensive levels).*

The section marked by bold text reflects the district's established policy that evaluations for SLD **must** include a test of achievement, and **may** include other tests of cognitive abilities based on the opinion of the CPS/RtI team and each student's unique circumstances. As BCPS did in its ESE Policies and Procedures with regard to requiring an achievement test, districts may impose *evaluation tools* in addition to those established in rule as long as they align with existing requirements and do not involve additions or other changes to *eligibility criteria*.

When conducting an evaluation, the CPS/RtI team must review all available and relevant data, including any existing evaluations and information provided by the parents, and on the basis of that review, identify what, if any, additional data are needed to determine if a student has a disability and the educational needs of the student. Based on Florida's evaluation and eligibility requirements, a student could potentially be determined to have an SLD based solely on data gathered through the CPS/RtI process; in the case of BCPS that would require that the CPS/RtI team had administered an individual achievement test to inform instructional planning and the development of effective interventions for a student.

In contrast, during interviews with district and school-based staff, virtually all respondents reported that teams require a full battery of assessments as part of psychological assessment. This was corroborated by a review of the documentation from evaluations conducted during the past two years in which the student was found eligible under SLD. Utilizing records housed in EasyIEP™, eligibility staffing documents for students enrolled in 12 elementary schools and who had been evaluated and found eligible as SLD during the past three years were reviewed.



Of the 300 students with SLD enrolled in the 12 schools, records for 98 (33 percent) were analyzed. The evaluations for all 98 (100%) included:

- at least one individually administered achievement test such as the Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement (KTEA-II);
- at least one assessment of cognitive ability such as the Differential Ability Scales (DAS-II) or Kaufman Assessment Battery for Children (KABC-II); and
- at least one processing test such as the Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing (CTOPP-2) or Test of Auditory Processing Skills (TAPS-3).

Because the records were reviewed online, copies of evaluation reports and documentation of the students' RtI were not available. However, the list of assessment tools used to determine eligibility would be expected to include analysis of the RtI data, as this is a critical component of the eligibility determination for SLD. Of the 98 records:

- 11 (11 percent) included "RtI data" or "review of tiered intervention data" as part of the evaluation;
- 62 (63 percent) included "record review"; and
- 25 (26 percent) did not include any reference to a record review, RtI data, or tiered interventions.

Based on the sample of eligibility documents reviewed and discussions with school and district staff, it appears that there is an unwritten requirement within BCPS that all evaluations for which SLD is being considered must include an assessment of cognitive ability and a processing test, in addition to the test of academic achievement required in accordance with the BCPS ESE Policies and Procedures document.

During school visits staff were asked why assessments such as these were believed to be necessary for so many students. Several respondents explained that they would yield valuable information needed to identify appropriate instructional methods and interventions as they provided insight into the students' learning styles and challenges. If this were the case, it would seem that these of assessments should be administered by the CPS/RtI team much earlier in the problem solving process to inform decisions about appropriate Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions. The fact that they are administered as part of the formal evaluation process after interventions have been found to be ineffective suggests that they are considered a necessary component of the eligibility determination. This is reinforced by the fact that only 11 percent of eligibility documents made reference to basing the determination at least in part on the students' response to intervention. Lastly, several individuals responsible for conducting ESE evaluations and determining eligibility reflected on the wide variation across the district in how CPS/RtI is implemented and, as a result, expressed concern regarding the validity and integrity of individual students' data and the appropriateness of relying on it to determine ESE eligibility.



RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.9-9:

Establish a committee of district and school-based staff involved in referral, evaluation, and eligibility of students with disabilities to evaluate the extent to which current district practices related to specific learning disabilities (SLD) align with written policies of the state and district.

Evergreen recommends that the committee include psychologists and other evaluators, compliance specialists, school-based CSP/RtI leaders, and ESE Specialists. The Committee should be tasked with identifying discrepancies between policies and current district practices; isolating possible causes for the discrepancies; and proposing solutions in the form of an action plan. The action plan should ensure that a process that determines how a child responds to scientific, research-based interventions is a central component of any evaluation and determination of eligibility for a student with an SLD.

FINDING

Between 2010-11 and 2012-13, the overall student population of BCPS and five of the six peer school districts increased (with the exception of Pinellas County Schools). In contrast, the number of students with disabilities has decreased in each of the districts except BCPS and the School District of Palm Beach County. A decrease in the number of students with disabilities was anticipated by many in the field as a result of Florida's focus on MTSS and a PS/RtI approach to better meeting student needs in general education programs.

Trends in enrollment and ESE eligibility for the enrollment group districts are provided in **Exhibit 4.9-7**.

Exhibit 4.9-7
PreK-12 Membership
All Students and Students with Disabilities

Florida Peer School District	2010-11		2011-12		2012-13	
	All	SWD	All	SWD	All	SWD
Broward County Public Schools	256,474	31,161	258,454	31,173	260,234	31,388
Duval County Public Schools	123,995	16,528	125,464	16,198	125,662	15,769
Hillsborough County Public Schools	194,353	28,964	197,001	28,435	200,287	28,173
Miami-Dade County Public Schools	347,406	37,638	350,227	35,915	354,236	35,534
Orange County Public Schools	175,986	22,142	179,989	21,443	183,021	20,813
School District of Palm Beach County	174,659	25,351	176,901	25,320	179,494	25,966
Pinellas County Schools	104,001	13,957	103,705	13,108	103,596	12,764

Source: Membership in Florida Public Schools <http://www.fldoe.org/eias/eiaspubs/pubstudent.asp>, 2014.



Data reflecting total PreK-12 enrollment and the number of students with the primary exceptionality of SLD during the three-year period between 2010-11 and 2012-13 were reviewed for Broward County Public Schools and its enrollment group peers. The trend pattern for SLD is similar to that for all disabilities in that the number of students with SLD decreased in each of the districts except BCPS and Palm Beach County. These data are presented in **Exhibit 4.9-8**.

Exhibit 4.9-8
PreK-12 Membership
All Students and Students with Specific Learning Disabilities

Florida Peer School District	2010-11			2011-12			2012-13		
	Total PreK -12	SLD #	SLD %	Total PreK -12	SLD #	SLD %	Total PreK -12	SLD #	SLD %
Broward County Public Schools	256,474	8,255	3.22%	258,454	8,462	3.27%	260,234	8,857	3.40%
Duval County Public Schools	123,995	5,784	4.66%	125,464	5,259	4.19%	125,662	4,770	3.79%
Hillsborough County Public Schools	194,353	12,590	6.48%	197,001	12,188	6.19%	200,287	12,141	6.06%
Miami-Dade County Public Schools	347,406	19,213	5.53%	350,227	17,506	5.0%	354,236	16,622	4.7%
Orange County Public Schools	175,986	11,527	6.55%	179,989	10,637	5.9%	183,021	9,890	5.4%
School District of Palm Beach County	174,659	10,913	6.23%	176,901	10,678	6.04%	179,494	10,934	6.1%
Pinellas County Schools	104,001	4,070	3.91%	103,705	3,683	3.55%	103,596	3,345	3.23%

Source: Membership in Florida Public Schools <http://www.fldoe.org/eias/eiaspubs/pubstudent.asp>, 2014.

Graphical representation of the incidence data is presented **Exhibit 4.9-9**. As can be seen by the relative trend lines across the districts:

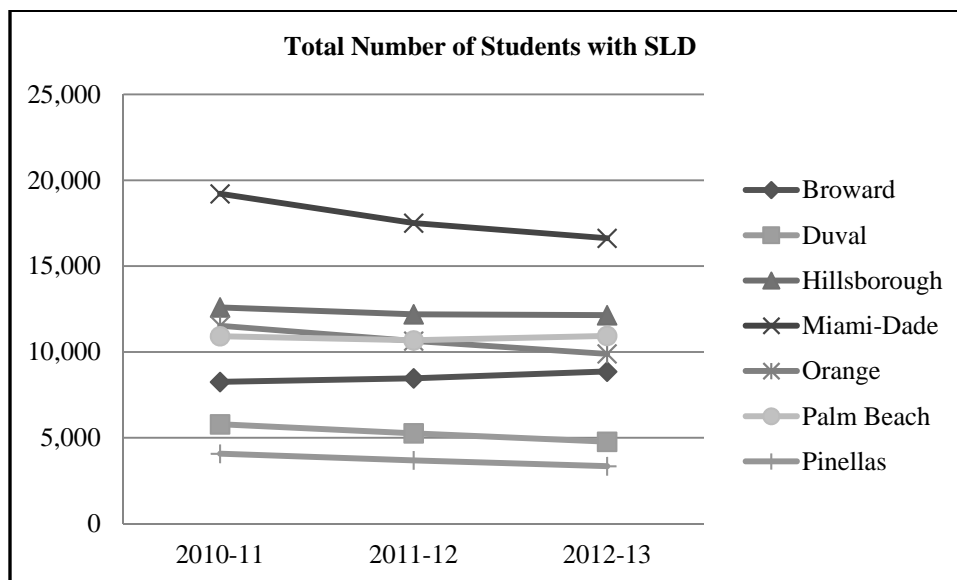
- Miami-Dade County Public Schools has experience the most significant drop in the number of students with SLD;
- the negative trend for Orange County Public Schools, Duval County Public Schools, and Pinellas County Schools mirror each other;
- the numbers for Hillsborough County Public Schools and the School District of Palm Beach County have remained relatively stable; and
- the number of student with SLD in BCPS is increasing.

Because the total population of most districts has increased, the incidence of SLD as a proportion of total PreK-12 enrollment was reviewed. Graphical representation of the percent of total enrollment data is presented **Exhibit 4.9-10**. As can be seen by the relative trend lines across the districts:

- Miami-Dade County Public Schools, Orange County Public Schools, Duval County Public Schools, and Pinellas County Schools have experienced decrease in SLD in terms of percentage of all students;
- SLD as a percent of total population also has decreased in Hillsborough County Public Schools and the School District of Palm Beach County, but to less significant degree; and
- BCPS is the only district within the group that has experienced an increase in the proportion of SLD students within the total population.

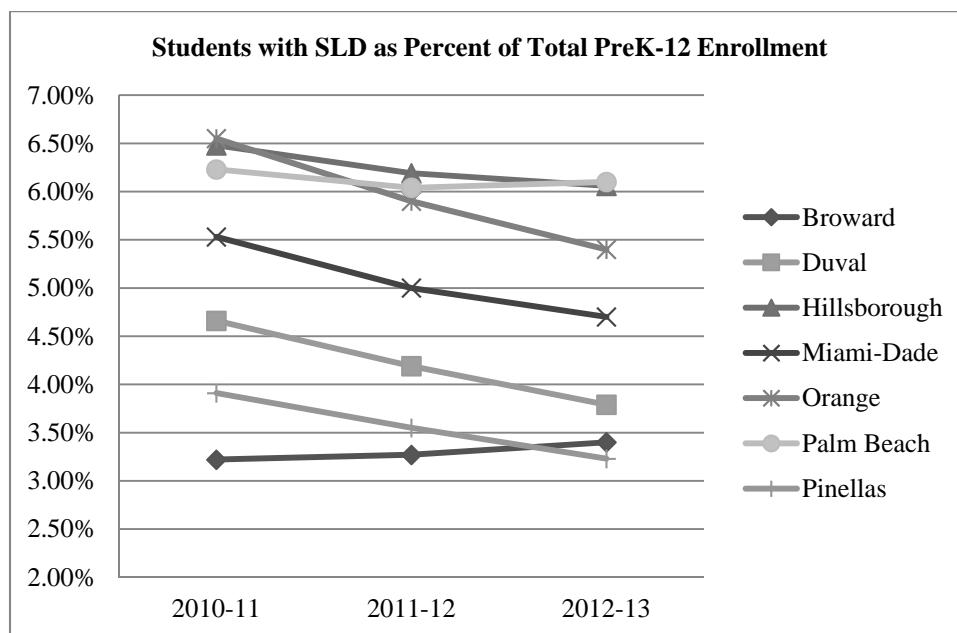


Exhibit 4.9-9
Prek-12 Students with Primary Exceptionality of SLD
Florida Comparison Districts



Source: Membership in Florida Public Schools <http://www.fldoe.org/eias/eiaspubs/pubstudent.asp>, 2014.

Exhibit 4.9-10
Prek-12 Students with Primary Exceptionality of SLD
Florida Comparison Districts



Source: Membership in Florida Public Schools <http://www.fldoe.org/eias/eiaspubs/pubstudent.asp>, 2014.



RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.9-10:

Investigate the potential reason for the increasing trend in SLD in BCPS compared with a decreasing trend in the peer school districts, concurrent with the previous recommendation to evaluate practices related to SLD.

It would be beneficial to communicate with size-alike peer districts and Florida's Problem-solving/Response to Intervention Project to support this process.

FINDING

With the exception of the evaluation process and criteria applied for students being considered for eligibility under the category of SLD mentioned in a previous section of this report, no other concerns were noted with regard to the conduct of evaluations and eligibility determinations. IDEA's requirements related to evaluations found at 34 CFR § 300.304 state the following:

- (b) Conduct of evaluation. In conducting the evaluation, the public agency must –*
 - (1) Use a variety of assessment tools and strategies to gather relevant functional, developmental, and academic information about the child, including information provided by the parent, that may assist in determining – (i) Whether the child is a child with a disability under Sec. 300.8; and (ii) The content of the child's IEP, including information related to enabling the child to be involved in and progress in the general education curriculum (or for a preschool child, to participate in appropriate activities);*
 - (2) Not use any single measure or assessment as the sole criterion for determining whether a child is a child with a disability and for determining an appropriate educational program for the child; and*
 - (3) Use technically sound instruments that may assess the relative contribution of cognitive and behavioral factors, in addition to physical or developmental factors.*

In addition, the evaluation must be “sufficiently comprehensive to identify all of the child's special education and related services needs, whether or not commonly linked to the disability category in which the child has been classified.” Evaluation reports and other evaluation documents reviewed through this evaluation adhered to these requirements and reflected thorough and thoughtful consideration of student needs.

By and large, evaluators and eligibility committees report that Broward County Public Schools adheres to procedural requirements and eligibility criteria as stated in the ESE Policies and Procedures as well as its own established procedures. However, multiple interview respondents reported recent incidents in which evaluators were required to alter reports and teams were told to find students eligible for a specific disability category contraindicated by the evaluation results. They reported that these decisions were based requests by parents or advocates and were not supported by data. Similar incidents were reported in which evaluators were required to



postpone scheduled evaluations to conduct preferential “fast track” evaluations; the cases given high priority were reported to be routine in nature, not based on critical, time-sensitive needs. Identifying student information was not provided, so the specific student records were not reviewed. However, the detrimental impact of these situations on morale was notable, causing several staff members to question their roles and value to the district.

COMMENDATION

Broward County Public Schools is commended for the quality and professionalism demonstrated by its evaluation teams.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.9-11:

Implement policies that clearly establish the roles, responsibilities, and authority of members of the multiple teams involved in ESE functions, including CPS/RtI teams, eligibility staffing committees, and IEP teams.

Particularly with regard to eligibility determinations, the guidelines for decision making are firmly established in statute and rule. Required procedures, including team membership, roles and responsibilities, and criteria for determining eligibility are clearly defined.



4.10 INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PLANS (IEP)



4.10 INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATIONAL PLANS

An individualized educational plan, or IEP, is defined at 34 CFR § 300.22 as “a written statement for a child with a disability that is developed, reviewed, and revised” by a team of professionals and the parent in accordance with specific regulations. The IEP serves as the blueprint for the ESE services and supports a student receives from a school district. For the purpose of clarity and in alignment with the areas of focus established by BCPS in the RFP for this evaluation, this section is divided into the following subsections:

- 4.10.1 IEP Process
- 4.10.2 IEP Development
- 4.10.3 IEP Implementation

4.10.1 IEP Process

As described in **Section 4.1**, Broward County Public Schools relies in large part on school-based ESE Specialists to oversee and coordinate IEP-related. Among other duties, the ESE Specialist is responsible for ensuring established ESE policies and procedures are adhered to within his or her school building.

Among compliance-related activities, ESE Specialists:

- serve as the local educational agency (LEA) representative/designee at ESE staffings and IEP team meetings;
- coordinate staffings, reevaluations, IEP team meetings, and other parent conferences for ESE students;
- facilitate and participate in the development of IEPs;
- serve as case manager for ESE students in the school;
- prepare ESE folders for approval by the district staff; and
- ensure ESE and general education teachers, school administrators, and all other school staff are kept abreast of current issues, concerns, expectations, and requirements related to ESE programs.

BCPS utilizes EasyIEP™, a web-based system developed by Public Consulting Group (PCG), to manage its ESE procedures.

FINDING

Over the past several years BCPS has developed tools and instituted a coordinated set of activities to support IEP teams in general and ESE Specialists in particular. These efforts have focused extensively on promoting consistency across the district – in message, in procedures, and in program implementation. Two key resources for communicating with ESE staff and providing them access to the most current and updated technical assistance and guidance are the ESE eNews mailing list, open to any interested individuals, and the ESE eBox. Located on the



BCPS ESE website, the eBox is organized by topic and provides links to technical assistance papers (TAPs), user guides or manuals, policy memoranda, required forms, and other resources related to ESE procedures.

ESE compliance requirements can vary significantly based on the purpose and circumstances of the meeting, and can be very intimidating. This is particularly true for new or relatively inexperienced ESE Specialists, or when there is conflict or disagreement among the members. Among the tools provided in the eBox are a set of materials for facilitating different types of meetings. Oftentimes assumptions are made that the parents and other IEP team members know each other and understand the process. In practice, this is rarely the case; care must be taken to ensure that introductions are clear and thorough. The eBox provides scripted opening statements designed to ensure that team members are informed of each participants name, title, and role during the meeting. Agendas, document checklists, and detailed outlines for the order and content of discussions also are provided.

The different types of meetings for which scripted materials are provided are presented in **Exhibit 4.10-1**. A sample opening statement and a document checklist are provided as **Exhibits 4.10-2** and **4.10-3**.

Exhibit 4.10-1 ESE Specialist eBox Meeting Facilitation Tools

Opening Statements	Agenda, Document Checklist, and Outline
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial Eligibility/Staffing Meeting IEP Team Meeting Transition IEP Team Meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial IEP Team Meeting Annual Review Reevaluation Planning Meeting Reevaluation Planning Meeting in Conjunction with Annual Review Reevaluation Results in Conjunction with Annual Review Reevaluation Results in Conjunction with Interim IEP Team Meeting

Source: Created by Evergreen Solutions, 2014.

Exhibit 4.10-2 IEP Team Meeting Opening Statement

IEP Meeting Opening Statement

Good (*afternoon/morning*). We are here for the purpose of holding an IEP meeting for (*student's name*). I am (*name of speaker*) and I am here to participate in (*student's name*) IEP meeting as the (*position of speaker – e.g. LEA Representative*) and I would like to introduce the other participants here today. As required by law, an IEP Team must include (*name of student's parents or appropriate guardian*) who (*are/are not*) here today. Unless a certain Team member has been formally excused through the IEP Team Member Excusal Form, the Team must also include one regular education teacher of (*student's name*). Serving as the regular education teacher today is (*regular education teacher's name*). In addition, we have (*student's name*) Exceptional Student Education (ESE) teacher or provider, who is (*teacher/provider's*). We are also required to have a school district representative here who is qualified to provide or supervise the provision of, specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of children with disabilities; is knowledgeable about the general education curriculum; and is knowledgeable about the availability of resources of the public agency. Today, that person is (*LEA Representative's name*). Finally, we have are required to have someone here who can interpret the instructional implications of any evaluation results, which is (*person's name*). We also have others here to participate in the meeting, including (*names and positions of anyone else in attendance*):

Source: <http://www.broward.k12.fl.us/studentsupport/ese/html/IEP2.htm>, 2014.



Exhibit 4.10-3 Reevaluation Results with Annual Review Document Checklist

REEVALUATION RESULTS IN CONJUNCTION WITH ANNUAL REVIEW

Documents that are generated and provided prior to the annual IEP:

- ☐ Parent Participation Form (PPF) 10 school days prior to the meeting (1st notice)
- ☐ Excusal Documents (if applicable)
- ☐ DRAFT IEP document 5 days prior to the Annual Review with the 2nd notice PPF
- ☐ Procedural Safeguards (be prepared to explain these) (if applicable)

What you will need to conduct the meeting:

- ☐ Agenda for Reevaluation Results in conjunction with Annual Review
- ☐ IEP/TIEP Meeting Opening Statement
- ☐ Outline for Facilitating Reevaluation Results in conjunction with Annual Review
- ☐ Copies of Reevaluation Report(s)
- ☐ Eligibility Determination Worksheet(s) IND, SLD, LI (if applicable)

Documents that will be finalized at the close of the IEP meeting:

- ☐ Create Eligibility Document
- ☐ Create Final IEP Document
- ☐ Create IEP At-A-Glance (if applicable)
- ☐ Procedural Safeguards Coversheet (attach signed form by parent) and fax into EasyIEP™
- ☐ Non-FCAT Accommodations and/or Medicaid Eligibility page signed by parent and fax into EasyIEP™ 1108 Attendance Form
- ☐ Parental Consent for SB1108 – Florida Alternate Assessment and Instruction on Access Points (if applicable)
- ☐ Parental Consent for SB1108 – Initial Placement in a Separate Day School (if applicable)
- ☐ Notice of Proposal/Refusal Form (if applicable)
- ☐ Parent Notification Letter (if applicable)
- ☐ McKay Scholarship Letter
- ☐ Matrix
- ☐ Confirm A23 panel in TERMS (next day)

Annual Review with Reevaluation Results Checklist

Updated July 2013

Source: <http://www.broward.k12.fl.us/studentsupport/ese/html/RRA.htm>, 2014.

In addition to electronic resources, such as ESE eNews and eBox, BCPS has sponsored face-to-face Key2Ed IEP Meeting Facilitation training to staff across the district (see **Section 4.5** for detailed discussion). The training provides administrators, teachers, and staff with specific tools and techniques for IEP meeting participants to improve positive communication, reduce conflict, and focus the meeting on the needs of the student. Participants report almost immediate positive impact as they apply the strategies learned to their next IEP team meetings.

COMMENDATION

Broward County Public Schools is commended for the coordinated and comprehensive set of resources the district provides to ESE Specialists, teachers, service providers, and other interested parties regarding district policies, procedures, and recommended practices. The use of eBox, ESE eNews, and other tools provide all stakeholders with easy access to valuable and timely information.



FINDING

IEP teams are made up of individuals who bring different perspectives and expertise to the table. Pooling their knowledge, team members set out to develop an individualized plan to meet a specific student's needs, taking into account the student's strengths and interests.

An IEP team must include the following, although individual members may fulfill more than one role:

- the child's parents;
- at least one regular education teacher, if the child is (or may be) participating in the regular education environment;
- at least one of the child's special education teachers or special education providers;
- a representative of the school district (local education agency (LEA) representative) who (a) is qualified to provide or supervise the provision of special education, (b) knows about the general curriculum; and (c) knows about the resources the school system has available;
- an individual who can interpret the evaluation results and talk about what instruction may be necessary for the child;
- the student, when appropriate;
- representatives from any other agencies that may be responsible for paying for or providing transition services (if the child is 16 years or, if appropriate, younger); and
- other individuals (invited by parents or the school) who have knowledge or special expertise about the child.

The importance of parent participation in the development of an IEP is reiterated throughout IDEA and Florida's State Board of Education rules governing ESE procedures. Districts must have procedures in place that provide the opportunity for one or both of a student's parents to participate in meetings and in decisions about the student's IEP. Florida's ESE Policies and Procedures template states that:

The role of the parents in developing IEPs includes, but is not limited to:

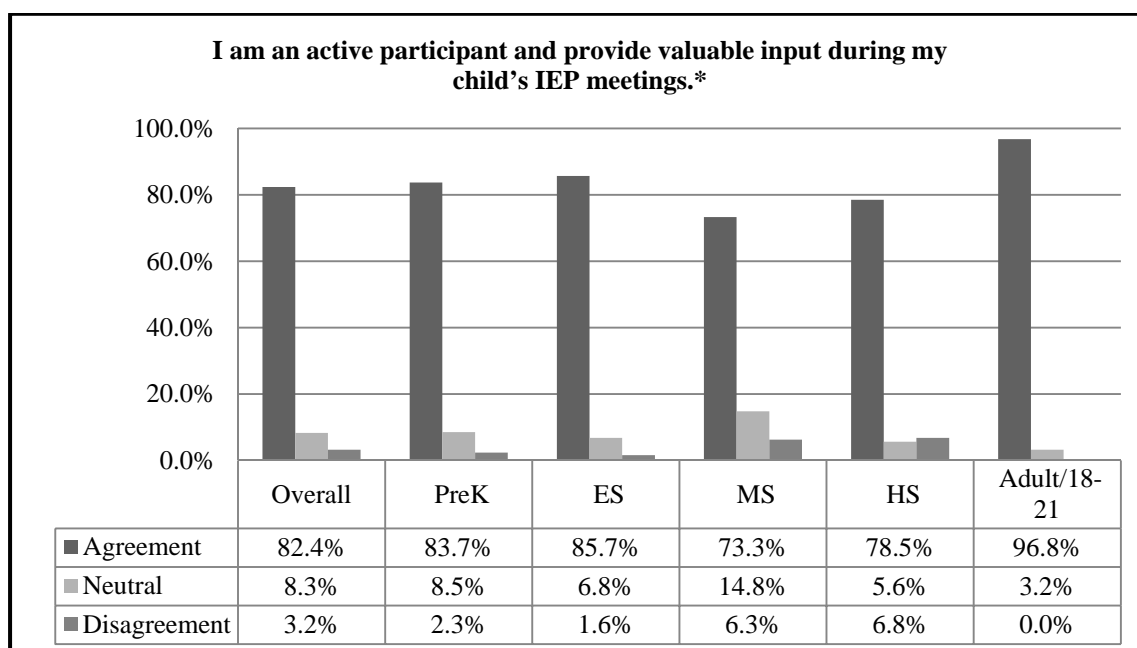
- *providing critical information regarding the strengths of their student;*
- *expressing their concerns for enhancing the education of their student so that their student can receive FAPE;*
- *participating in discussions about the student's need for special education and related services*



- *participating in deciding how the student will be involved and progress in the general curriculum, including participation in state and district assessments;*
- *participating in the determination of what services the district will provide to their student and in what setting; and*
- *participating in the determination of whether the student is pursuing a course of study leading to a standard diploma or a special diploma*

Survey items were developed to solicit stakeholder input regarding their experience as a member of an IEP team. Parents were presented with the statement “I am an active participant and provide valuable input during my child’s IEP team meetings.” Results are presented in **Exhibit 4.10-4**, with favorable responses (i.e., strongly agree and agree) combined and reported as “agreement” and unfavorable responses (i.e., strongly disagree and disagree) combined and reported as “disagreement.”

Exhibit 4.10-4
Evergreen Survey Statement on
Parent Participation in IEP Team Meetings



Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.

*Categories may sum to less than 100% due to exclusion of “N/A” responses.

Responses were overwhelmingly positive. Parents of adult students with disabilities who remain in the program through age 21 were the most likely to respond favorably (96.8 percent). These students generally have the most significant disabilities and resulting needs. Parents of PreK children or students in elementary grades also respond favorably at a high rate (83.7 percent for PreK and 85.7 percent for elementary grades). Paralleling the pattern of decreasing involvement

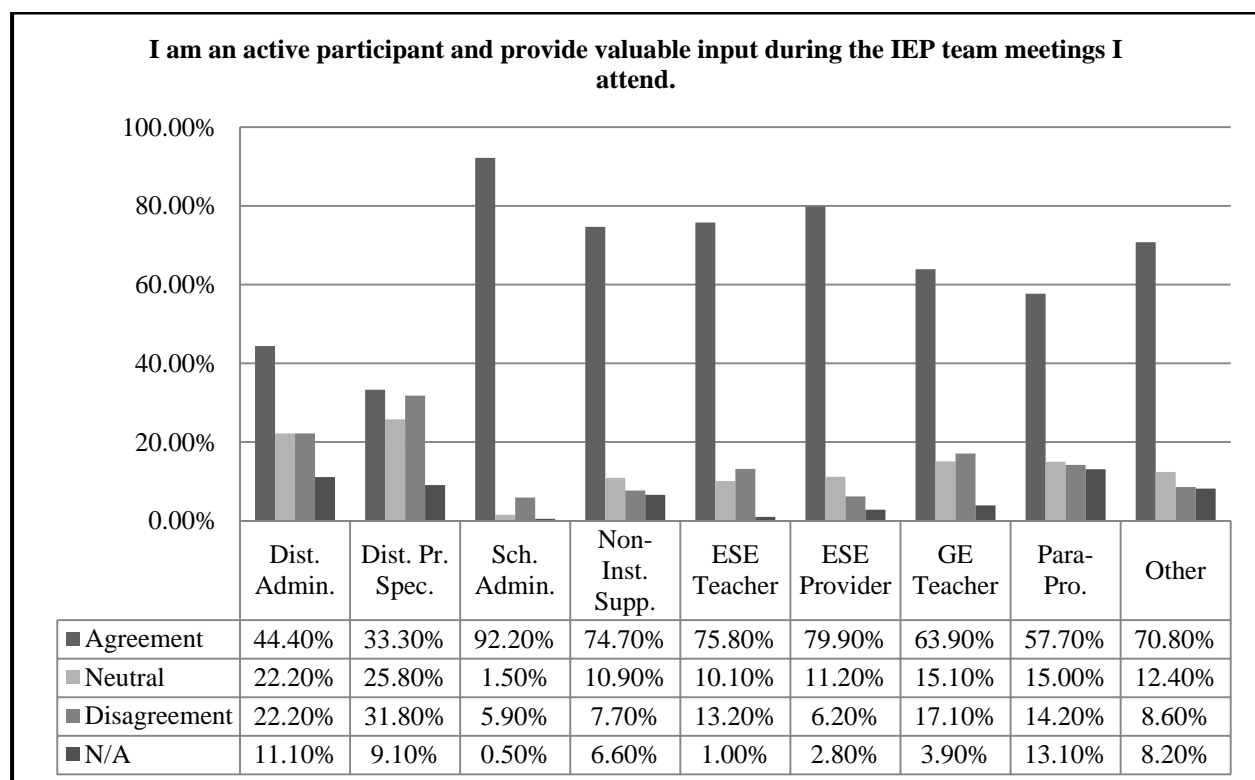


by parents as students reach middle and high school, the response rates for these two groups were the lowest, although still quite positive (i.e., 73.3 percent agreement for middle grades and 78.5 percent for high school). These groups also responded with disagreement at the highest rate, although still below seven percent for both groups.

In addition to the parent survey that was made available to all parents of students with disabilities in the district, two parent informational meetings were held that were open to the public and individual parent interviews were conducted. In contrast to the survey results, a significantly higher proportion of parents expressed dissatisfaction during those meetings and provided anecdotal information regarding specific IEP team decisions they felt were inappropriate for their child.

Input from BCPS district staff was solicited through a similarly worded statement on the staff survey: "I am an active participant and provide valuable input during the IEP team meetings I attend." The results are presented in **Exhibit 4.10-5**. Because of the larger number of respondents for whom this item would not apply, N/A responses are included in the table.

Exhibit 4.10-5
Evergreen Survey Statement on
Parent Participation in IEP Team Meetings



Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014



The results are notable in the rate of favorable responses. Removing from consideration those respondents who indicated the item was not applicable to their position or experience, a strong majority of staff in each stakeholder group indicated they serve an active role on their student's IEP teams. ESE teachers and services providers were most positive, as would be expected, at 95.4 percent and 96.2 percent in agreement, respectively. There is a frequently stated perception that general education teachers don't often attend IEP team meetings and, when they do, they rarely participate. The results reported here do not support that belief; over 75 percent of general education responded favorably, and more than 12 percent were neutral. Fewer than 6 percent of respondents reported disagreement with the statement.

The high level of involvement reflected in the survey results also was observed during the onsite visit through interviews and record reviews. In almost all schools visited, it was evident that the majority of school-based IEP team members spend a significant amount of time preparing for and participating in IEP team meetings and are knowledgeable about and committed to their students.

COMMENDATION

Broward County Public Schools is commended for the positive efforts demonstrated by staff with regard to developing meaningful IEPs and for the way parents are actively included in the process.

FINDING

EasyIEP™ is used to develop IEPs, educational plans for gifted students, and private school services plans for students receiving ESE support from the district through its proportionate share obligation. Additional features and functionality include:

- tiered levels of access based on user type (e.g., teacher; school-level; district-level);
- accessible with a username and password on any computer with Internet access;
- development of IEPs for students with disabilities and educational plans (EPs) for gifted students;
- creation of matrix of services documents;
- *Message Board* for communicating with PCG (e.g., questions, bug reports, comments or suggestions);
- *Message of the Day* from district administrators informing users of important information;
- centralized location for the district to upload files for dissemination to all users in lieu of email or hardcopy communication (e.g., technical assistance; guides or manuals memorandum);



- compliance and event alerts;
- virtual file cabinet of students' ESE related documents;
- viewable student history of eligibility and IEP events; and
- ability to log and graph student behaviors and behavior goal progress.

IEP development can be challenging, requiring team members to juggle quality content with meeting facilitation and clerical requirements simultaneously. Survey items were developed to solicit user input regarding the extent to which the system is easy to use and designed to foster thoughtful decision making on the part of IEP teams. Responses to the statement "The BCPS EasyIEP system is easy to use and understand" are presented in **Exhibit 4.10-6**. As can be seen, responses were generally positive, with most frequent users (i.e., district program specialists, ESE teachers, and ESE service providers) also being the most likely to express an opinion.

Exhibit 4.10-6
Evergreen Survey Statement on
EasyIEP™ Ease of Use

Survey Statement: The BCPS EasyIEP system is easy to use and understand.						
Survey Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
District Staff						
District Administrator	27.3%	18.2%	18.2%	0.0%	0.0%	36.4%
District Program Specialist	11.8%	57.4%	10.3%	10.3%	1.5%	8.8%
School Staff						
School Administrator	17.1%	35.2%	19.9%	2.8%	1.9%	23.1%
Non-instructional Support	16.9%	36.7%	13.3%	8.3%	2.2%	22.5%
Special Education Teacher	28.4%	45.2%	11.4%	8.7%	4.4%	1.9%
Special Education Provider	23.4%	44.1%	17.0%	9.6%	3.7%	2.1%
General Education Teacher	10.8%	32.0%	25.1%	9.2%	4.4%	18.5%
Paraprofessional	6.0%	13.7%	11.4%	1.3%	2.7%	64.9%
Other	17.0%	35.5%	14.5%	7.9%	3.8%	21.4%

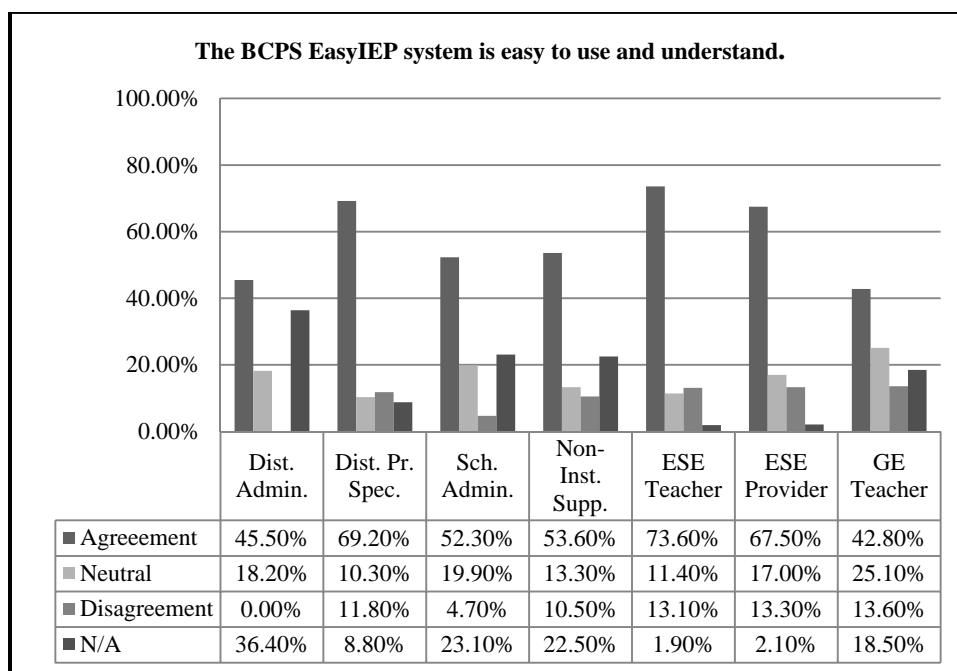
Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.

Graphical representation of results reflecting aggregated positive and negative responses are presented in **Exhibit 4.10-7**.

Approximately 69 percent of district program specialists, 73 percent of ESE teachers, and 68 percent of ESE service providers responded favorably. The survey completers most likely to respond unfavorably (i.e., strongly disagree or disagree) were general education teachers (almost 14 percent) and ESE teachers and service providers (approximately 13 percent each). This result is not unexpected, as the heaviest users of the system are most likely to have an opinion.



Exhibit 4.10-7
Evergreen Survey Statement on
EasyIEP™ Ease of Use
Aggregated Agreement and Disagreement by Respondent Type



Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.

During school visits teachers and ESE Specialists were asked their opinions about EasyIEP™, and responses were similar to the survey – the majority indicating that it is convenient, relatively easy to navigate, and simplifies the paperwork process considerably. However, a significant number of teachers and some ESE Specialists (primarily those who were new to their positions) reported not feeling confident with the system and not really understanding all of the functionality.

The most common concern voiced in free responses to the surveys and during interviews was that changes often appear in the system without the users being made aware of them ahead of time. It was unclear whether this was the result of information actually not being relayed, or if the messages become lost in the large amount of information they must process throughout the day. It was noted that an extensive amount of text is presented on the EasyIEP™ home screen and other pages, much of in very small font.

The home screen is presented in **Exhibit 4.10-8**. Because of the large amount of information and the way it is formatted, it may be difficult for users to identify what might be new or different information or to find something they are looking for. Redesign or reorganization of the way content is presented on the screen may assist users to recognize and act on important information.



Exhibit 4.10-8 BCPS EasyIEP™ Home Screen

EdPlan by PCG Education

Welcome, Kim | My Calendar | Message Board | Logout

Main Menu Students My Data Available Wizards Select a School School System Info Users PCG

Send us a Message My Messages Review the License Agreement

NOTE: Your browser is using JavaScript version 5.0, and your monitor's resolution is 1920 by 1080 pixels.

Not sure who is missing a progress report? There is a new report on the reports tab to assist you. Select your marking period and your school and run the report.

Per ESY Planning Timeline: ESY Transportation Request Forms must be generated between April 4 to April 16, 2014. Any forms generated outside of this time-frame will not be processed.

Jenny Quartararo is the contact for ESE EasyIEP user names and passwords.
Christie Carl is the contact for Gifted EasyIEP usernames and passwords.

When generating an IEP amendment it is ALSO necessary to create an Interim IEP.

A NEW matrix of service handbook is available in the E-Box. A new matrix MUST be created with EVERY IEP, Interim IEP, Amended IEP and Multiple meeting IEP.

Have you set your forgotten password questions on your Update Information Tab?

When entering a new Eligibility for a student, You MUST remember to enter the individual disability Consent Dates on the bottom of the Eligibility Tab. This triggers Easy to send the information to TERMS.

When creating a new IEP, please remember to delete old goals and add new or revised goals in a new box. This will eliminate old comments appearing on the progress reports.

Remember to update your Report Card Team Tab. Especially if the student is new to your school. By clicking the Update the Database button you will clear out any historical names that are no longer associated with the student.

School staff must contact their Program Specialist For Behavior if there is a possibility that any form of crisis management might need to be added to an existing PBIP or included in a new PBIP based upon the results of a Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA).

The EasyFAX number for Broward is 754-551-5569.

ESE referral database:
<http://169.139.254.58/Refsys/Account/Refsvcmaint.aspx>

Documents

General Files IEP Gifted Medicaid Private School Behavior Student Services Transportation ESE Procedures

[Running An Accommodations Report in EasyIEP.doc](#)
[Access Update Form \(doc\)](#)
[Access Update Form \(pdf\)](#)
[LEA Signature Page](#)
[Calendar Functionality .pdf](#)
[External IEPs and Privately Placed Student Procedures-0.doc](#)
[Parent Directions for Accessing EasyIEP on Virtual Counselor.pdf](#)
[Progress Report Wizard.pdf](#)
[Electronic Cumulative Folder Manual](#)
[Paperclip Manual](#)
[Updated EasyIEP User Manual\(4-12-13\)](#)

Source: <https://go6.pcgeducation.com/flbroward>, 2014.

In an effort to assess user satisfaction with the way the system supports quality content, survey completers were asked to respond to the statement “The BCPS EasyIEP system guides teams to develop high quality IEPs.” Results are presented in **Exhibit 4.10-9**.



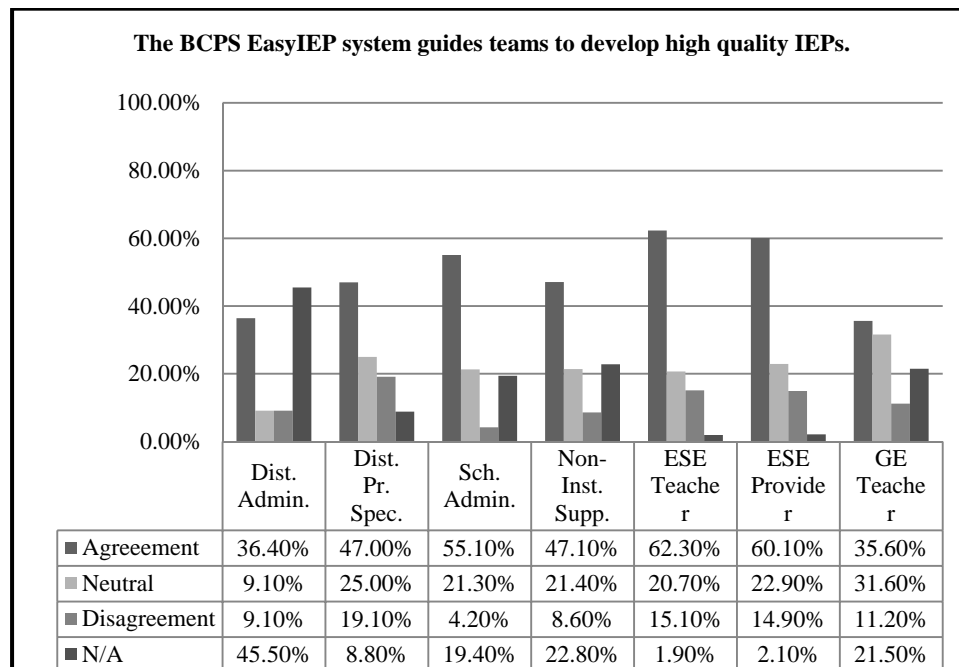
Exhibit 4.10-9
Evergreen Survey Statement on
EasyIEP™ Guidance to IEP Teams

Survey Statement: The BCPS EasyIEP system guides teams to develop high quality IEPs.						
Survey Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
District Staff						
District Administrator	9.1%	27.3%	9.1%	0.0%	9.1%	45.5%
District Program Specialist	8.8%	38.2%	25.0%	19.1%	0.0%	8.8%
School Staff						
School Administrator	17.1%	38.0%	21.3%	2.3%	1.9%	19.4%
Non-instructional Support	14.8%	32.3%	21.4%	6.4%	2.2%	22.8%
Special Education Teacher	22.7%	39.6%	20.7%	10.5%	4.6%	1.9%
Special Education Provider	18.6%	41.5%	22.9%	10.1%	4.8%	2.1%
General Education Teacher	9.2%	26.4%	31.6%	6.8%	4.4%	21.5%
Paraprofessional	6.7%	11.8%	12.5%	1.3%	2.4%	65.3%
Other	15.8%	30.6%	17.0%	8.8%	5.4%	22.4%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.

Graphical representation of results reflecting aggregated positive and negative responses are presented in **Exhibit 4.10-10**.

Exhibit 4.10-10
Evergreen Survey Statement
EasyIEP™ Guidance to IEP Teams
Aggregated Agreement and Disagreement by Respondent Type



Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.



Approximately 47 percent of district Program Specialists, 62 percent of ESE teachers, and 60 percent of ESE service providers responded favorably. The survey completers most likely to respond unfavorably were district Program Specialists (over 19 percent) and ESE teachers and service providers (approximately 15 percent each).

Overall, staff report that EasyIEP™ is relatively intuitive and easy to use once the individual becomes familiar with it, and that it incorporates a range of useful reporting and tracking tools. Based on interviews with principals and other school leaders across the district, however, much of the functionality is not being used to the greatest advantage. Two specific examples that will be addressed in more detail below under IEP implementation deal with behavior tracking for students with behavior intervention plans or social/emotional annual goals and service delivery and IEP implementation tracking for schools that provide support facilitation and other hard-to-track services.

In addition, during site visits to schools and interviews with district staff several respondents expressed concern regarding the decrease in district support for users with regard to EasyIEP™. The number of district staff assigned to support the system was decreased from four to less than two full time positions, which limits the amount of training and technical assistance that can be provided.

COMMENDATION

Broward County Public Schools is commended for its implementation of a centralized web-based ESE management system.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 4.10-1:

Review the alert system in EasyIEP™ to identify ways it can be used more effectively to notify users of upcoming changes to functionality, revised content, or new compliance requirements.

An extensive amount of information is provided on the home screens and other pages, much of it presented in the form of small font text. Redesign or reorganization of the way content is presented on the screen may assist users to recognize and act on important information.

Recommendation 4.10-2:

Solicit input from BCPS Program Specialists, school-based ESE Specialists, and ESE teachers and service providers regarding ways the current IEP system could be enhanced to proactively guide teams in developing high quality IEPs.

Developing high-quality IEPs requires both technical compliance with the letter of IDEA and programmatic or substantive compliance with the spirit and intent of the law. Acknowledging that the latter is much more challenging to enforce than the former, almost one in five district



Program Specialists and more than one in seven ESE teachers and services providers responded negatively to the survey item regarding EasyIEP™ and quality IEP development. Engaging those individuals in future development plans may yield valuable insight.

Recommendation 4.10-3:

Assess the level and type of support currently in place for EasyIEP™ to determine if it is sufficient to meet the needs of all users, including new hires and experienced teachers, with regard to content and technical support.

While a strong majority of district Program Specialists, ESE teachers, and other ESE service providers reported agreeing or feeling neutral about the statement that EasyIEP™ is easy to use and understand, almost one in eight disagreed. This was reinforced during interviews with teachers and ESE Specialists in schools. In light of the decrease in the number of district staff available to provide training and support in EasyIEP™ and the multiple responsibilities they juggle, periodic internal assessments to gauge the extent to which end-user's needs are being met.

FINDING

The BCPS EasyIEP system uses domains based on FLDOE's *Matrix of Services Handbook* to organize the present level of academic achievement and functional performance statements and annual goals for students below the age of 14. For students 14 years of age and older, it uses transition service areas based on those described in IDEA. In addition to using these categories as organizing tools, BCPS requires each IEP team to develop a present level statement for each of the domains or transition areas. The practice of using the domains and transition service areas to organize the content of the IEP is almost universal in districts across the state; however, requiring a present level statement for each category is not common practice. Potential unintended consequences of this requirement include unnecessary time and effort spent on paperwork and the potential for confusion or misunderstanding on the part of parents.

Florida's ESE funding relies in part on cost factors determined by using a matrix of services to document the services that each exceptional student will receive. The *Matrix of Services Handbook* is used by districts to determine a student's support level (Level I, II, III, IV, or V) based on the services described in the IEP. The matrix is organized on five domains or areas of development that may be negatively affected by a disability: *A. Curriculum and Learning Environment; B. Social or Emotional Behavior; C. Independent Functioning; D. Health Care; and E. Communication.*

In accordance with IDEA and its regulations related to secondary transition planning, beginning no later than the first IEP to be in place when a student turns 16, the IEP must include measurable postsecondary goals and "the transition services... needed to assist the child in reaching those goals." Florida's Rule 6A-6.03028, F.A.C., is more stringent than IDEA; it requires IEP teams to "begin the process of identifying transition services needs of student disabilities,... beginning no later than age fourteen (14), so that needed postsecondary goals may



be identified and in place by age sixteen (16)..." Transition services are defined at 34 CFR § 300.43(a) as:

... a coordinated set of activities for a student with a disability that... is based on the individual student's needs, taking into account the student's strengths, preferences, and interests, and includes –

- (i) *Instruction;*
- (ii) *Related services;*
- (iii) *Community experiences;*
- (iv) *Development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives; and*
- (v) *If appropriate, daily living skills and provision of a functional vocational evaluation.*

Generally, if a student has a need resulting from the disability that impacts a given domain or transition service, the IEP team develops: a present level statement focusing on that domain or transition service; annual goal(s) that target skills or behaviors in that domain or transition area; and services and supports that will be provided for the student to achieve the goal(s). This does not always apply; however, since domains are content-focused while transition services are activity-focused. In addition, not all domains or transition services lend themselves to present levels and student goals.

The domains and transition service areas BCPS requires IEP teams to address, by age, are presented in **Exhibit 4.10-11**.

Exhibit 4.10-11 **IEP Process: Domains and Transition Areas**

Age of Student	
Ages 3 through 13	Ages 14 through 21
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum and Instruction • Social/Emotional Behavior • Independent Functioning • Communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instruction • Employment • Community Experience • Post School Adult Living • Daily Living • Functional Vocational Evaluation

Source: Created by Evergreen Solutions, 2014.

For students for whom the transition requirements do not apply, users are directed to "enter the strengths and abilities narrative for the student for each of the Domains" (*EasyIEP End User Manual*, page 27). The manual does not state that every Transition Area must be addressed beginning at age 14, but the practice of completing each section was evident in almost all of the transition IEPs reviewed. After completing the narrative description of the student's strengths and abilities, the user then responds with "yes" or "no" to questions asking: "Does the student's



disability affect his or her involvement in general education?” and (2) Does the student have a Priority Educational Need(s) in the Domain [in question]?” When the response is “yes,” the user is presented with a text field in which to enter a narrative description of the impact and/or the priority educational need.

IDEA requires that the IEP address all of the student’s educational needs resulting from the disability, but does not prescribe a specific list of domains or areas for which written descriptions are required for all students. At one time, Rule 6A-6.03028, F.A.C., stated “If the IEP Team determines that transition service is not needed as described [above], the IEP shall include a statement to that effect.” That requirement was deleted from the rule in 2007 and no longer applies. However, guidance in the *Secondary Transition and Compliance Module* developed by Florida’s Project 10: Transition Education Network, does indicate: “No services needed” statements for each of the transition services activity areas are no longer required; however, it is a practice that districts are encouraged to continue.”

While the intent of BCPS’s requirement that the IEP team address every domain or transition area is admirable—ensuring that IEP teams consider all potential areas of concern that may be affected by the disability—it goes beyond the recommendation noted above by requiring written documentation of a student’s performance in each area in addition to the statement “no services needed.” With regard to the domain areas used in IEP for younger students, it should be noted that the evaluators could find no similar guidance regarding the need to address each domain, regardless of student need. This practice may have unintended consequences that result in inefficient use of resources or miscommunication with family members.

As an example, some students have disabilities that, in the normal course of events, have very narrow spheres of influence—speech impairment is one such disability. Under IDEA and Florida statutes and rules, the IEP for such a student would be expected to include a present level statement that addresses how the disability affects the student’s progress and involvement in the general curriculum; annual goals to remediate the impact; and services designed to assist the student in meeting the annual goals. In contrast, depending upon the age of the student, an IEP team using the BCPS system is required to write present level statements for each of the four domains or all six transition areas.

A sample present level statement from the IEP of an elementary grade student eligible under speech impairment only is provided in **Exhibit 4.10-12**.

As can be seen, this IEP includes a significant amount of information beyond what is directly or even indirectly related to the impact of the disability, which may reflect time and resources that might be used more efficiently. In addition, it is stated in the Social/Emotional Behavior Domain that the student “has great difficulty getting along with peers.” However, it goes on to state that “There is no impact of the disability on [Student]’s involvement and progress in the general curriculum” and, therefore, “There are no priority educational needs at this time.” This could easily cause confusion for parents; if the school has seen fit to document the child’s struggle getting along with classmates, it would be expected that some action would be taken to remedy this (i.e., annual goal(s) and ESE services). In this case the problem is not that the IEP Team neglected to address a need related to the disability. Instead, because it was required to describe the student’s status in every domain, the team included extraneous information, unrelated to the speech impairment, which rightfully would not be addressed through ESE services. This IEP was not unique; similar content was identified dozens of IEPs across all grade levels.



Exhibit 4.10-12
Sample Present Level Statement: Speech Impairment
Elementary Level

Domain	Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance
Curriculum/ Instruction	<p>[Student's] strengths and abilities:</p> <p>Based on teacher input [Student] is on grade level in all academic areas. In the area of reading [Student] can answer questions related to the main idea and use details from the story to explain the main idea. [Student] can compare and contrast characters and ideas from the text. In the area of math, [Student] can multiply and divide within 100 and understands fractions as numbers. [Student] can complete grade level word problems. In the area of writing, [Student] can write a narrative, recounting an event or sequence of events with supporting details.</p> <p>The impact of the disability on [Student]'s involvement and progress in the general curriculum:</p> <p>There is no impact of the disability on [Student]'s involvement and progress in the general curriculum.</p> <p>Based on the educational impact of the disability, [Student's] educational need(s) for the duration of the IEP is/are:</p> <p>There are no priority educational needs at this time.</p>
Social/ Emotional Behavior	<p>[Student's] strengths and abilities:</p> <p>Based on teacher input [Student] get along well with adults and respects authority. However, [Student] has great difficulty getting along with peers. At times [Student] does not have good personal hygiene habits (e.g. picking nose and biting and chewing on nails) which bothers [Student's] peers.</p> <p>Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance</p> <p>There is no impact of the disability on [Student]'s involvement and progress in the general curriculum.</p> <p>Based on the educational impact of the disability, [Student's] educational need(s) for the duration of the IEP is/are:</p> <p>There are no priority educational needs at this time.</p>
Independent Functioning	<p>[Student's] strengths and abilities:</p> <p>Based on teacher input [Student] comes to class prepared, can stay on task and transitions well between activities. [Student] returns his homework in a timely manner.</p> <p>The impact of the disability on [Student]'s involvement and progress in the general curriculum</p> <p>There is no impact of the disability on [Student]'s involvement and progress in the general curriculum.</p> <p>Based on the educational impact of the disability, [Student's] educational need(s) for the duration of the IEP is/are:</p> <p>There are no priority educational needs at this time.</p>
Communication	<p>Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance</p> <p>Based on results from the Goldman Fristoe Test of Articulation [Student] demonstrates with a severe articulation disorder with lateralized distortions of /s/, /z/ and /s/ blend sounds. There is also a w/r substitution error and a distortion of the vocalic /r/ sounds (as in "zippah/zipper" or "guh"/girl). Errors occurred consistently in the beginning, middle and end positions of words. /S/ and /R/ sounds occur frequently in the English language, so the combination of these sound errors and the lateralized distortions and vocalic /r/ distortions significantly affects [Student]'s speech sound production. [Student] was stimuable for more correct speech sound production with maximum therapist cues and models for /s/, /z/ and /r/ at the sound and syllable levels. [Student] was able to produce an improved /s/ sound in the /sw/ blend only. It should be noted that [Student] is fluent in both [another language] and English. Mother reports however, that she feels [Student] speaks better English than [the other language]... It should also be noted that the /r/ and /z/ sounds are not found in [the other language] and therefore the /s/ is the only sound [Student] mispronounces in both English and [the other language]. Errors in English with the /r/ sound are most likely due to a language difference not disorder.</p> <p>The impact of the disability on [Student]'s involvement and progress in the general curriculum</p> <p>Due to the disability [Student] has difficulty being understood in the classroom, with peer interactions, and confidence when speaking.</p> <p>Based on the educational impact of the disability, [Student's] educational need(s) for the duration of the IEP is/are:</p> <p>To improve articulation skills.</p>

Source: Created by Evergreen Solutions from BCPS IEP data, 2014.



COMMENDATION

Broward County Public School is commended for the quality of the content in the majority of individual educational plans reviewed. It is evident that staff developing the plans are knowledgeable about the students and that care has been taken to reflect the unique nature of each student in their IEPs.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.10-4:

Review local policies regarding IEP development and content, assess their impact on quality and efficiency of services, and identify potential benefits and pitfalls inherent in requiring procedures or content that goes beyond federal and state requirements.

Consideration should be given to whether current practices such as that requiring IEP teams to report on all domains for all students may have potential risks that outweigh advantages or put an unreasonable demand on staff resources.

FINDING

In addition to the enhanced content requirements BCPS has established for its IEPs, other local policies not required under IDEA or Florida's statutes and rules include the requirement that draft present level statements and annual goals must be sent home at least five days prior to the IEP team meeting and that data from the previous goals be used to create the new draft IEP. Guidance from district IEP training reflecting these policies is presented in **Exhibit 4.10-13**.

Exhibit 4.10-13 BCPS Policies and Procedures beyond Federal and State Requirements

Policies and Procedures

- ◆ Each state and school district develops policies and procedures consistent with IDEA requirements.
 - State—Florida Administrative Code and Florida Statutes
 - District—ESE Policies and Procedures
 - **Broward Examples:**
(*Ex. as of 2012-13 school year, for all upcoming IEP meetings, a DRAFT Present Level of Performance and IEP Goals MUST be sent home 5 days PRIOR to meeting.*)
- AND**
- (*Data from previous goals should be used to create the DRAFT IEP. This data will be available at the annual IEP meeting.*)
- ◆ Compliance with these policies is monitored at the federal, state, and local levels.

Source: Developing Quality IEP training materials, presented by BCPS ESE/FDLRS, 2014.



Regarding draft IEPs, the Analysis of Comments and Changes section of the IDEA regulations includes the following response to a request that the regulations require draft IEPs prior to the meeting:

With respect to a draft IEP, we encourage public agency staff to come to an IEP Team meeting prepared to discuss evaluation findings and preliminary recommendations. Likewise, parents have the right to bring questions, concerns, and preliminary recommendations to the IEP Team meeting as part of a full discussion of the child's needs and the services to be provided to meet those needs. We do not encourage public agencies to prepare a draft IEP prior to the IEP Team meeting, particularly if doing so would inhibit a full discussion of the child's needs. However, if a public agency develops a draft IEP prior to the IEP Team meeting, the agency should make it clear to the parents at the outset of the meeting that the services proposed by the agency are preliminary recommendations for review and discussion with the parents. The public agency also should provide the parents with a copy of its draft proposals, if the agency has developed them, prior to the IEP Team meeting so as to give the parents an opportunity to review the recommendations of the public agency prior to the IEP Team meeting, and be better able to engage in a full discussion of the proposals for the IEP. It is not permissible for an agency to have the final IEP completed before an IEP Team meeting begins. (71 Fed. Reg. 46678.)

It is clear that BCPS's policy only requires that the present level and annual goals be presented in draft form, so there should be no confusion on the part of a parent or school-based IEP Team members that the document presented to parents is the final IEP. However, it still must be made very clear to the parents that the contents of the present level statement and the annual goals are not complete – that they are simply a basis from which to begin the discussion. ESE Specialists and ESE teachers consistently indicated that this was the case, but voiced concern regarding the amount of time required to draft these components in a form “clean” enough to send home for parents to review. In general, teachers of students with the most significant disabilities were the most accepting of this policy, but many questioned the value of applying it to every IEP, no matter the circumstance. Given the intensive case load of most ESE Specialists and many ESE teachers, imposing a “one-size-fits-all” solution may have unintended consequences. For example, time that would be spent planning instruction or progress monitoring may be spent drafting IEP content, even though IDEA anticipates the IEP being developed at the time of the meeting.

Regarding the requirement that the existing IEP be used to create the new one, this reflects common and expected practice. Identifying which goals the student has achieved and which not is a logical first step for developing the present level statement. It also gives the team an opportunity to consider “why” student hasn't mastered a goal – Was the goal flawed or unreasonable? Were the services appropriate? If so, were they implemented? If the goal was reasonable, what should be changed on the IEP to assist the student in achieving it?

COMMENDATION

BCPS is commended for its commitment to increasing and maintaining the quality of IEPs developed within the district by operationalizing the way IEP Teams should implement the intent of IDEA.



The statement that teams must refer back to the IEP that is being closed out when developing a new IEP is a good example. It only seems logical that this would occur, but in practice it is a step that is often glossed over. This policy doesn't impose additional obligations on the team; instead, it describes how they are to implement an existing one.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.10-5:

Include data-based analysis of the potential impact of requiring draft IEP components five days prior for every IEP team meeting in the district's review of local policies recommended above.

Individuals serving as case managers reported spending a significant amount of time preparing drafts of the IEP in a format sufficient to send home, and that the process as a whole has increased the stress level and decreased morale of staff in many schools. Acknowledging the value of this practice for some students or in some situations, the impact when applied universally may outweigh the benefit.

4.10.2 IEP Development

The major components of an IEP include:

- a statement of the child's **present levels of academic achievement and functional performance**, including how the student's disability affects his or her involvement and progress in the general education curriculum;
- a statement of measurable **annual goals**, including academic and functional goals;
- a description of how the **student's progress** toward meeting the annual goals will be measured, and when periodic progress reports will be provided;
- a statement of the **special education and related services** and **supplementary aids and services** to be provided to, or on behalf of, the student;
- a statement of the **program modifications or supports for school personnel** that will be provided to enable the student to advance appropriately toward attaining the annual goals; to be involved in and make progress in the general education curriculum and to participate in extracurricular and other nonacademic activities; and to be educated and participate with other students with disabilities and nondisabled children;
- an explanation of the **extent, if any, to which the student will not participate with nondisabled students** in the regular class and in extracurricular and nonacademic activities;
- a statement of any **individual accommodations** that are necessary to measure the academic achievement and functional performance of the student on State and districtwide assessments;



- if the IEP team determines that the student must take an alternate assessment instead of a particular regular State or districtwide assessment of student achievement, a statement of why the student cannot participate in the regular assessment and why the particular alternate assessment selected is appropriate for the child; and
- the **projected date** for the beginning of the services and modifications, and the anticipated **frequency, location, and duration** of those services and modifications.

Additionally, beginning not later than the first IEP to be in effect when a student turns 16, the IEP must include:

- measurable **postsecondary goals** based upon age-appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment, and, where appropriate, independent living skills; and
- the **transition services** (including courses of study) needed to assist the student in reaching those goals.

IDEA mandates that students with disabilities be provided a free appropriate education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE). FAPE is defined at 34 CFR § 300.17 as special education and related services that are provided at public expense, under the supervision and direction of the district, meet the standards of the State's Department of Education, and are provided in conformity with an IEP. LRE refers to the setting in which a student with a disability can receive an appropriate education designed to meet his or her needs resulting from the disability, alongside peers without disabilities to the maximum extent appropriate.

The student's present levels of academic achievement and functional performance, taken in conjunction with the measurable annual goals, should drive the placement decision; it cannot be based "solely on factors such as category of disability, severity of disability, availability of special education and related services, configuration of the service delivery system, availability of space, or administrative convenience."

More than 350 IEPs were reviewed in whole or in part during the course of the Evergreen evaluation. The reviews focused on the following:

- The extent to which the **present levels of academic achievement and functional performance** statement:
 - describes the student's needs that result from the disability;
 - describes the student's current educational or functional performance;
 - is individualized, objective, and descriptive; and
 - clearly indicate how the student's disability affects the student's participation in the general education curriculum, or, for PreK children, accurately describes the effect of the disability on age-appropriate abilities or milestones that typically developing children of the same age would be achieving.



- Correspondence between the **annual goals** (and short-term objectives or benchmarks, if applicable) and the needs identified on the present level statement and whether they reflect sufficient content and/or skills to reasonably meet both (1) the student's needs that result from the student's disability and (2) each of the student's other educational needs that result from the disability. For students with transition IEPs, the extent to which the annual goals support and align with the postsecondary goals.
- For students with transition IEPs, the extent to which the **postsecondary goals** are based on transition assessments, written to reflect an observable, measurable action that will occur in the future (after graduation or obtaining the age of 21), and correspond to the information in the present level statement.
- The extent to which the **ESE services and supports** and **educational placement** are reasonably calculated enable the student to achieve the annual goals, given the unique needs of the student as identified in the present level statement, and then to meet the measurable postsecondary goals.

FINDING

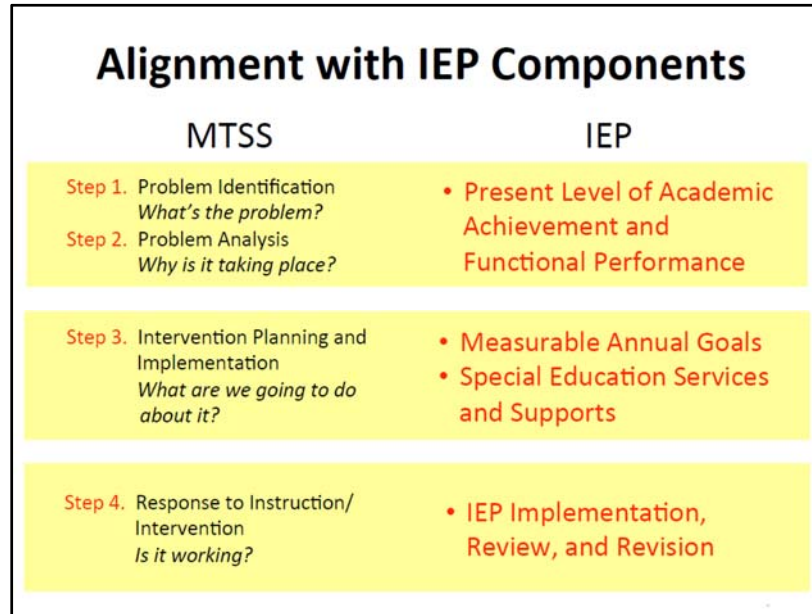
The statement of a student's present levels of academic achievement and functional performance (present level statement) is the foundation of a well-developed IEP. Measurable postsecondary goals, once identified through the transition planning process, provide additional "footing" from which to develop the IEP. Measurable annual goals designed to meet the student's needs resulting from the disability and reflecting what the student can reasonably be expected to accomplish within one year are derived directly from the present level statement. The annual goals also must align with the skills and abilities needed for the student to achieve his or her stated postsecondary goals.

Taken together, these components of the IEP paint a picture of where the student currently is and where the team wants him or her to be. With this in mind, the IEP Team can determine the specific special education and related services, supplemental aids and services, and transition services needed to enable the student to reach both annual and postsecondary goals.

Broward County Public Schools has focused a significant amount of attention and resources to helping IEP teams develop thorough, meaningful, data-based present levels statements. The graphic presented in **Exhibit 4.10-14** reflects the focus on aligning the conceptual framework of MTSS with the foundational components of an IEP. This organizing structure reinforces the message that the foundation of all educational action is a process of continuous improvement; the concept is the same—it's not new or different or "more."



Exhibit 4.10-14
MTSS and IEP Development: A Conceptual Framework



Source: Developing Quality IEP training materials, presented by BCPS ESE/FDLRS, 2014.

Although some exceptions were observed, the positive impact of this effort was evident in the majority of IEPs reviewed. None were found to be missing required components of the present level statements and incidents of inadequate or insufficient content did not rise to the level of a pattern of concern or systemic noncompliance. Isolated issues included things such as acronyms not spelled out, and assessment results reported as scores with little or no explanation as to what they reflected. That said, the present levels of the IEPs reviewed all described the student's needs and current educational or functional performance; included objective data; reflected the individual characteristics of each student; and described the impact of the students' disabilities. In fact, as discussed in a previous finding related to the IEP process, it appears that staff are so attentive to developing comprehensive present level statements that they often include information beyond that related to the disability or its impact. Overall, the quality of the present level statements observed in the BCPS IEPs exceeded that of IEPs reviewed by Evergreen evaluators during the course of other performance and program evaluations, and the level of substance was more consistent across grades levels and disability types than is generally observed.

The BCPS training materials for Developing Quality IEPs includes guidance for developing measurable annual goals. Components of annual goals are presented in **Exhibit 4.10-15**.

Guidance provided to IEP teams reflects best practice related to ensuring that annual goals meet the standard of being specific, objective, quantifiable, and clear. Utilizing the three components as a template has been shown to be an effective tool in guiding IEP teams to really think about what it is they want the student to achieve. The first step is to determine exactly what it is the student is expected to do, as presented in **Exhibit 4.10.16**.



Exhibit 4.10-15 Measurable Annual Goal Components

Measurable Annual Goals: Three Parts

1. **Observable behavior:** An explicit, observable statement of what the student will do
2. **Conditions:** The tools, situation, or assistance to be provided
3. **Mastery criteria:** Acceptable performance (how well the student must perform)

73

Source: Developing Quality IEP training materials, presented by BCPS ESE/FDLRS, 2014.

Exhibit 4.10.16 Measurable Annual Goals – Behavior

Handout T-5

Observable/Measurable Behavior?

Is it observable and measurable... or not?

<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="color: green; font-size: 2em; margin-right: 10px;">✓</div> <div>Read aloud</div> </div> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="color: red; font-size: 2em; margin-right: 10px;">✗</div> <div>Know</div> </div> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="color: green; font-size: 2em; margin-right: 10px;">✓</div> <div>Write an essay</div> </div> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="color: red; font-size: 2em; margin-right: 10px;">✗</div> <div>Improve</div> </div> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="color: red; font-size: 2em; margin-right: 10px;">✗</div> <div>Learn</div> </div>	<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="color: green; font-size: 2em; margin-right: 10px;">✓</div> <div>Point to</div> </div> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="color: green; font-size: 2em; margin-right: 10px;">✓</div> <div>Count objects</div> </div> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="color: red; font-size: 2em; margin-right: 10px;">✗</div> <div>Understand</div> </div> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="color: green; font-size: 2em; margin-right: 10px;">✓</div> <div>Illustrate</div> </div> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="color: red; font-size: 2em; margin-right: 10px;">✗</div> <div>Remember</div> </div>
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Will you know it when you see it?

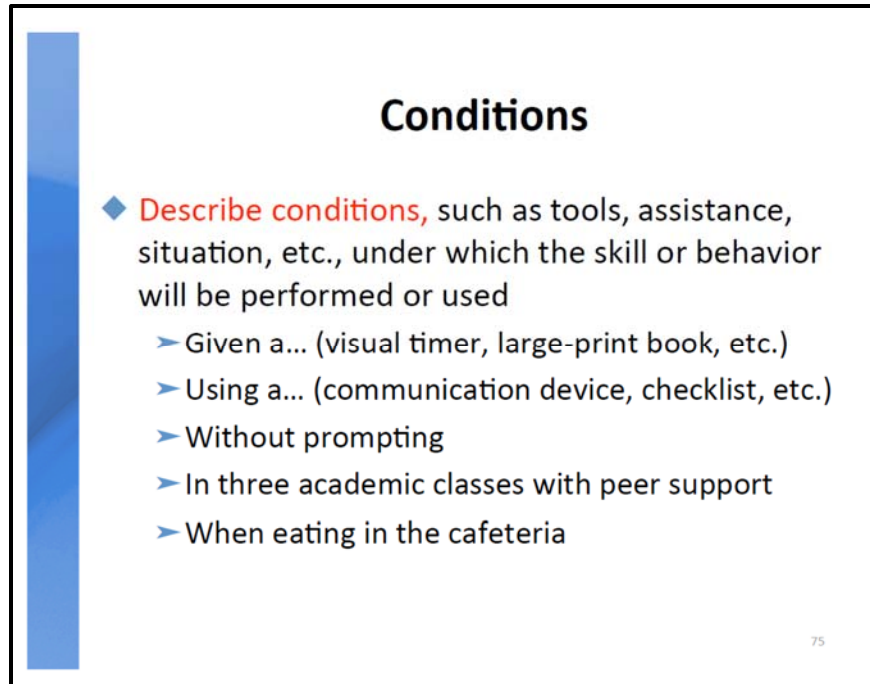
74

Source: Developing Quality IEP training materials, presented by BCPS ESE/FDLRS, 2014.



With the behavior clearly defined using action verbs, the next step is identify the conditions under which it is expected to occur. The “conditions” component is presented in **Exhibit 4.10-17**.

Exhibit 4.10-17
Measurable Annual Goals – Conditions



Source: Developing Quality IEP training materials, presented by BCPS ESE/FDLRS, 2014.

Conditions give context to the behavior, and make assessing attainment of the goal much more straightforward. Specific criteria for mastery also must be established, and they must align with the nature and intent of the goal. The most common error IEP teams make when developing annual goals is to arbitrarily select a criterion (e.g., 80% accuracy) and apply to every goal. Training guidance related to master criteria is presented in **Exhibit 4.10-18**.

The positive influence of training efforts on the development of measurable annual goals also was evident. BCPS’s format for present level statements requires the user to definitively state if the student has a priority educational need in a given area. If the team makes an appropriate judgment in that regard, the likelihood of developing annual goal(s) that correspond to the identified needs is greatly increased. The effectiveness of this model was evident throughout the IEPs reviewed. Even in those that included extraneous or confounding information in the present levels themselves, the teams accurately identified the areas in which there was a priority educational need and developed corresponding annual goals.



Exhibit 4.10-18
Measurable Annual Goals – Mastery Criteria

Mastery Criteria

- ◆ **Accuracy**
 - 90% accuracy; 9 out of 10 items correct
- ◆ **Duration (time)**
 - Stays on task for 10 minutes
- ◆ **Speed/Rate**
 - With fluency of 90 words correct per minute
 - Within two minutes
- ◆ **All goals must reflect at least 80% mastery criteria**

76

Source: Developing Quality IEP training materials, presented by BCPS ESE/FDLRS., 2014.

With regard to the format of the goals and the extent to which they adhered to the BCPS model, results were inconsistent. While the content of the goals – the specific skill areas they addressed – was appropriate in almost all cases, and the majority included condition statements, the specific mastery criteria applied did not always align in a logical way with what was being assessed.

With regard to the extent to which student postsecondary goals are based on transition assessments, written to reflect an observable, measurable action that will occur in the future, and correspond to the information in the present level statement, two areas of concern were identified. For many students, the postsecondary goals are stated as aspirational goals reminiscent of the desired post-school statements that were required on IEPs prior to 2004, or were not realistic or reasonable. Examples of postsecondary goals for students in grades 11 or 12 that did not meet an acceptable standard include:

- For a student with a GPA of 1.5, including an F in Introduction to Information Technology and Level 1 scores in both reading and math on the FCAT: “[Student] may like to attend [in-state university] or [rigorous out-of-state university] to study technology.” The goal itself is not stated as a goal to accomplish (i.e., “will attend” instead of “may like to attend”). In addition, acceptance into four-year university is unlikely for this student.
- The postsecondary goal for a student is to enroll in college and become a paralegal, but this student’s present level statement includes the following: “[Student’s] language



impairment impacts [student's] memory for information presented verbally, ability to retain concepts from one day to the next, and grammar." The student also exhibits significant delays in reading and math (multiple grade levels behind) and organizational skills. Given the tasks and activities inherent in a position as a paralegal, this may not be a reasonable expectation.

- [Student] will probably attend a trade school to learn the skills to develop employability skills."
- Postsecondary goal in education is to "enroll at a local college before the fall semester begins" followed by an employment goal stating: "Within one year of graduating from college, [Student] will be successfully employed as a Dentist."

The second concern is that many of the postsecondary goals reflected actions to be taken prior to graduation or leaving school at 21 due to no longer being eligible for ESE services. Specifically, for several students participation in the district's ESE programs for students ages 18 through 21 was used as the postsecondary goal in the area of education or training. Services provided under IDEA through age 21 are considered part of the student's current educational program; postsecondary education or training must reflect activities after the student is no longer eligible for and receiving services under IDEA. It was notable that, unlike the other IEP components targeted in this evaluation (e.g., present level statements; annual goals), the majority of postsecondary goals reviewed either clearly met the standards of IDEA or were clearly deficient; very few were judged to be "minimally sufficient."

COMMENDATION

Broward County Public Schools is commended for the impact of its IEP training on the overall content of the plans and the extent to which the present levels and annual goals reflect IEP Team consideration of the unique qualities and needs of the students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 4.10-6:

Enhance the training components related to measurable annual goals and internal methods for monitoring and oversight to ensure IEP team members consistently apply what is learned during training. Continue to reinforce the importance of incorporating multiple data sources, including results of classroom, benchmark, and standardized assessments.

In order to maintain and sustain the skills developed through training and technical assistance related to developing quality IEPs, a system of guided self-assessment should be implemented. Unlike more punitive "audit-style" internal monitoring activities that often cause staff to react defensively, self-assessment conducted within small groups can be an effective teaching and learning tool.



Recommendation 4.10-7:

Enhance the training related to measurable postsecondary goals and internal methods for monitoring and oversight to ensure they reflect an observable, measurable action that will occur in the future (after graduation or obtaining the age of 21), and correspond in a meaningful and reasonable way to the students interests, skills, and abilities as described in the present level statement.

While the majority of goals met the substantive requirements of IDEA, there were pockets of schools or programs in which the content was not sufficient and it was clear the IEP team members did not understand the purpose or intent of postsecondary goals and their influence on IEP development. The striking contrast between those that met the standard and those that didn't suggest that targeted technical assistance is warranted. As with annual goals, internal monitoring should include guided self-assessment of IEPs developed after the IEP team members participate in professional development.

FINDING

IEP team decisions regarding a student's services and placement should be driven by the present levels of performance statement (i.e., where the student is now), the annual goals (i.e., where we want the student to be in one year), and the measurable postsecondary goals (i.e., where the student should be in terms of education, employment, and independent functioning during the years immediately following. Based on IEP reviews and interviews with school-based IEP team members and parents, services and placements for students in grades six through 12 are often predetermined based on the limited options available in middle and high schools.

Related to this concern, staff involved in IEP team meetings across all grade levels indicated that professional development related to IEPs and oversight of the IEP development process itself focuses primarily on procedural compliance and the development of comprehensive data-based present level statements and high quality annual goals. Discussion and collaborative problem solving around the issue of potentially effective supports and services was rarely mentioned. When prompted, school staff indicated that they include on IEPs the services and supports that the school routinely provides, and that those decisions are made by principals.

To gauge the extent to which BCPS IEPs are perceived to meet students' needs, school and district staff were asked to respond to the survey statement: IEPs teams in my school do a good job of ensuring the IEPs they develop include all of the ESE services and supports necessary to meet the students' needs resulting from their disabilities (e.g., speech or language therapy, occupational therapy, counseling, direct specially designed instruction). The results are presented in **Exhibit 4.10-19**.

A graphical representation of the results are provided in **Exhibit 4.10-20**, with the favorable (strongly agree and agree) and unfavorable (strongly disagree and agree) aggregated.

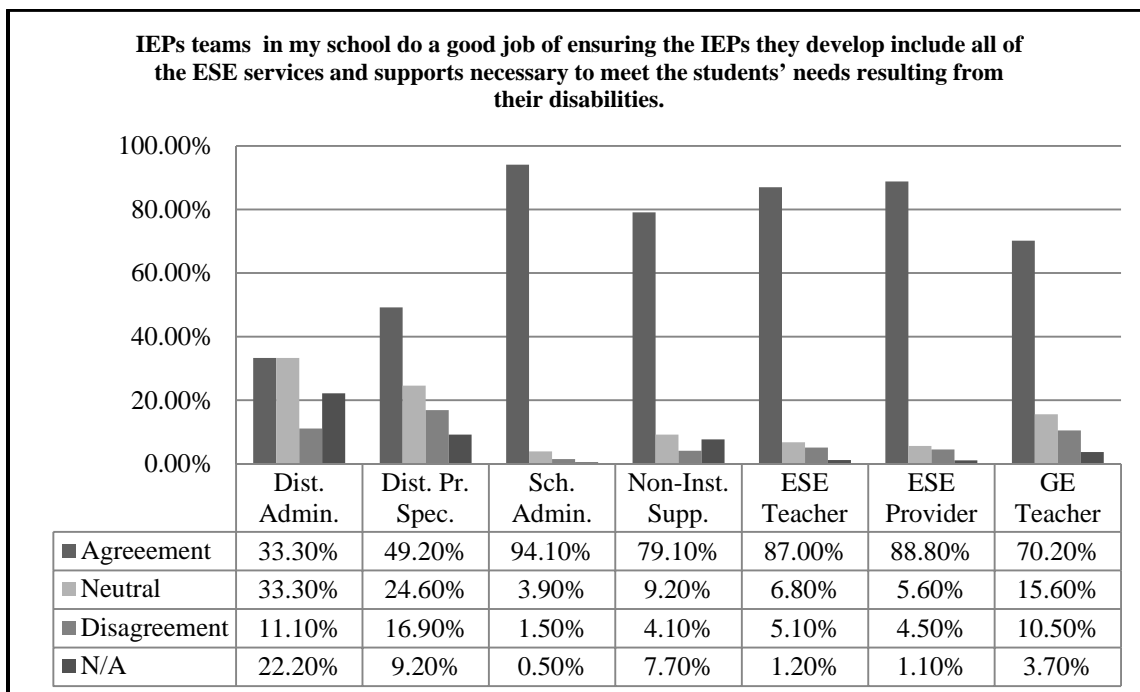


Exhibit 4.10-19
Evergreen Survey Statement on
IEP Content Meets the Needs of the Student

Survey Statement: IEPs teams in my school do a good job of ensuring the IEPs they develop include all of the ESE services and supports necessary to meet the students' needs resulting from their disabilities.						
Survey Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
District Staff						
District Administrator	22.2%	11.1%	33.3%	11.1%	0.0%	22.2%
District Program Specialist	9.2%	40.0%	24.6%	16.9%	0.0%	9.2%
School Staff						
School Administrator	55.8%	38.3%	3.9%	1.5%	0.0%	0.5%
Non-instructional Support	40.4%	38.7%	9.2%	3.2%	0.9%	7.7%
Special Education Teacher	44.5%	42.5%	6.8%	3.1%	2.0%	1.2%
Special Education Provider	51.4%	37.4%	5.6%	3.4%	1.1%	1.1%
General Education Teacher	25.6%	44.6%	15.6%	6.7%	3.8%	3.7%
Paraprofessional	21.6%	30.6%	16.0%	4.5%	2.2%	25.0%
Other	38.1%	36.4%	10.3%	3.4%	2.1%	9.6%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014

Exhibit 4.10-20
Evergreen Survey
IEP Content Meets the Needs of the Student
Aggregated Agreement and Disagreement by Respondent Type



Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.



The discrepancy in rates of positive responses between district-based and school-based staff is significant. A large majority of school administrators (94.1 percent), noninstructional support personnel (79.1 percent), ESE teachers (87 percent), ESE providers (88.8 percent), and general education teachers (70.2 percent), and others (74.5 percent) indicated that the IEPs developed by their IEP teams meet the needs of their students. In contrast, fewer than half of district-level administrators and program specialist (33.3 percent and 49.2 percent, respectively), responded favorably.

This discrepancy aligns with the discussions held with school staff regarding how decisions are made. For the most part, IEP team members explained that they base their decisions on what is at the school site. When asked what they would do if a student needed something different, many respondents indicated that they thought students would be moved to other schools if they needed services other than those commonly implemented within the home school.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.10-8:

Examine current guidance being provided to IEP teams regarding service decisions and ensure that it clearly and accurately describes the team's obligation and authority to include in the IEP the services and supports necessary to provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment.

Current guidance regarding placement decisions serves to ensure meaningful consideration of the nature of services and supports a student may need and requires an explanation of why they cannot reasonably be made available at the home school. This same level of consideration should be applied as IEP teams identify the most appropriate and effective services and supports for students who are not being considered for a more restrictive placement.

FINDING

Interviews with district- and school-based staff and a review of due process hearing orders and state complaint investigations completed during the past three years reveal cause for concern regarding the way some IEP team decisions are made. These sources indicate that intimidation through over-zealous advocacy and the resulting contentious relationships often influence school-based IEP team members to go against their best professional judgment.

The required membership of an IEP team includes a representative of the school district (local educational agency, or "LEA" representative) or designee who has the authority to allocate resources on behalf of the district. The LEA representative and other duly designated members of the team who are in attendance at the meeting are the only individuals authorized to develop an IEP. District-level and school-based staff reported that established district policy precludes IEP team members who represent the school district from contacting other staff members by phone, email, or text during the course of a meeting to obtain their input, as this would violate the requirement that only designated team members are authorized to develop an IEP. Despite this, incidents were reported in which parents or their representatives contacted school board



employees during the course of IEP team meetings and solicited their assistance in overriding the decisions of the team. The individuals contacted were not members of the IEP team, and the manner of communication appears to violate the district's internal policy.

Believing that they will not be supported by district leadership if they do not “give in” to pressure from parents and/or advocates, no matter the request, many school- and district-based staff report feeling incapacitated and immobilized, no longer acting in the best interests of the student.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.10-9:

Implement policies that clearly establish authority of members of a duly constituted IEP team to fulfill their assigned roles and responsibilities.

Decisions regarding ESE services and placements must be made by IEP team members in the course of a meeting. Each IEP team includes an LEA representative authorized to make decisions on behalf of the district, and procedures are in place to address situations in which the parents and the district are unable to reach consensus. Adherence to those established policies serves to uphold the integrity of the ESE process as a whole.

4.10.3 IEP Implementation

FINDING

The EdPlan™ system, of which EasyIEP™ is one part, includes many other functions, including logging and tracking the frequency and duration of student behaviors, antecedents and consequences of student behaviors; and documenting services and supports provided by support facilitators, therapist, and other service providers responsible for implementing students' IEPs. Based on interviews with school staff and review of IEPs accessed through EasyIEP™, this functionality is not being used to maximum effect. It was observed in the records of selected students enrolled in E/BD center programs, but not for other students with significant behavioral needs.

District staff reported concerns about the extent to which IEPs are implemented, particularly with regard to related services and support facilitation. A primary tool used by the district to ensure everyone responsible for implementing a student's IEP understands his or her role is the “IEP-at-a-Glance” generated by EasyIEP. Notably, this document includes the PLP statement(s), annual goals, supplementary aids and services, and accommodations, but does not include the amount or type of direct special education and related services a student is to receive. When asked about how this document is used, school staff indicated that it is primarily intended to inform general education teachers and ESE support facilitators of each student's goals and accommodations. While it is effective for this purpose, it does not reinforce for ESE teacher and service providers the importance of adhering to the established schedule of direct ESE services required by the IEP.



Similarly, when asked how implementation of IEPs is tracked within individual schools, the majority of principals stated that lesson plans and schedules are their primary tools. Some also discussed classroom walk-throughs as an effective measure. In contrast, only two school-based administrators stated that they utilize the tracking system embedded in EasyIEP™ to ensure that ESE support facilitators are meeting with students and going into classrooms in accordance with what is stated in the lesson plans and posted schedules.

ESE programs and services are governed by a set of laws and regulations that do not apply to general education, and parents of students with disabilities benefit from procedural safeguards not available to the general school population. As a result, principals and other school staff often expect district-level ESE staff to intervene whenever problems arise related to the services provided to students with disabilities). With few exceptions, this is not a reasonable expectation. Just as school-based administrators are responsible for ensuring that all other teachers within the school provide the amount and type of instruction required for their respective classroom and course assignments, they must ensure that students with disabilities receive the services required by their IEPs.

Monitoring the quality and amount of ESE services being provided to students within a school is often more challenging than with a traditional classroom or even a self-contained ESE classroom. Support facilitators, itinerant teachers, family counselors, speech/language therapists, and others often have complicated schedules that require a level of flexibility. During interviews with both school-based and district level staff, several respondents indicated that there is an expectation or belief that any issues related to ESE programs or services are the responsibility of central office staff, and that principals are hesitant to address concerns regarding the quality of ESE services in their own schools or to monitor IEP implementation.

During the past year teams from the Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services implemented a team-based onsite school review process at selected schools. In addition to staff interviews and observations of IEP team meetings, activities included reviews of IEPs; matrixes; scheduling; functional behavior assessments and positive behavior intervention plans; use of AT in different settings; Post-Graduate Alternatives for Secondary Students (PASS) programs; and community based instruction (CBI) activities. While fairly comprehensive, the school review process focused primarily on compliance and documentation, and did not delve very deeply into assessing the extent to which IEPs were actually implemented.

The following survey item was developed to assess IEP implementation: Students with disabilities in my school receive all of the ESE services required by their IEPs (i.e., type and amount of special education, related services, accommodations, behavioral supports, etc.). The results are presented in **Exhibit 4.10-21**.

A graphical representation of the results with strongly agree/agree and strongly disagree/disagree aggregated to reflect an “agreement” response and a “disagreement” response is provided in **Exhibit 4.10-22**.

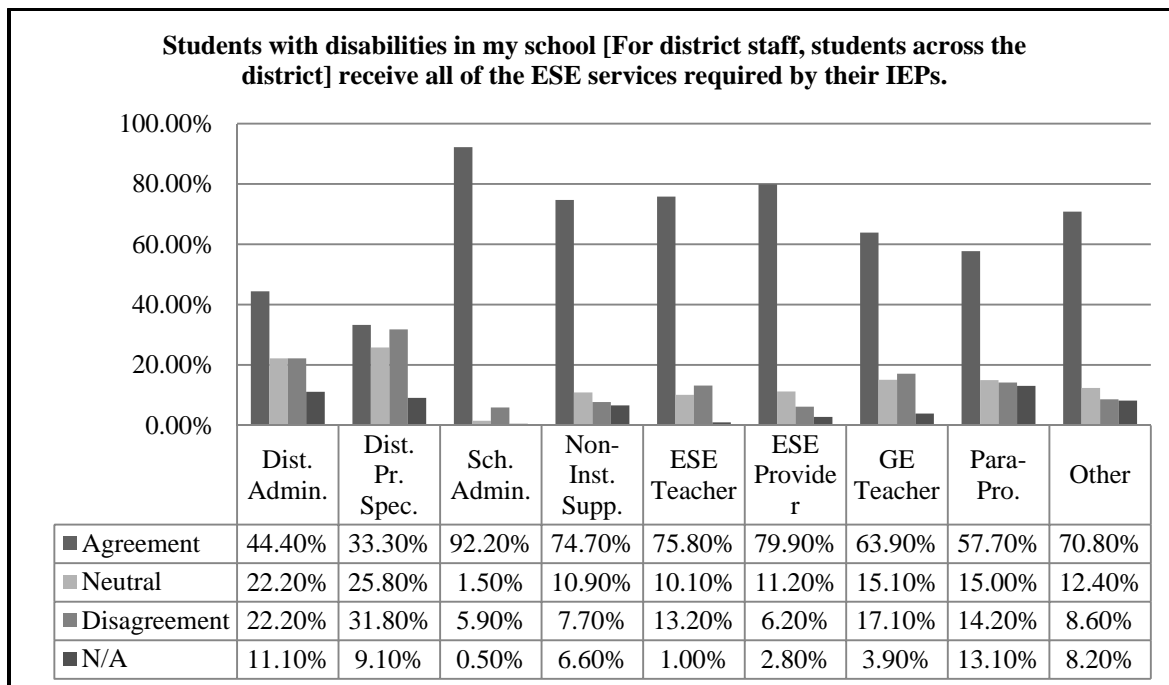


Exhibit 4.10-21
Evergreen Survey
IEP Implementation

Survey Statement: Students with disabilities in my school receive all of the ESE services required by their IEPs (i.e., type and amount of special education, related services, accommodations, behavioral supports, etc.), [For district staff, students across the district...]						
Survey Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
District Staff						
District Administrator	22.2%	22.2%	22.2%	11.1%	11.1%	11.1%
District Program Specialist	9.1%	24.2%	25.8%	30.3%	1.5%	9.1%
School Staff						
School Administrator	53.9%	38.3%	1.5%	4.9%	1.0%	0.5%
Non-instructional Support	39.1%	35.6%	10.9%	6.3%	1.4%	6.6%
Special Education Teacher	37.5%	38.3%	10.1%	9.4%	3.8%	1.0%
Special Education Provider	41.9%	38.0%	11.2%	4.5%	1.7%	2.8%
General Education Teacher	24.8%	39.1%	15.1%	11.4%	5.7%	3.9%
Paraprofessional	24.0%	33.7%	15.0%	10.1%	4.1%	13.1%
Other	37.5%	33.3%	12.4%	6.9%	1.7%	8.2%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.

Exhibit 4.10-22
Evergreen Survey
Aggregated Agreement and Disagreement



Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.



As with the item regarding the content of IEPs, the discrepancy in rates of positive responses between district-based and school-based staff is significant. A large majority of school administrators (92.2 percent), noninstructional support personnel (74.7 percent), ESE teachers (75.8 percent), ESE providers (79.9 percent), and general education teachers, and others (70.8 percent) responded with agreement to the statement that students receive the services on their IEPs. In contrast, fewer than half of district-level administrators and program specialist (44.4 percent and 33.3 percent, respectively), responded favorably. These results indicate that IEP implementation is an area of concern worthy of increased scrutiny.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 4.10-10:

Conduct an indepth review of IEP implementation, focusing on services that are not directly tied to ESE course enrollment (e.g., support facilitation, consultation, collaboration) and that are provided on an itinerant basis (e.g., speech and language therapy, counseling, occupational therapy, physical therapy).

Reports from schools indicate three possible patterns of concern with regard to IEP implementation. The first is related to itinerant services such as counseling for which there may be a logging system, but little or no oversight to verify the sessions recorded in the log align with the IEP. The second is related to the extent to which general education teachers implement the accommodations and instruction they are responsible for, and if there is any evidence or documentation to support this. The third concern is related to caseloads and workloads for support facilitators, particularly in middle schools and high schools. In many cases, the number of students served combined with the number of classrooms served exceeds the ability of the support facilitator to establish and maintain a schedule that provides the necessary services. The first step in resolving these concerns is understanding levels of implementation across schools or populations.

Recommendation 4.10-11:

Establish a workgroup, comprised of school leaders and district staff, to develop procedures for ensuring IEPs are implemented in their entirety, focusing on both the subject of instruction (i.e., annual goals) and the amount and type of service required (e.g., direct ESE support, consultation, collaboration, and accommodations).

School-based teams are responsible for developing IEPs and the majority of ESE services are provided by school-based employees. For services provided through the district, such as therapies or counseling, there is level of expectation that the school administrator is responsible for and aware of services being provided on their behalf to students in their schools. Input from both principals and district staff should be solicited to develop an effective and transparent system to monitor the provision of ESE services, with the onus of responsibility placed with the schools' administration. A basic set of consistent procedures adaptable for the range of school and program types (e.g., elementary, middle, high, and adult; traditional, cluster, and center schools sites) should be identified, with existing resources and systems integrated to the extent possible (e.g, EasyIEP™ service log).



4.11 TRANSITION/MATRICULATION



4.11 TRANSITION/MATRICULATION

The stated purpose of IDEA is “to ensure that all children with disabilities have available to them a free appropriate public education that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living.” This preparation begins in prekindergarten and continues through transitions to postsecondary opportunities.

Far too many children enter school not ready. When children are not developmentally prepared to transition to elementary school, they tend to fall further and further behind. Quality prekindergarten programs provide the necessary instruction to prepare children for a smooth and successful transition from prekindergarten to elementary school. Research supports positive outcomes of children who participate in quality programs in the early grades, including:

- increased lifelong earning potential;
- achieved better academic outcomes; and
- improved high school graduation outcomes.

Elementary programs build for student success in middle school. With the federal requirements of NCLB and IDEA, schools are accountable for the academic success of all students, including those with disabilities. Preparation for middle school begins with students’ abilities to meet academic performance standards in core academic subjects. Highly qualified teachers, accommodations, and access to the general curriculum are factors for academic achievement at all grade levels.

Realizing that middle school programs differ significantly from those in elementary grades, and additional differences are evident in high school programs, it is imperative that processes be in place to support students with disabilities as they matriculate from level to level. Effective ESE programs are designed to foster increasing levels of independence while maintaining sufficient services and supports to enable students with disabilities to achieve their goals.

Beginning in middle school and continuing on throughout high school, students with disabilities plan for the transition from secondary school into adult life, as required by IDEA. Students, with the support of others, are encouraged to think about their goals beyond high school in the areas of employment, further education or training, participation in their communities, and independent living.

Transition planning varies among students because each student has unique needs, strengths, interests, and preferences. Students and families are vital to the transition planning process—and contribute the most important voices. Transition is a process that builds on itself each year from middle school through high school graduation, and goals evolve and change as the student gets older and gains new insights.

With this level of planning, it is important to involve people who can work with a student to make long-term plans a reality. As transition planning begins, it is important that students actively and fully participate in this process and that their interests and preferences are



considered. It is equally important to determine which program or course of study the student needs to achieve transition goals.

This section is divided into the four subsections:

- 4.11.1 Prekindergarten to Elementary School
- 4.11.2 Elementary to Middle School
- 4.11.3 Middle to High School
- 4.11.4 Transition from High School to Postsecondary Life

4.11.1 Prekindergarten to Elementary School

Quality early education is an intentional initiative related to college and career readiness standards in Florida. The School Readiness Act, Chapter 411.01 of the Florida Statutes, recognizes that elementary school readiness increases a child's chance of achieving future educational success and becoming a productive member of society. It is the intent of the Florida Legislature that readiness programs:

- be developmentally appropriate;
- be research-based;
- involve parents as their child's first teacher;
- serve as preventive measures for children at risk of future school failure;
- enhance the educational readiness of eligible children; and
- support family education.

Every elementary school has a general curriculum used to guide classroom instruction at each grade level. This curriculum incorporates the state standards for each subject area. A continuum of services for students with disabilities in the early grades begins the journey towards future education, employment, and independent living.

FINDING

The prekindergarten programs for children with disabilities maintain a uniform matriculation process for children transitioning from prekindergarten to elementary school. Matriculation from prekindergarten to elementary school is a multi-step process. More specifically, elementary matriculations include:

- scheduling transition IEP meetings to review present levels and develop new goals and objectives for the kindergarten setting;
- hosting open houses or pre-enrollment classroom visits for parents and children in order for them to gain experience in what the school day is like;
- hosting parent orientation sessions to provide family members with forms and insights to help children transition to the next grade level; and
- providing helpful pamphlets for families on what the school will expect of them and tips on things they can do at home to prepare their children for school.



Exhibit 4.11-1 shows the parent survey rating of effective communication. As shown, approximately 64 percent of parents of prekindergarten children agreed or strongly agreed that BCPS effectively communicates information on available ESE programs and services to parents of children with disabilities. Parents of prekindergarten children rated district communications the highest of any other parent group survey.

Exhibit 4.11-1
Evergreen Parent Survey Statement
BCPS Communication with Parents

Survey Statement: BCPS effectively communicates information on available ESE programs and services to parents of students with disabilities.						
Parent	Overall	Prekindergarten	Elementary School	Middle School	High School	Adult/18-21
Strongly Agree	24.7%	42.5%	24.2%	19.3%	20.6%	19.4%
Agree	32.5%	21.3%	35.3%	31.3%	32.2%	38.7%
Neutral	16.2%	15.0%	15.8%	17.6%	16.7%	9.7%
Disagree	11.7%	12.6%	10.7%	13.1%	12.2%	12.9%
Strongly Disagree	8.6%	7.9%	7.4%	9.7%	10.6%	19.4%
N/A	6.3%	0.8%	6.7%	9.1%	7.8%	0.0%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2013.

Smooth transitions from prekindergarten to elementary are a result of connections between schools and families, and between prekindergarten and elementary teachers and classrooms. Purposeful coordination between the prekindergarten and elementary settings can maintain and potentially maximize gains that children achieved in prekindergarten. The transition is essential to sustain the benefits of early efforts to promote school readiness. The BCPS prekindergarten matriculation process involves not only the readiness of children for kindergarten, but also the readiness for schools to receive children, and the readiness of families to support their children in a new setting.

COMMENDATION

The prekindergarten to elementary matriculation process allows for smooth transition from one setting to another. The process focuses on children's readiness for kindergarten and includes the key stakeholders of receiving schools and families.

4.11.2 Elementary to Middle School

Matriculation from elementary to middle school can be one of the most difficult times for all students, especially those with disabilities. Students with disabilities face new challenges academically and socially as they move from elementary to middle school. While there are no specific legislative requirements for students with disabilities moving from elementary to middle school, it is important to consider best practices in creating a smooth transition to a new setting.

FINDING

BCPS does not have a districtwide process or procedure for matriculation from elementary to middle school.



As previously shown in **Exhibit 4.11-1**, approximately 60 percent of parents of students with disabilities in elementary school and approximately 51 percent of parents of students with disabilities in middle school agreed or strongly agreed that BCPS effectively communicates information on available ESE programs and services to parents of children with disabilities. Ratings by parents of elementary and middle school students were slightly lower than the parent ratings of prekindergarten children and seven to ten percent higher than the parent ratings of high school students. These data suggest that even though there is not a districtwide process or procedure for matriculation from elementary to middle school, informal conversations and planning do occur between the parents and school personnel some of the time, but not all of the time. Based on onsite parent interviews and forum discussions, parents of students with disabilities served in special programs tend to have considerable difficulty with the lack of BCPS communication about available ESE programs.

Teachers and ESE Specialists of special cluster-site programs for children with autism, emotional/behavioral disabilities, and intellectual disabilities do provide a variety of matriculation activities to help ease the transition from elementary-to-middle school and middle-to high school. Based on parent reports; however, the transition from elementary special cluster-site programs to middle school is particularly difficult because students with disabilities transfer from a very specialized elementary setting that includes placement in an ESE classroom for most or all of the school day (with a set of supports tailored to the student's particular disability) to a varying exceptionalities class in middle school or, for some students, inclusion in general education classes for the majority of the school day.

Parents reported, in the onsite forum and interviews, that the lack of preparation and communication throughout the matriculation process created unnecessary difficulties in moving from one setting to another. More specifically, parents reported:

- IEPs were not written appropriately for a new setting;
- parents were not effectively involved in the process;
- service delivery changed significantly, and parent or students were not adequately prepared for the shift;
- receiving staff were not appropriately informed or trained to receive the students;
- necessary materials, assistive technology, and adaptive equipment were not readily available in the new setting; and
- parents or students were not given an opportunity to visit the receiving school prior to the transition.

ESE Specialists reported that lack of time was the greatest barrier to providing more comprehensive matriculation activities. Teachers reported that they rely on the ESE Specialists to coordinate matriculation through the IEP process. Given the demands of the ESE Specialists, matriculation has not been the highest priority.



While schools provide informal matriculation activities, there is no consistent district approach to easing the transition from elementary to middle school. Most frequently, elementary ESE Specialists reported that they invite the ESE Specialist from the receiving middle school to participate in the IEP team meetings. Most receiving ESE Specialists cannot attend, however, because of their own caseloads and schedules. Other ESE Specialists reported that they send a list of students with disabilities to the receiving school and discuss matriculation by phone. Some receiving schools offer a parent open house for parents and the students. By report, the open houses are poorly attended.

Based on onsite school visits and interviews with key staff and parents, matriculation procedures for students with disabilities moving from inclusive settings in elementary school to a similar placement in middle school also are lacking districtwide. While the placement may stay the same (all or most of the school day in the general education classroom), the nature, amount and intensity of supports provided to the student decreases significantly. As with the students moving from more restrictive settings described above, parents, teachers, and district-level staff reported that IEPs prepared at the sending school are often not appropriate for the receiving school due to schedules, course offerings, or other issues. This necessitates that the IEP team, convene to update the IEP in the new setting. Students are often inappropriately scheduled, requiring a change of schedule after the school year begins.

This way of work is not effective or efficient. A more comprehensive and accurate matriculation model is needed that can characterize transition readiness from one setting to another, where multiple stakeholders support a smooth transition of students with disabilities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 4.11-1:

Create a district matriculation procedure for promoting students with disabilities from elementary to middle school.

This recommendation should be implemented in conjunction with **Recommendation 4.2-8** related to ensuring appropriate ESE supports are available for all middle school students with disabilities. The matriculation procedure should include a process for planning and the creation of school-based matriculation committees. Transition committees should adopt and use standard matriculation forms. Transition tools should be developed and disseminated to parents. There should be networking and joint training opportunities for parents and staff. Student needs should be clearly assessed and equipment/technology devices should be readily available at the receiving school prior to the student's arrival.

Recommendation 4.11-2:

Assess existing matriculation activities throughout Broward County Public Schools and develop a resource guide of best practices.



There are a number of effective practices for matriculation from elementary to middle school occurring in the schools. The Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services should identify those practices and develop a resource guide for all the schools.

4.11.3 Middle to High School

By their nature as secondary schools, middle schools and high schools are more similar to each other than to elementary schools. However, the transition from middle to high school is a challenging one, particularly for students with disabilities. Reliance on departmental rather than grade-level organization, the even larger campus and student population found in high schools compared to middle schools, and the increased expectations for student independence all have an impact on the success of ESE students. These factors make planning for a smooth matriculation to high school especially important.

Middle school promotion requirements are shown in **Exhibit 4.11-2**. In addition to the reading and math requirements shown in the exhibit, students must demonstrate proficiency in writing and science.

Exhibit 4.11-2
Florida Middle School Promotion Requirements

Grade & Subject	Passing Classes	Criteria #1	OR	Criteria #2
6-8 Reading and 6-8 Math	Pass a minimum of *four subjects plus meet Criteria #1 Or Criteria #1	Level 2 or higher on FCAT-SSS Reading And Level 2 or higher on FCAT-SSS Mathematics	Or	At or above the 25 th percentile on the FCAT-NRT At or above the 25 th percentile on the FCAT-NRT

Source: BCPS, Policy 6000.1: Student Progression Plan, 2014.

Another requirement for middle school promotion is that all middle school students must complete a career and education planning course which requires the creation of an academic and career plan (Personal Education Planner or ePEP) for high school. The Florida Department of Education offers exceptional education courses that will satisfy this requirement for those students with disabilities who may require them.

FINDING

Much like the experiences of students matriculating from elementary to middle school, parents and teachers reported that the services available in high schools for ESE students pursuing a standard diploma are limited and often not sufficient. As a result of the very high caseloads of Support Facilitators, staff reported few opportunities for meaningful planning and preparation for matriculation. Again, IEPs prepared at the sending school may not align with the schedules and service delivery model(s) available at the new school, and IEP teams must convene to address the conflicts.

In addition to the factors impacting all students as they exit middle school, Florida statutes require that IEP teams begin the process of identifying student transition services needs beginning at age 14. For most students, this aligns with the move to high school. Specifically, Rule 6A-6.03028, F.A.C., states that, beginning in grade eight or during the school year when the student turns 14, the IEP Team must:

- document steps taken to ensure that student strengths, preferences, and interests were considered;
- develop a statement of whether the student is pursuing a course of study leading to a standard or special diploma;
- begin the process of identifying transition services, to include consideration of the student's need for instruction or the provision of information in the area of self-determination to assist the student to be able to actively and effectively participate in IEP meetings and self-advocate, so that needed postsecondary goals may be identified and in place by age 16; and
- document the diploma decision (standard or special diploma).

In accordance with IDEA and Florida's statutes and rules, additional more rigorous and substantial transition planning requirements apply beginning when a student turns 16 years of age or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP team. As described in **Subsection 4.10** of the report with regard to IEP development, BCPS encourages its IEP teams to incorporate this additional content into IEPs beginning at age 14.

The extent to which ESE services and supports drop significantly from elementary to middle school and then again from middle to high school has a significant detrimental effect on successful matriculation of students with disabilities within BCPS. This particular concern is addressed in more detail in **Subsections 4.2** and **4.12** of this report.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.11-3:

Create a district protocol for students with disabilities matriculating from middle school to high school to ensure that appropriate and sufficient supports and services are in place to meet each student's needs.

This recommendation should be implemented in conjunction with **Recommendations 4.11.1 and 4.2-8**. Information gleaned by beginning the process of transition planning should be used to identify the nature, intensity, and amount of ESE services and supports a student requires and ensure that they are available at the start of the school year. Behavioral, academic, and life skills concerns must be addressed. In many cases, this may require changing the service delivery models provided within high schools.



4.11.4 Transition from High School to Postsecondary Life

Perhaps the most significant and overarching stated purpose of IDEA is “to ensure that all children with disabilities have available to them a free appropriate public education that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living.” In support of those goals of education, employment, and independence, IDEA requires IEP teams to begin planning and implementing transition services no later than the first IEP to be in effect when a student turns 16, or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP team. In addition, Florida requires IEP teams to begin the process of identifying students’ transition services needs beginning at age 14, and to consider whether the student needs instruction or information in the area of self-determination. In furtherance of this, the student is a required member of the IEP team beginning at 14.

The term “transition services” means a coordinated set of activities for a child with a disability that:

- is designed to be within a results-oriented process, that is focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the child with a disability to facilitate the child’s movement from school to post-school activities, including postsecondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation;
- is based on the individual child’s needs, taking into account the child’s strengths, preferences, and interests; and
- includes instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives, and, if appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation.

FINDING

Many district staff and high school teachers interviewed by Evergreen consultants expressed great concern over what they perceive as an absence of appropriate transition services to prepare two specific groups of students:

- those who do not have intellectual or developmental disabilities, but are struggling to pass the FCAT and may not earn a standard diploma; and
- those with emotional or behavioral challenges.

A frequent concern regarding the quality of transition services within the district was that teachers and school administrators do not always understand the content and complexity of transition planning for that population.

In accordance with Florida statutes, students who do not demonstrate proficiency on the FCAT in reading or math must be provided remediation, generally through enrollment in intensive reading or mathematics courses in addition to English and Algebra or another regular math class.



As a result, many students with disabilities who are pursuing a standard diploma have very limited opportunity to enroll in elective courses.

Challenges regarding the quality and effectiveness of transition planning for this population of students are exacerbated by the reliance on consultation, collaboration, and a limited amount of support facilitation to assist students pursuing a standard diploma. This model combined with a lack of or limited access to learning strategies courses results in students receiving little or no direct ESE support. Once students fall behind, it becomes increasingly difficult to catch up and increasingly unlikely that they will meet the criteria for enrollment in career and technical programs or other postsecondary education and training options.

District and school-based staff reported that the lack of access to postsecondary education and to the district's own technical schools is a significant problem. It was reported that the technical programs require students to achieve a minimum score on the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) to qualify for most technical programs. Further, staff stated that the schools do not allow for consideration of a waiver of the TABE requirements they believe is condoned by FLDOE, but the technical schools will not consider such a request.

During the course of the parent meetings, concerns were also expressed regarding a lack of appropriate transition support for students with disabilities planning to attend a university or community college. High school guidance counselors have high caseloads in general, and are not attuned to the unique needs of students with disabilities—assuming that the ESE staff address issues such as accommodations on college entrance examinations and accessing available supports once enrolled in college. The ESE staff similarly assume that support regarding college selection, application, enrollment, and scholarships will be addressed through the guidance department or families.

Results from the Evergreen staff survey related to the prompt “Middle and high school students with disabilities are adequately prepared for postsecondary employment and education or training when they graduate or age out” are reported in **Exhibit 4.11-3**.

Exhibit 4.11-3
Evergreen Staff Survey Statement on
Secondary Transition

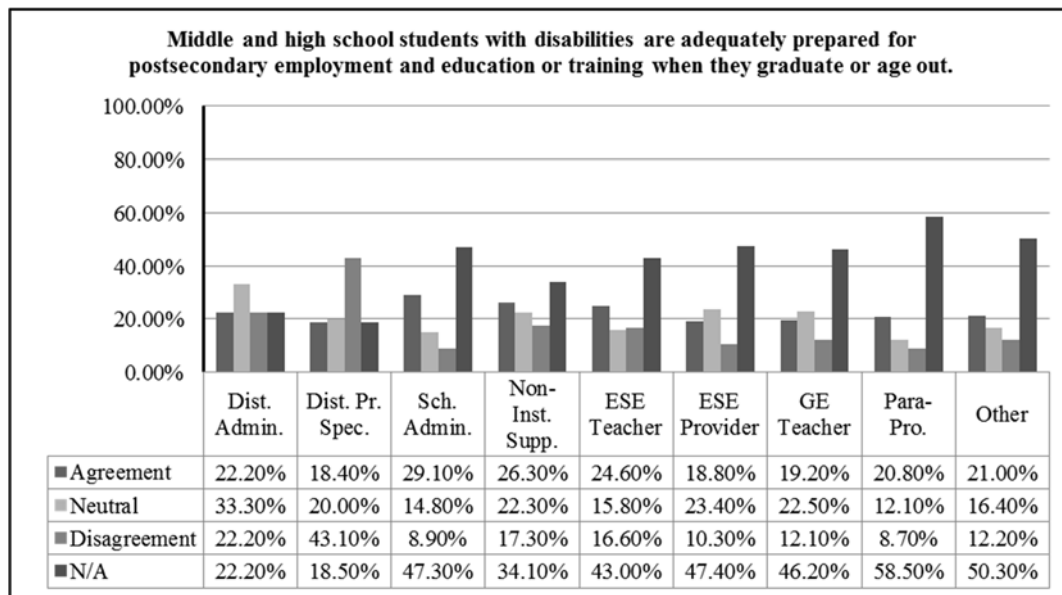
Survey Statement: Middle and high school students with disabilities are adequately prepared for postsecondary employment and education or training when they graduate or age out.						
Survey Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
District Staff						
District Administrator	11.1%	11.1%	33.3%	11.1%	11.1%	22.2%
District Program Specialist	4.6%	13.8%	20.0%	26.2%	16.9%	18.5%
School Staff						
School Administrator	12.8%	16.3%	14.8%	6.4%	2.5%	47.3%
Non-instructional Support	7.2%	19.1%	22.3%	10.1%	7.2%	34.1%
Special Education Teacher	7.8%	16.8%	15.8%	10.5%	6.1%	43.0%
Special Education Provider	5.7%	13.1%	23.4%	8.6%	1.7%	47.4%
General Education Teacher	5.2%	14.0%	22.5%	7.4%	4.7%	46.2%
Paraprofessional	8.7%	12.1%	12.1%	4.9%	3.8%	58.5%
Other	8.4%	12.6%	16.4%	8.7%	3.5%	50.3%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.



Graphical representation of the results aggregated to reflect agreement (i.e., strongly agree and agree) and disagreement (strongly disagree and disagree) are presented in **Exhibit 4.11-4**.

Exhibit 4.11-4
Evergreen Staff Survey Statement on
Secondary Transition
Aggregated Agreement and Disagreement by Respondent Type



Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.

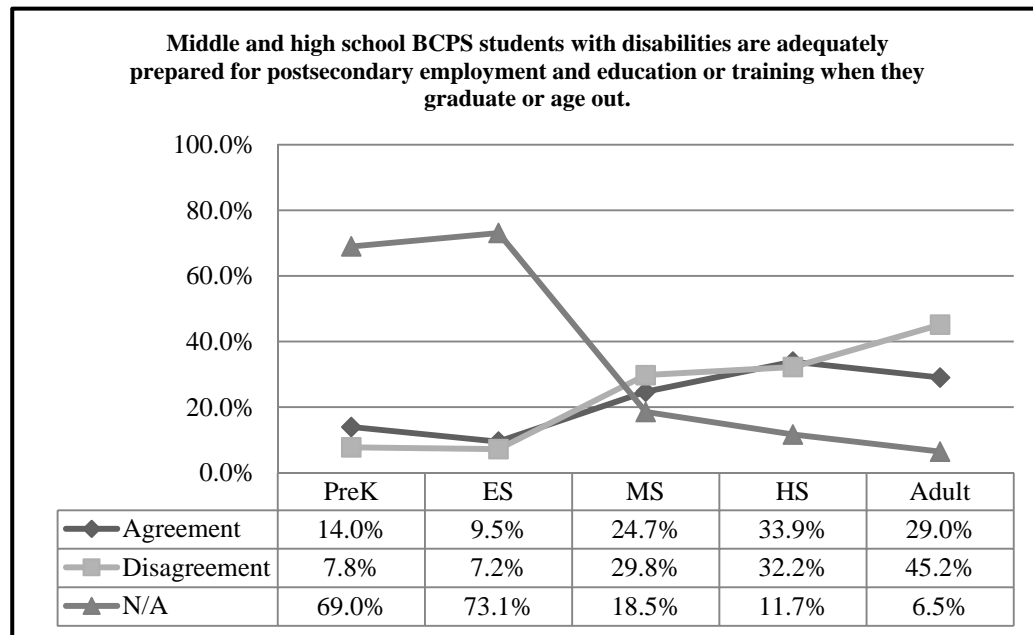
Overall, the discrepancy among respondent groups was not as great for this item as for others. District-based staff were more likely to respond negatively than school-based staff, with the highest rate of disagreement coming from district program specialists (43.1 percent) and the lowest level from school administrators (8.9 percent) and paraprofessionals (8.7 percent). In contrast, the highest level of agreement was from school administrators (29.1 percent) and the lowest level of agreement was from ESE providers (18.8 percent). The same prompt was presented in the parent survey.

Results disaggregated by grade level of the students are presented in graphical format in **Exhibit 4.11-5**. Results are notable for the significant drop in favorable responses when as students matriculated to middle school and then to high school. However, this is large due to the high number of parents of PreK and elementary grade students who responded with N/A. The rate of disagreement rises steadily with the age of the student, from approximately 7 percent at the PreK and elementary grades to 29.8 percent for parents of middle school students, 32.2 percent for parents of high school students, and 45.2 percent for parents of adult students.

A summary item with the following prompt presented in both the staff and parent surveys: “Overall, the quality and effectiveness of secondary transition planning and services provided by BCPS are improving, staying the same, [or] declining,” Results for the two groups are presented in **Exhibits 4.11-6** and **4.11-7**, respectively.

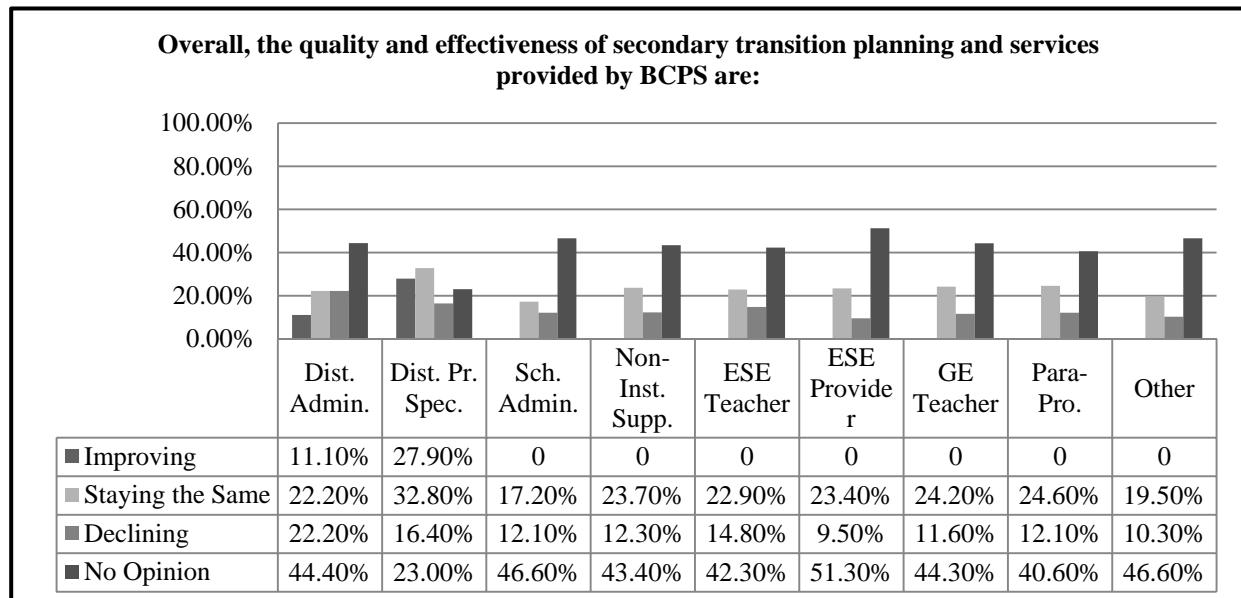


Exhibit 4.11-5
Evergreen Parent Survey Statement on
Effectiveness of Secondary Transition Services



Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.

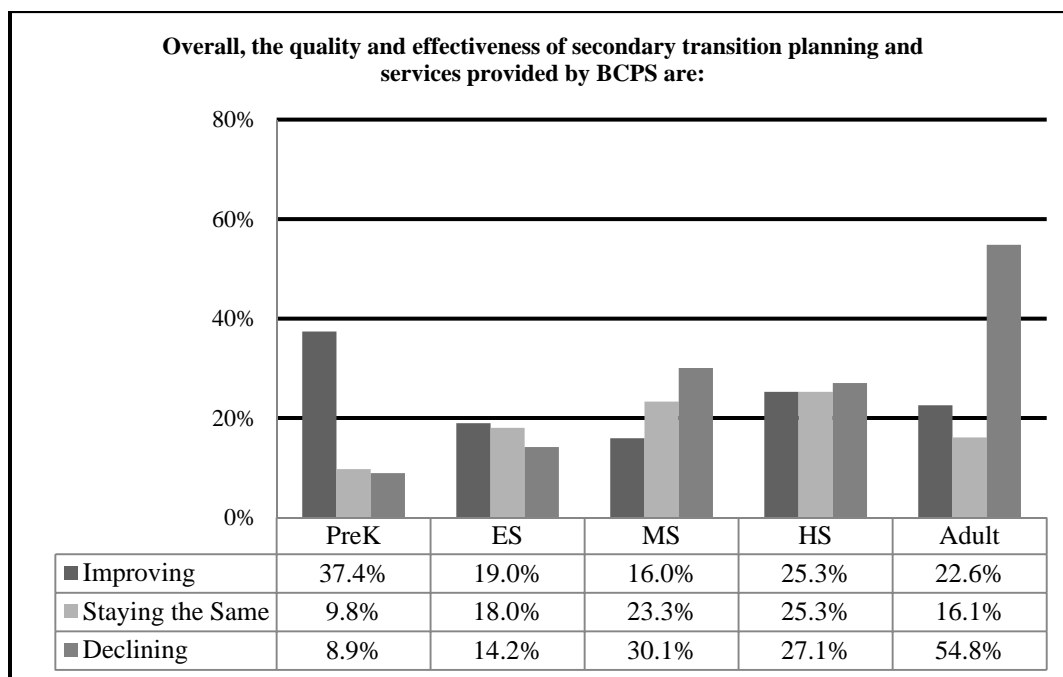
Exhibit 4.11-6
Evergreen Staff Survey Statement on
Trend in Secondary Transition Services



Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.



Exhibit 4.11-7
Evergreen Parent Survey Statement on
Trend in Transition Services by Grade Level



Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.

The pattern of responses aligns with that on the previous item, with relatively few district or school staff voicing an opinion, and parental dissatisfaction increasing with the age of the students.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.11-4:

Conduct a comprehensive review/evaluation of all transition programming, with a focus on how schools are implementing vocational education for ESE students, and develop a guide based on researched best practices and effective service delivery models.

BCPS should convene a stakeholder workgroup to conduct a gap analysis with regard to transition services and student outcomes. The stakeholder group should comprise secondary transition specialists, representatives from career and technical education programs, community vocational and business partners, ESE teachers, general education teachers, parents, and students, as appropriate. A primary focus of the group should be to identify potential services or supports for the most hard-to-reach/hard-to-serve students, including students with behavioral challenges and students who are not on track to graduate. District and school administrators and program specialists as well as teachers indicated that the need for information and suggestions in this is considerable and critical.



FINDING

Transition services and resources of the Florida Department of Education's Project 10: the Transition Education Network—are not effectively utilized for the planning and delivery of transition services in secondary programs.

The Project 10: Transition Education Network is one of many statewide discretionary projects supported by the Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services (BEESS), which also funds it. The mission of Project 10 is to assist Florida school districts and relevant stakeholders in building capacity to provide secondary transition services to students with disabilities in order to improve their academic success and post-school outcomes.

Project 10's primary charge is to assist school districts in providing appropriate planning and timely transition services and programs to assist youth with disabilities in their transition to adulthood. Project 10 also serves as a collaborative resource for other state agencies, discretionary projects, non-profit organizations, and families in the provision of transition services for students served in exceptional student education.

Project 10 uses regional personnel, 21st Century technology, extensive collaboration, and data-driven accountability to deliver services, supports, and information to all stakeholders focused on improving post-school outcomes for students served in exceptional student education within Florida.

When requested, transition staff from Project 10 work closely with school district personnel to identify the programmatic and training needs of each district, and assist them with meeting their goals in the area of secondary transition. Project 10 collaborates in related state activities and provides support to the State Transition Steering Committee and District Interagency Councils. This project also produces a number of products, supports pilot transition activities across the State, provides training and technical assistance services, and develops research-supported activities.

Project 10 is currently focusing on four major initiatives:

- capacity building to implement secondary transition services;
- interagency collaboration;
- transition legislation and policy; and
- student development and outcomes.

The initiatives of Project 10 provide the training, technical assistance, and resources at no cost to personnel throughout Florida's school districts who are working to improve the future success of students with disabilities. Project 10 is a resource that BCPS has not effectively utilized.



RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.11-5:

Utilize the training, technical assistance, and resources provided by the Project 10: Transition Education Network to develop a comprehensive transition program in BCPS secondary schools.

Discretionary projects such as Project 10 are available to schools districts at no cost. This is an untapped resource that can provide a wealth of information and support BCPS efforts in developing and implementing a comprehensive transition program for students with disabilities.

FINDING

BCPS lacks an adequate monitoring process for successful academic or test performance for students with disabilities—thereby possibly missing opportunities for planning for accelerated programs.

The high school graduation requirements shown in **Exhibit 4.11-8** include opportunities for students to take academic courses designed to prepare them for future academic and career choices. All students must earn a specific grade point average on a 4.0 scale and achieve passing scores on the Grade 10 Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test 2.0 (FCAT) Reading in order to graduate with a standard diploma. Under some circumstances, students with disabilities may be eligible for a waiver of the passing score requirement for the FCAT or end-of-course exams. Such a waiver requires action by the student's IEP team.

Exhibit 4.11-9 shows the acceleration programs and advanced coursework offered for all BCPS students, including those with disabilities.

BCPS does not disaggregate SAT or ACT results for students with disabilities. These tests are high indicators of academic performance in accelerated programs, such as International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Program, the Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE) Program, Dual Enrollment and Early Admission, Advanced Placement (AP) Program or the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (Pre-AICE) Program (IGCSE). During onsite visits, interviews, or data review, there was no consistent evidence found for monitoring successful academic or test performance for students with disabilities; thus, possibly missing opportunities for planning for accelerated programs. Data were also not available to show the enrollment of students with disabilities in accelerated academic programs.

It appears that the majority of efforts in exceptional student education focus on students with disabilities served in special programs, followed by those who are not academically successful. While this focus is worthy, the need for a greater emphasis on high achieving students with disabilities is apparent.



Exhibit 4.11-8 Broward County High School Graduation Requirements

Subject Area	Graduation Requirements of 24-Credit Program	Graduation Requirements of Three-Year 18-Credit College Preparatory Program	Graduation Requirements of Three-Year 18-Credit Career Preparatory Program
English	4 credits, with major concentration in composition, reading for information, and literature	4 credits, with major concentration in composition and literature	4 credits, with major concentration in composition and literature
Mathematics	4 credits, one of which must be Algebra 1 or its equivalent and one of which must be in Geometry or its equivalent, and one of which must be Algebra 2 or a series of courses equivalent to Algebra 2	4 credits, one of which must be Algebra 1 or its equivalent or a higher-level mathematics course from the list of courses that qualify for state university system (SUS) admission, one of which must be in Geometry or its equivalent, and one of which must be Algebra 2 or a series of courses equivalent to Algebra 2 or a higher-level mathematics course	4 credits, one of which must be Algebra 1 or its equivalent and one of which must be in Geometry or its equivalent, and one of which must be Algebra 2 or a series of courses equivalent to Algebra 2
Science	3 credits in science, two of which must have a laboratory component and one of which must be Biology 1 or an equivalent course or a series of courses	3 credits in science, two of which must have a laboratory component and one of which must be Biology 1 or an equivalent course or a series of courses	3 credits in science, two of which must have a laboratory component and one of which must be Biology 1 or an equivalent course or a series of courses
Social Studies	1 credit World History 1 credit United States History .5 credit United States Government .5 credit Economics	1 credit World History 1 credit United States History .5 credit United States Government .5 credit Economics	1 credit World History 1 credit United States History .5 credit United States Government .5 credit Economics
World Languages	Not required for high school graduation, but required for admission into state universities	2 credits in the same language or demonstrated proficiency in a second language	Not required
Fine Arts and Performing Arts, Speech and Debate, or Practical Arts	1 credit in Fine or Performing Arts, Speech and Debate, or Practical Arts (eligible courses specified in Course Code Directory)	Not required	Not required
Physical Education	1 credit in Physical Education (to include the Integration of Health)	Not required	Not required
Electives	8 credits	2 credits	3 credits in single vocational/career education program and 1 elective credit <u>OR</u> 3 credits in single career/technical certificate dual enrollment and 1 elective credit <u>OR</u> *4 credits in vocational/career education (including 3 credits in one sequential career and technical education program)
TOTAL	24 credits	18 credits	18 credits
Grade Point Average (GPA) Requirements	Cumulative GPA of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale	Cumulative GPA of 3.5 on a 4.0 scale in required courses and a weighted or unweighted grade that earns at least 3.0 points or its equivalent in each of the 18 required credits	Cumulative GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale in required courses and a weighted or unweighted grade that earns at least 2.0 points or its equivalent in each of the 18 required credits
State Assessment Requirements	Students must earn passing scores on the Grade 10 FCAT 2.0 Reading (or scores that are concordant with the passing scores on the Grade 10 FCAT 2.0 Reading. Students must earn a passing score or attain an equivalent score on the Algebra 1, Geometry, and Biology 1 EOC Assessment in order to earn course credit.		
Special Notes: All courses earned toward the three-year, 18-credit college preparatory program must satisfy admission requirements for the State University System. To determine which courses meet State University System admission requirements, please use the Comprehensive Course Table. At least 6 of the 18 credits must be completed in courses that include dual enrollment, AP, IB, AICE, or are specifically listed as rigorous by the Florida Department of Education. At least one course within the 24-credit program must be completed through online learning.			

Source: BCPS, Policy 6000.1: Student Progress Plan, 2014.

*Pending Legislative Action



Exhibit 4.11-9 Acceleration Programs and Advance Coursework

Program	Description
International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Program	The IB Diploma Program is a rigorous pre-university course of study leading to internationally standardized tests. The program's comprehensive two-year curriculum allows its graduates to fulfill requirements of many different nations' education systems. Students completing IB courses and exams from six subject groups are eligible for college credit. The award of credit is based on scores achieved on IB exams. Students can earn up to 30 postsecondary semester credits by participating in this program at the high school level. Approximately 56 Florida high schools offer an IB Diploma Program. Students in Florida's public secondary schools enrolled in IB courses do not have to pay to take the exams. Visit http://www.ibo.org
Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE) Program	The AICE Program is an international curriculum and examination program modeled on the British pre-college curriculum. To be considered for an AICE Diploma, a candidate must earn the equivalent of six credits by passing a combination of examinations at either the full (one credit) Advanced Subsidiary Level (AS) or double (two credits) International Advanced Level (A), with at least one course coming from each of the three curriculum areas. Florida's colleges and universities provide college credit for successfully passing the exams. Student in Florida's public secondary schools enrolled in AICE courses do not have to pay to take the exams. Visit http://www.cie.org.uk/qualifications/academic/uppersec/aice and http://www.cie.org.uk/docs/qualifications/aice/AICE
Dual Enrollment and Early Admission	These programs allow eligible high school students to enroll in postsecondary courses. They earn credit toward high school graduation and, at the same time, earn credit toward a college degree or technical certificate. All 28 Florida colleges and some of the state universities participate in dual enrollment. Students are permitted to take dual enrollment courses on a part-time basis during school hours, after school, or during the summer term. Dual enrollment students do not have to pay registration, matriculation, or laboratory fees. In addition, textbooks for dual enrollment are provided to students free of charge. Dual enrollment courses will be weighted the same as courses taught through other acceleration mechanisms. Students should be aware that grades received through dual enrollment at Florida colleges and universities become part of the permanent postsecondary record. State universities will not admit a student who has less than a 2.0 grade point average on a 4.0 scale.
Advanced Placement (AP) Program	The College Board's AP Program is a nationwide program consisting of more than 30 college-level courses and exams offered at participating high schools. Subjects range from art to statistics. Students who earn a qualifying grade of three or above on an AP exam can earn college credit, or AP credit, or both, depending on the college or university. Students in Florida's public secondary schools enrolled in AP courses do not have to pay to take the exams. Visit http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/ap/about.html
International General Certificate of Secondary Education (Pre-AICE) Program (IGCSE)	The IGCSE Program is an international curriculum and examination program designed for 14-to-16 year old students. Participants who obtain an IGCSE qualification from Cambridge are prepared for further academic success, including progression to the British pre-college curriculum "A-Level" study (AICE Program). Students in Florida's public secondary schools enrolled in pre-AICE courses do not have to pay to take the exams. Visit http://www.cie.org.uk and click on <i>Qualifications and Diplomas</i> , then <i>IGCSE</i> .
Florida Virtual School (FVS)	The FVS offers high-quality, online high school curricula, including AP courses. The FVS Program can be a resource for students with limited access to AP offerings. Visit http://www.flvs.net
Adult Education	Many school districts let high school students take courses through their adult education program. Credits earned may be applied to requirements for high school graduation, subject to the local school board's policies. Visit http://www.fldoe.org/workforce/adulted/
College-Level Examination Program (CLEP)	Students with strong content background in a subject area can earn credit through an examination program administered by the college they attend. One such program is the College-Level Examination Program (CLEP). Candidates for the CLEP include students who have completed an AP course but did not take or earn a qualifying score on the AP exam. Other students who have taken several high school courses in one particular subject area may wish to take a CLEP exam. For more information on CLEP testing sites and dates, contact the admissions or registrar's office at the postsecondary institution in your area.

Source: BCPS Policy 6000.1: Student Progress Plan, 2014.



RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.11-6:

Increase the monitoring of students with disabilities who are academically successful and consider participation in accelerated academic programs in transition planning, as appropriate.

Developing a process for monitoring the successful academic achievement of students with disabilities is necessary for the transition planning for high school and beyond. Without such a process, students with disabilities may not be appropriately considered for participation in accelerated academic programs.

FINDING

There are limited opportunities for vocational education or employability skills training for high school students with disabilities. BCPS does not offer modified completion points for Modified Occupational Completion Points (MOCPs) for vocational education. The district's pupil progression plan does not specify the availability of MOCPs.

The accelerated programs were previously shown in **Exhibit 4.11-9** (Adult Education). As stated:

Many school districts let high school students take courses through their adult education program. Credits earned may be applied to requirements for high school graduation, subject to the local school board's policies.

In addition to the graduation requirements for standard diploma summarized in previous **Exhibits 4.11-8** and **4.11-9**, Florida offers five special diploma options for students with disabilities. These options are shown in **Exhibit 4.11-10**, including performance-based exit, GED, dual enrollment, certificate of completion and Special Diploma Option 1 and Special Diploma Option 2. Of these five options, three are directly related to vocational training and employability training, including dual enrollment, certificates of completion, and employment and community competencies.

As referenced on the Florida Department of Education website, the Department is restructuring vocational education curricula to be more responsive to the needs of business and industry in Florida and to improve vocational educational courses for secondary students preparing to enter the work force. Many occupational programs offer the option of occupational completion points. Course modifications for students with disabilities can be used in developing modifications to preexisting occupational completion points and included in the transition IEP process.

Modified Occupational Completion Points (MOCPs) are selected sets of student performance standards that fall between established occupational completion points as identified in vocational job preparatory course descriptions. These selected standards guide the student in completing a modified program and developing marketable skills.



Exhibit 4.11-10
Special Diploma Options for Students with Disabilities

Option	Description
Performance-based Exit Option (formally GED Exit Option)	Performance-based exit option is an alternative route to graduation for students who are at risk of not graduating on time with their kindergarten cohort due to: credit deficiency, low grade point average, being overage for grade. Districts must apply and receive approval from the Florida Department of Education to offer this option; and participation is voluntary on the part of students. In order to participate, students must perform at the seventh reading level or higher at the time of selection for the program and ninth grade or higher at the time of GED testing. Students who successfully complete this option are awarded a Florida high school performance-based diploma, not a standard high school diploma.
GED/Florida High School Performance Based Diploma/CPT Eligible Certificates of Completion	Students may enroll in a degree-seeking program in a college. Students will be required to take or present visa employment authorization, ACT, or SAT scores to determine which courses for enrollment. This diploma option may impact military service eligibility.
Dual Enrollment and Early Admission	These programs allow eligible high school students to enroll in postsecondary courses. They earn credit toward high school graduation and, at the same time, earn credit toward a college degree or technical certificate. All 28 Florida colleges and some of the state universities participate in dual enrollment. Students are permitted to take dual enrollment courses on a part-time basis during school hours, after school, or during the summer term. Dual enrollment students do not have to pay registration, matriculation, or laboratory fees. In addition, textbooks for dual enrollment are provided to students free of charge. Dual enrollment courses will be weighted the same as courses taught through other acceleration mechanisms. Students should be aware that grades received through dual enrollment at Florida colleges and universities become part of the permanent postsecondary record. State universities will not admit a student who has less than a 2.0 grade point average on a 4.0 scale.
Certificate of Completion	The certificate of completion is appropriate for students who have completed required coursework for graduation but have not passed the state assessment (FCAT), achieved a minimum of 2.0 GPA, or achieved other district requirements. This is not a high school diploma.
Special Diploma 1	For special diploma option 1, students must meet school district's requirements, which includes earning the minimum number of course credits determined by the school district.
Special Diploma 2:	Special diploma option 2, students must attain achievement of all the annual goals and short-term objectives/benchmarks specified on the IEP related to the employment and community competencies. Employment is required in a community-based job, for the number of hours per week specified in the student's training plan, for the equivalent of one semester, and paid a minimum wage in compliance with the requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act. Students must also mastery the employment and community competencies specified in the training plan. Students may be eligible to enroll in career and technical certificate programs, GED, or adult basic education. Students receiving a special diploma are not eligible for military service. Programs at colleges and universities provide comprehensive transition and postsecondary programs for students with intellectual disabilities.

Source: BCPS, Policy 6000.1: Student Progress Plan, 2014.



The benefits of using modified occupational completion points include:

- increased flexibility in career planning;
- allow more opportunities and choices related to education and jobs;
- give students and teachers a targeted outcome;
- highlight student abilities rather than disabilities;
- meet the requirements of transition IEPs;
- respond to accountability and accessibility mandates;
- allow for a larger, more diverse population of workers that meet local community labor market needs;
- provide earlier and continuous individual career counseling;
- provide a realistic career plan which allows students to move vertically and horizontally based on changing needs, interests and labor market changes;
- coordinate more realistically with vocational assessment and evaluation procedures;
- promote greater awareness and interdisciplinary collaboration that enhances transition planning; and
- complement dropout prevention by helping students target specific school-to-work goals.

The development of an appropriate vocational education plan depends on assessing a student's interests and abilities. For students with disabilities, traditional assessment approaches may not be effective. Curriculum-Based Vocational Assessment (CBVA) is one approach that is being successfully implemented in Florida.

CBVA is a process for determining career development and vocational instructional needs of students based upon ongoing performance within existing course content and curriculum. It is a systematic, continuous evaluation process that allows for the development of individual student data that can guide the career development of the student. CBVA helps identify the student skills and preferences—which are key factors to consider in transition planning. CBVA instrument data can be integrated with assessment information from other sources in order to:

- determine current career/vocational functioning level;
- develop annual vocational program goals; and
- develop observable, measurable short-term vocational instructional objectives.

CBVA supports transition IEP development by providing functional data for developing goals and objectives, and documenting the extent to which these goals and objectives have been met. Further, CBVA serves as a performance-based method to assess the need for Modified Occupational Completion Points (MOCs).



The transition IEP identifies needs related to postsecondary outcomes for students with disabilities. Planning should include identification of vocational outcomes and the selection of vocational job preparation courses. Most students will be able to master one or more occupational completion points during their high school years. Sometimes instructional or curriculum modification are needed if a student is unable to complete occupational completion points within available time frames or has significant needs. In cooperation with the student, vocational and ESE staff identify appropriate vocational outcomes which are documented in the transition IEP.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 4.11-7:

Offer Modified Occupational Completion Points (MOCPs) for vocational education to increase opportunities for vocational education or employability skills training for high school students with disabilities.

MOCPs for vocational education can increase the opportunities for postsecondary employment and independent living for students with disabilities. The Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services and the Career and Technical Education Department should work collaboratively to offer MOCPs as a high school transition opportunity for students with disabilities.

Some options available in developing an appropriate vocational job preparatory program are shown in **Exhibit 4.11-11**. An individually designed program could range from no required modifications to curriculum framework modifications with instructional modifications.

Exhibit 4.11-11
Options for Developing a Vocational Job Preparatory Program

OPTION	REQUIREMENTS
No modifications	The student completes the requirements for completion of the vocational program with no modifications or accommodations. Upon successful completion, the student is reported as a standard occupational completion point(s) completer.
Instructional modifications without curriculum modifications	Modifications may be made to time requirements, variations in instructional methodology, accommodations for teacher-student communications systems, classroom and district testing procedures, and other evaluation procedures. Upon successful completion, the student is reported as a standard occupational completion point(s) completer.
Curriculum framework modifications without instructional modifications	Curriculum modifications may include the selection of particular outcomes and student performance standards chosen from a job preparatory program that a student must master to earn credit. These performance standards must be specified in the Transition IEP and are designated as Modified Occupational Completion Points. No instructional modifications are required. Upon successful completion, the student is reported as a modified occupational completion point(s) completer.
Curriculum framework modifications with instructional modifications	Curriculum modifications may include the selection of particular outcomes and student performance standards chosen from a job preparatory program that a student must master to earn credit. The student requires modifications in time requirements, variations in instructional methodology, accommodations for teacher-student communications systems, classroom and district testing procedures, or other evaluation procedures are also needed. These performance standards must be specified in the Transition IEP and are designated as Modified Occupational Completion Points. Upon successful completion, the student is reported as a modified occupational completion point(s) completer.

Source: Florida Department of Education, *Modified Occupational Completion Points (MOCPs)*, 2013.



Recommendation 4.11-8:**Revise the district's pupil progression plan to specify the availability of MOCPs.**

Rule 6A-6.0312(6) FAC, Course Modifications for Exceptional Students, states, "The school board's provisions for course modifications shall be incorporated in the district's Pupil Progression Plan." If Modified Occupational Completion Points (MOCPs) are used, the district must specify the availability of MOCPs in the Pupil Progression Plan.

The following steps, summarized from Modified Occupational Completion Points in Vocational Education for Students with Disabilities (1995), are offered as a starting point. These steps will support the development of district policy, procedures, and technical assistance materials to meet student needs and assist in development of vocational education programs for students with disabilities.

- Vocational educators establish commitment of district administration to implement MOCPs.
- Vocational educators establish a core team that includes representatives from vocational education, exceptional student education, guidance/counseling, vocational rehabilitation, local business and industry, occupational and vocational specialists, and parents.
- Core team reviews state policy on course modifications for students with disabilities in vocational education as well as technical assistance materials related to vocational education enrollment, completion, and placement.
- Core team reviews state MOCPs technical assistance materials as well as district developed MOCP materials as possible models for local use.
- Core team drafts district policy on course modifications including provision for course modifications in the district's Pupil Progression Plan and submits it for review and approval.
- Core team selects specific vocational programs areas, reviews curriculum frameworks, and develops MOCPs job charts to reflect occupations in the community, using recommended titles from the Dictionary of Occupational Titles (DOT), when appropriate.
- Vocational instructors and business representatives identify student performance standards for selected MOCP areas identified on jobs charts.
- Core team establishes procedures for including MOCPs in student performance standards in the Transition IEP and adopts procedure for tailoring MOCPs for individual students.
- Core team develops district-level technical assistance materials that include recommended policies, procedures and MOCPs job charts.
- Core team and/or other staff provide training and onsite technical assistance, as appropriate.



FINDING

Secondary transition services and programs implemented within BCPS include community-based instruction (in all but two of the district's high schools), community-based vocational education, dual enrollment, and career placement. The following are examples of specialized secondary transition programs currently implemented by the district for adult students age 18 to 22:

- **Post-Graduate Alternatives for Secondary Students (PASS):** PASS is a community-based transition model located at select high schools throughout the district. Students participate in a curriculum that emphasizes functional academics, social skills, life skills, community-based instruction, and work experience.

Examples of placements that take place in PASS are provided in **Exhibit 4.11-12**.

Exhibit 4.11-12
Post-Graduate Alternatives for Secondary Students (PASS)

Student Placements	P.A.S.S. Partnerships
<i>Retail:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process Clothing • Stocking • Pricing • Bagging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barnes and Noble • Best Western • Big Lots • BJ's • Coral Financial Group • Coral Springs Medical Center • Dollar Tree • Hilton • Kilwin's • Marshalls • McDonalds • Memorial Hospital Miramar • Mulligans • Office Depot • Old Navy • Oriole Golf and Tennis Club • Plato's Closet • Publix • Ramblewood Diner • Sweet Tomatoes • Target • TJ Maxx • Walgreens • Walmart • Wings Plus
<i>Clerical:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Entry • Mail Room • Copy Machine 	
<i>Food Service:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dining Room Setup • Food Preparation • Dishwashing 	
<i>Custodial:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grounds Maintenance • Office Cleaning 	
<i>Manufacturing:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sorting Returns • Packaging • Shipping 	
<i>Hospital:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food Service • Central Supply/Warehousing • Environmental Services • Transporters • Retail 	

Source: Created by Evergreen Solutions from data provided by BCPS, 2014.



- **Adult Curriculum for Community Employment and Social Skills (ACCESS):** ACCESS is a community-based transition model in which students work with a team of teachers, job coaches, and communication specialists to learn a variety of work and community skills. The goal of ACCESS is to prepare students for competitive employment and help them develop the skills needed to participate in community activities. ACCESS is housed at Sheridan and Atlantic Technical Centers.
- **Career Placement:** Career placement class is a transition model located at Sheridan, McFatter, and Atlantic Technical Centers. To participate in Career Placement, students must have completed 24 high school credits and earned a special diploma, have an interest in paid employment, demonstrate the skills needed for employability, and be able to navigate the community independently. The course prepares and assists students to secure and maintain competitive employment. The focus of career placement is that “each student will have paid employment, will be able to navigate throughout their community on their own and will work towards their goal of living independently.”

Employers who agree to participate in Career Placement commit:

- working with the Job Coach and Career Placement Facilitator to ensure the best possible training;
- communicating with the Job Coach/Facilitator about unsatisfactory situations to avoid dismissals;
- communicating with the Job Coach/Facilitator if a promotion, dismissal or layoff is anticipated; and
- permitting the Job Coach/Facilitator to regularly review the progress of the Career Placement Employee.

As described in promotional materials for the program, benefits to the employer include “dependable, motivated workers who save time and money; employees with flexible work hours; job coaching and support services available; ability to train workers to employer’s standards; fosters a strong work ethic in young people entering the workforce; and assist young adults in becoming independent, productive, tax-paying citizens within our community.”

- **Technical Cluster Program:** Technical Cluster Program at Atlantic Technical Center is a multi-level exploratory program designed for share-time ESE high school students. The program offers students an opportunity to experience several areas of technical training in order to match aptitudes and interests with potential job preparatory training. Opportunities are offered in the Automotive, Building Trades, Culinary and Business occupational cluster areas.
- **ARC Broward School of HIRE Education:** HIRE provides an opportunity for BCPS students with intellectual disabilities (InD), ages 18 through 22, to obtain real-life employment and life skills. Community-based instruction (CBI) is used to teach you domestic competencies; vocational skills; community skills; and recreation and leisure.



Career tracks include:

- Entry Level Culinary Arts – The ARC Broward Culinary Institute provides students with the opportunity to learn culinary skills associated with working in a commercial kitchen such as serving, food preparation, and catering.
- Electronics Recycling – This program provides students with real job situations such as how to handle, de manufacture, sort, stock, and inventory recycled electronics in a safe warehouse setting.
- Office/Clerical – This track presents students with entry-level administrative tasks such as mail room duties, switchboard operation, data entry, and more.
- Child/Elder Care – This program offers students the opportunity to assist in a licensed preschool and/or senior day program to learn the art of caring for others in need.
- **Goodwill South Florida School Transition Program (STP):** The STP provides functional academic and life skills, work experience, community based instruction and related services for exceptional students ages 18-22 and who are enrolled in Broward County Public Schools. The program offers work training and experience based on the students' needs, strengths, abilities, preferences, cultural background, and desired employment outcome utilizing the variety of work areas and contracts that Goodwill has—clerical, retail store, document destruction, e-commerce, custodial, sorting, packing and manufacturing. Referrals to the program are made by the school district staff. The program follows the BCPS calendar and students attend Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. through 2:30 p.m. Transportation and lunch are provided BCPS.

District staff reported that a transition team of seven teachers and five job coaches was established and funded through funds from the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA), and that the 15 job coaches in place now allow for one coach for every two high schools. High school staff who have worked with the transition team report that the technical assistance and support they provides very good and highly appreciated. However, many high school teachers and other staff who would be expected to be familiar with the transition team and the programs available to students within their own schools reported little or no knowledge of the types of opportunities available for their students.

While initiatives and programs, such as those described above, are points of pride for the district, concerns expressed by teachers and school administrators as well as several district-based staff revolved around the continuing gap between the number of students who can reasonably be served in these programs compared to those who are eligible and interested in participating.

COMMENDATION

Broward County Public Schools is commended for establishing partnerships across the district with community members and developing district-level staff who are well-trained in providing assistance to both teachers and students.



RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.11-9:

Expand capacity in meeting the needs of adult students with disabilities who desire or would benefit the most for community-based services that are not housed on a traditional school campus, and ensure that all students who are eligible for and would benefit from a program have the opportunity to participate.

Although BCPS recently increased the number of transition team members, demand continues to exceed available slots. In addition, high school teachers across the district would benefit from increased access to the training they provide.

FINDING

Secondary transition programs are not well-marketed or promoted. It is difficult to find the information on the district or individual school websites, and some of the high school staff responsible for transition planning reported of being unaware of the options available for their students. In addition to each of the transition programs described above, Florida High School High Tech (HSHT) provides a striking example. Operated by the Able Trust and the Center for Independent Living (CIL) of Broward, HSHT serves high school students with all types of disabilities ages 14-22 who are pursuing various diploma options and are interested in technology-related careers.

Orange County Public Schools, one of the peer school districts for BCPS, recently expanded its HSHT model (based on learning strategies courses) into high schools across the district. Initial results are striking, with 98 percent of participating students graduating.

No mention was made of HSHT during the interviews with school or district staff, and the Evergreen Team was unaware that BCPS had the program until it was found listed on the Project 10 website under *Promising Practices in Transition*, with the following description:

High School/High Tech is designed to provide high school students with all types of disabilities the opportunity to explore jobs or postsecondary education leading to technology- related careers. HSHT links youth to a broad range of academic, career development, and experiential resources and experiences that will enable them to meet the demands of the 21st century workforce. HSHT is a community-based partnership made up of students, parents, businesses, educators and rehabilitation professionals. It has been shown to reduce the high school dropout rate and increase the overall self-esteem of participating students. The HSHT Program at the Center for Independent Living of Broward in partnership with 16 Broward County High Schools provide students exceptional career-oriented activities and exposure to technology based careers. We also work with students to develop their skills in computer technology, and provide access to computer equipment in our state-of-the-art iPad studio and computer lab. As part of a structured academic curriculum, students explore career and vocational goals through Disabled and Nondisabled corporate and educational site visits, mentoring, and job shadowing with the ultimate goal to develop employability skills, job readiness, or post-secondary interest.



RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.11-10:

Establish an easily located page on the Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services website to provide parents, students, and staff members with informative and action-oriented information and links to the array of specialized transition programs available across the district.

The information should include as much detail as is reasonable regarding eligibility requirements and other relevant information. High schools should be encouraged or required to provide the same level of information regarding the options available on their sites.

FINDING

The primary measure of postsecondary outcome data in the State is the Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program (FETPIP)—an interagency data collection system that obtains follow-up data on former students. The most recent FETPIP data available reports on students who exited Florida public schools during the 2010-11 school year. FETPIP results for the seven districts in the very large size-alike enrollment group and the State were reviewed to compare BCPS's outcomes with the others.

Exhibit 4.11-13 displays the percentage of students with disabilities exiting school in 2008-09 through 2010-11 who were found during the fall/winter following the school year and were (1) enrolled in higher education; (2) enrolled in higher education or competitively employed; and (3) enrolled in higher education or some other postsecondary education or training program or competitively employed or employed in some other employment.

Exhibit 4.11-13
Post School Outcomes
Students with Disabilities
2008-09 through 2010-11 School Years

Florida Peer School District	SWDs in Higher Education			SWDs in Higher Education or Competitively Employed			SWD in any Employment or Continuing Education		
	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Broward County Public Schools	32	34	38%	41	44	47%	53	55	58%
Dade County Public Schools	34	34	38%	41	42	44%	57	61	62%
Duval County Public Schools	18	26	21%	30	37	32%	38	46	41%
Hillsborough County Public Schools	27	28	24%	37	38	35%	51	50	46%
Orange County Public Schools	29	30	29%	38	42	42%	54	57	56%
School District of Palm Beach County	26	27	32%	38	39	42%	50	50	56%
Pinellas County Public Schools	27	22	23%	40	34	34%	53	44	52%
Enrollment Group	29	30	31%	38	40	40%	52	54	54%
State	27	27	27%	37	39	39%	50	51	52%

Source: FLDOE 2013 LEA Profiles.



As the outcome data indicate, BCPS exceeds both the state and enrollment group average for students with disabilities enrolled in higher education two years after leaving high school (38 percent compared to 27 percent for the state and 31 percent for the enrollment group). Only Miami-Dade County Public Schools achieved equally well.

When the population is expanded to include students enrolled in higher education or who are competitively employed, BCPS's rate of 47 percent exceeds the state (39 percent), enrollment group (40 percent), and each of its within-state peers.

The pattern of results is similar when the population is further expanded to include students enrolled in any type of employment or continuing education program. BCPS's rate of 58 percent exceeds both the State (52 percent) and enrollment group (54 percent) and is second only to Miami-Dade County Public Schools (62 percent).

Trend data for students who left high school over the three-year period from 2008-09 through 2010-11 indicate that, overall, the rates in BCPS across all three categories have steadily increased.

COMMENDATION

Broward County Public Schools is commended for its continuous progress in increasing positive measures of post-school outcomes for students with disabilities.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.11-11:

Establish collaborative relationships among transition directors and specialists in the other enrollment group districts.

BCPS should utilize opportunities to share resources and lessons learned in order to benefit from districts that report consistently higher student outcome rates and to provide support to those programs that are less successful.

FINDING

IDEA requires districts to provide a summary of performance (SOP) for students with disabilities "whose eligibility under special education terminates due to graduation with a regular diploma, or due to exceeding the age of eligibility." The SOP must include a summary of the student's academic achievement and functional performance, as well as recommendations on how to assist the student in meeting his or her postsecondary goals. The SOP and any accompanying documentation are especially helpful as the student transitions from high school to higher education, training, or employment.

In addition, information such as that provided in the SOP is necessary under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act to help establish a student's eligibility for reasonable accommodations and supports in postsecondary settings. It is also useful for the



Vocational Rehabilitation Comprehensive Assessment process. The information about each student's current level of functioning is intended to help postsecondary institutions consider accommodations for access.

BCPS has established procedures for providing the SOP to students with disabilities upon graduation with a standard diploma, aging out of ESE services, or withdrawal from the district's programs for students ages 18-21. The SOP is generated in EasyIEP™ in a format modified from that provided by FLDOE as a sample. Information prepopulated from the student's current IEP includes:

- student demographic information, including disability(ies) and primary language;
- results of informal assessments;
- postsecondary goals;
- present levels of academic achievement and functional performance; and
- supplementary aids and services provided to the student.

Additional information entered into the SOP at the time of completion includes:

- school of enrollment at time of exit;
- name, title, and contact information of the person completing the document;
- recommendations to assist the student in meeting postsecondary goals (i.e., suggestions for accommodations, adaptive devices, assistive services, compensatory strategies, and/or collateral support services, to enhance access in post-high school environments as they relate to the student's postsecondary goals); and
- the student's perspective, solicited via structured interview, on the impact of the disability on schoolwork and school activities, supports that have been tried in the past and their relative effectiveness, and the student's strengths and weakness that others should know about as he/she enters the postsecondary education or work environment.

A total of 48 SOPs developed at 18 schools were reviewed. Individuals completing the form included ESE Specialists, ESE teachers, speech/language pathologist, family counselors, and case managers. The student input section is optional. Student interviews were documented in 44 of the 48 SOPs (92 percent).

It is unclear whether the sections of the form prepopulated from EasyIEP™ are editable, but text in the samples reviewed appeared to come directly from the IEP. In some cases this resulted in an awkward flow or presentation of the information, depending on the way the IEP Team had included specific information in the original IEP. An example of how direct pulling of un-editable text can make the information seem disorganized is provided in **Exhibit 4.11-14**. The examples reflect the response to the prompt "Please check and include the most recent copy of assessment reports that you are attaching that diagnose and clearly identify the student's disability or functional limitations and/or that will assist in postsecondary planning."



Exhibit 4.11-14 Sample SOP Content

Sample	Most Recent Assessments – Reports to be Attached	
Sample 1: Assessment Identified	<input type="checkbox"/> Psychological/cognitive <input type="checkbox"/> Neuropsychological <input type="checkbox"/> Medical/physical <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Achievement/academics <input type="checkbox"/> Adaptive behavior <input type="checkbox"/> Social/interpersonal <input type="checkbox"/> CBA <input type="checkbox"/> Self determination Informal assessment: Informal assessment: Other:	<input type="checkbox"/> Response to Intervention (RTI) <input type="checkbox"/> Language proficiency assessments <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reading assessments <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Communication <input type="checkbox"/> Behavioral analysis <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Classroom observation <input type="checkbox"/> Career/vocational or transition assessment <input type="checkbox"/> Assistive technology Diagnostic of Reading Assessment Test of Adult Basic Education Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test
Sample 2: Assessment Results Reported	<input type="checkbox"/> Psychological/cognitive <input type="checkbox"/> Neuropsychological <input type="checkbox"/> Medical/physical <input type="checkbox"/> Achievement/academics <input type="checkbox"/> Adaptive behavior <input type="checkbox"/> Social/interpersonal <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CBA <input type="checkbox"/> Self determination Informal assessment: Informal assessment: Other:	<input type="checkbox"/> Response to Intervention (RTI) <input type="checkbox"/> Language proficiency assessments <input type="checkbox"/> Reading assessments <input type="checkbox"/> Communication <input type="checkbox"/> Behavioral analysis <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Classroom observation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Career/vocational or transition assessment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Assistive technology [Student] is able to follow simple one-step, two-step verbal directions when [s/he] is responsive. [S/he] is able to choose his/her own food selection in the school cafeteria, toilet him/herself, make a bed with simple demonstrations from peers and instructors, hang up clothing, and fold laundry. [Student] is able to use a visual schedule with adult prompting to complete stocking the grocery zone within the classroom. [Student] is able to wipe glass doors and use the vacuum cleaner when on Community Based Instruction at Home Goods and Sunoco, but must have adult prompting to continue/complete the task. [Student] is able to sort by shape, color, and use a visual schedule for matching/sorting. [Student] is nonverbal and was given an adaptive technology device. However, [s/he] has not acquired the ability to use it as intended.

Source: Created by Evergreen Solutions from sample data, 2014.

The content that appears under “informal assessment” would more logically be provided under the present level of performance section of the form. A second area of concern involves the demographic component of the form related to the student’s primary language. For 13 of the students, the primary language listed was a language other than English. For all 13, no response was provided for the prompt “If English is not the student’s primary language, what services were provided for this student as an English language learner.” This item is not a required component of an SOP; however, as the district has opted to include it on its form, it should be completed when applicable.

COMMENDATION

Broward County Public Schools is commended for its commitment to fostering active involvement by students in the developing their summary of performances (SOPs) to ensure the content as accurate and meaningful as possible.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 4.11-12:

Review the business requirements completion of the EasyIEP™ summary of performance to ensure that the logic and flow of the final document are not compromised by efforts to streamline the process.

Transferring text directly from the IEP to complete some sections of the SOP is an effective and efficient tool. However, depending on how the original IEP team reported specific information on the IEP, there may be a disconnect between the prompt or question that shows up on the form and the answer that pulls from the IEP.

Recommendation 4.11-13:

Review the summary of performance form to determine if the information regarding a student's status as an English language learner is necessary. If so, provide training to staff responsible for completing the SOP to ensure a description is provided of ELL services and, if not, delete this section of the form.

The intent of the SOP is to provide important information colleges, vocational school programs, adult service providers, training facilities, employers, or other individuals or agencies who may assist the student in the future. It must include recommendations on how to assist the student in meeting his or her postsecondary goals, but IDEA does not otherwise specify the information to be included. While an IEP team must consider the language needs of an English language learner (ELL) as they relate to the student's IEP, there is no requirement that the SOP describe the ELL services a student received meaningful information, providing that information when it is most timely makes sense.

FINDING

Effective transition planning requires that students be actively engaged with the process, and that their strengths, interests, and aptitudes be considered throughout the process. In order for students with disabilities to become successful young adults, they must develop the skills and confidence to advocate for themselves. Participation in the IEP process is an important step in that development.

Staff was presented with the prompt: "Middle and high school students with disabilities attend and are active participants in their IEP team meetings." The results are presented in **Exhibit 4.11-15**.

Graphical representation of the responses aggregated by agreement (strongly agree and agree) and disagreement (strongly disagree and disagree) are presented in **Exhibit 4.11-16**.

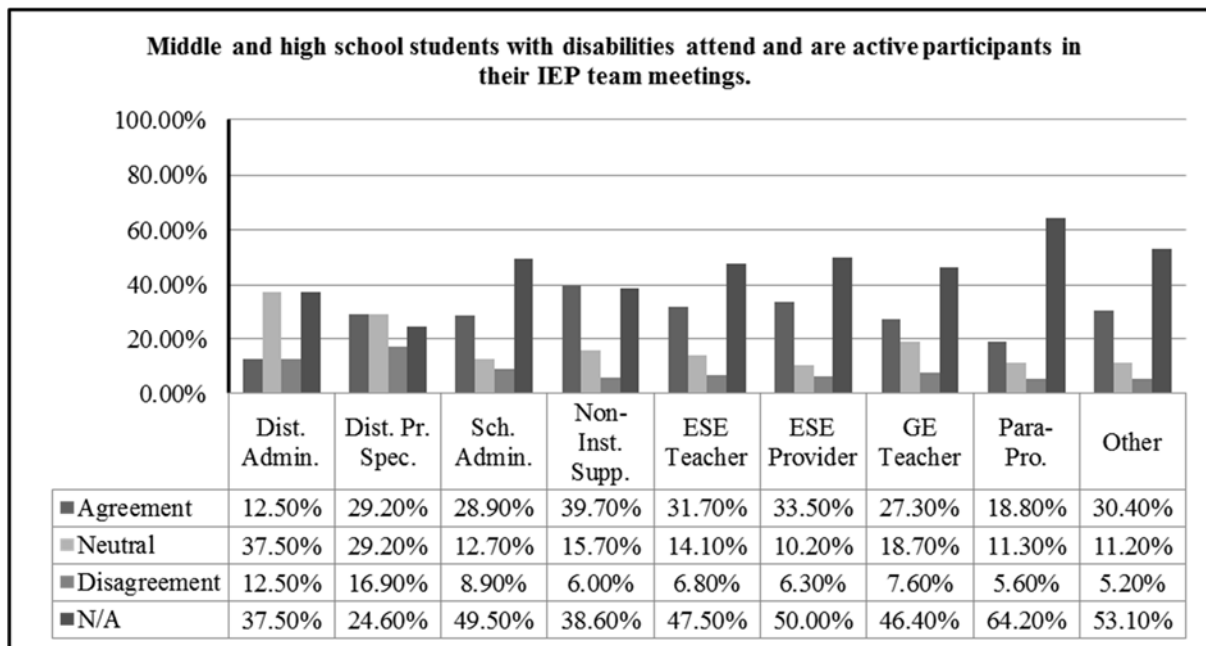


Exhibit 4.11-15
Evergreen Staff Survey on
Student IEP Team Participation

Survey Statement: Middle and high school students with disabilities attend and are active participants in their IEP team meetings						
Survey Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
District Staff						
District Administrator	0.0%	12.5%	37.5%	0.0%	12.5%	37.5%
District Program Specialist	1.5%	27.7%	29.2%	15.4%	1.5%	24.6%
School Staff						
School Administrator	13.7%	15.2%	12.7%	7.4%	1.5%	49.5%
Non-instructional Support	15.4%	24.3%	15.7%	4.6%	1.4%	38.6%
Special Education Teacher	11.8%	19.9%	14.1%	5.1%	1.7%	47.5%
Special Education Provider	9.1%	24.4%	10.2%	4.0%	2.3%	50.0%
General Education Teacher	7.5%	19.8%	18.7%	4.7%	2.9%	46.4%
Paraprofessional	7.9%	10.9%	11.3%	2.6%	3.0%	64.2%
Other	14.0%	16.4%	11.2%	3.5%	1.7%	53.1%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.

Exhibit 4.11-16
Evergreen Staff Survey on
Student IEP Team Participation
Aggregated Agreement and Disagreement by Respondent Type



Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.



As can be seen, the majority of respondents did not feel that this item was applicable to their position—it does not apply to PreK or elementary grades, nor to most sixth and seventh graders. In general, the results indicate that students are being encouraged to participate in their IEP Team meetings. Taking into account the large number of staff for whom the item was not applicable, fewer than nine percent of school-based staff reported disagreement with the statement (ranging for 5.2 percent of “other” to 8.9 percent of school administrators). With very few exceptions, student attendance at IEP team meeting beginning at age 14 also was evident in the student records reviewed as part of this evaluation.

COMMENDATION

Broward County Public Schools is commended for its commitment to helping students develop self-determination skills through active participation as members of their IEP teams.



4.12 INCLUSIONARY PRACTICES



4.12 INCLUSIONARY PRACTICES

Inclusion is a philosophical and educational approach to providing students with disabilities educational opportunities in the same settings as their nondisabled peers. Federal and state regulations related to special education do not use the term “inclusion,” but they do provide a clear framework for states, school districts and schools to increase inclusive opportunities through provisions requiring placement of students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment (LRE).

In accordance with IDEA and Florida statutes and State Board of Education rules, school districts “must ensure that a continuum of alternative placements is available to meet the needs of children with disabilities for special education and related services.” The continuum of placements must include such things as “instruction in regular classes, special classes, special schools, home instruction, and instruction in hospitals and institutions” and must meet the needs of all students with disabilities within the district, regardless of how extensive those needs might be. Overlaying the continuum of services is the concept of LRE, a cornerstone of IDEA and exceptional student education. IDEA clearly anticipates inclusive educational programs as the foundation of ESE in the following definition of LRE:

To the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities, including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities, are educated with children who are not disabled, and special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability of a child is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

In support of LRE and inclusionary practices, the IEP must include:

A statement of the special education and related services and supplementary aids and services... to be provided to the child, or on behalf of the child, and a statement of the program modifications or supports for school personnel that will be provided to enable the child will be provided to enable the child— (i) To advance appropriately toward attaining the annual goals; (ii) To be involved in and make progress in the general education curriculum... and to participate in extracurricular and other nonacademic activities; and (iii) To be educated and participate with other children with disabilities and nondisabled children in the activities described...

Supplementary aids and services and supports for personnel are broadly defined as “aids, services, and other supports that are provided in regular education classes or other education-related settings to enable children with disabilities to be educated with nondisabled children to the maximum extent appropriate...” Their purpose is to support students with disabilities as active participants with nondisabled peers as well as to enable their access to the general curriculum. Supplementary aids and services can address academic, social/behavioral, or environmental needs, and may include opportunities for collaboration among school staff and families.



The National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities (NICHCY) provides the following examples of what teams should consider as inclusionary practices and supports as they develop IEPs:

- supports to address environmental needs (e.g.; preferential seating; planned seating on the bus, in the classroom, at lunch, in the auditorium, and in other locations; altered physical room arrangement);
- levels of staff support (e.g.; consultation, stop-in support, classroom companion, one-on-one assistance);
- personnel support (e.g.; behavior specialist, health care assistant, instructional support assistant);
- planning time for collaboration by staff;
- specialized equipment (e.g.; wheelchair, computer, software, voice synthesizer, augmentative communication device, utensils/cups/plates, restroom equipment);
- pacing of instruction (e.g.; breaks, more time, home set of materials);
- presentation of subject matter (e.g.; taped lectures, sign language, primary language, paired reading and writing);
- special materials (e.g.; tests and notes scanned into computer, shared note-taking, large print or Braille, assistive technology);
- assignment modification (e.g.; shorter assignments, taped lessons, instructions broken down into steps, allow student to record or type assignment);
- self-management and/or follow-through (e.g.; calendars, study skills directly taught);
- testing adaptations (e.g.; reading test to student, modify format, extend time);
- social interaction support (e.g.; Circle of Friends, cooperative learning groups, directly teaching social skills); and
- training for personnel working with the student.

FINDING

A full continuum of placements for students age 6-21 is implemented within Broward County Public Schools. The continuum of placements ranges from students fully included 100 percent of the day in general education classrooms to placement in a private residential school for students with significant disabilities.



Students served in “other separate environments” include students whose placement was determined by their IEP teams as well as students placed in residential facilities by other agencies (e.g., Agency for Persons with Disabilities) or their parents. During 2013-14, BCPS provided educational services to three students placed in residential placements by an outside agency.

BCPS operates several ESE center schools solely for students with disabilities who require extensive and intensive services and supports:

- Bright Horizons Center and Wingate Oaks Center for students with significant intellectual disabilities, many of whom also have special physical, medical, or behavioral needs;
- Cross Creek and Whispering Pines for students with significant emotional and/or behavioral disabilities; and
- The Quest Center for students with autism and intellectual disabilities (PreK-12). As part of the district’s repurposing initiative discussed in other sections of this report, Wingate Oaks was selected for closure and is no longer enrolling new students.

In addition, Cypress Run Education Center is a Behavior Change Program that focuses on preparing students to return to their home school environment by improving their relationships with peers and adults. General education as well as ESE students may attend Cypress Run. The school also provides one of the district’s alternative to external suspension (AES) programs.

Reviewing the extent to which students with disabilities are served in each of the placement categories (i.e., regular class; resource room; separate class; separate school or other separate environment), it is clear that BCPS strongly advocates regular class placement. The percent of students with disabilities ages 6-21 served in the different placement categories for BCPS, the other districts in its Florida peer group and the State as a whole during the 2012-13 school year are provided in **Exhibit 4.12-1**.

Exhibit 4.12-1
Continuum of Alternative Placements
Percentage of Students with Disabilities Ages 6-21 by Placement Category

Florida Peer School District	Total PreK-12	% SWD	Regular Class	Resource Room	Separate Class	Other Separate Environment
Broward County Public Schools	260,234	12%	79%	7%	11%	3%
Dade County Public Schools	354,236	10%	52%	24%	20%	4%
Duval County Public Schools	125,662	13%	79%	4%	14%	4%
Hillsborough County Public Schools	200,287	14%	68%	15%	14%	3%
Orange County Public Schools	183,021	11%	77%	7%	12%	5%
School District of Palm Beach County	179,494	14%	71%	13%	11%	5%
Pinellas County Public Schools	103,596	12%	69%	9%	13%	9%
Enrollment Group			69%	13%	14%	4%
State			71%	11%	14%	4%

Source: Florida Department of Education LEA Profiles <http://www.fldoe.org/ese/datapage.asp>, 2013.



High rates of regular class placement concurrent with low rates of separate class or separate school placement are common standards for assessing inclusive environments. As the placement data indicate, BCPS outpaces almost all of the peer school districts with regard to inclusion when placements across the continuum are reviewed. BCPS serves students with disabilities in regular class placement at a higher rate than the enrollment group or state averages (79 percent compared to 69 percent for the peer enrollment group and 71 percent for the State). Only one other district in the peer group (Duval County Public Schools) serves this high of a proportion of students in regular class placement.

The impact of support for inclusionary placements also is evident in the separate class placement results. Only one other district in the peer group (School District of Palm Beach County) uses separate class placement for as few as 11 percent of its students; rates for the other five districts range from 12 percent (Orange County Public Schools) to 20 percent (Miami-Dade County Public Schools). BCPS is also one of the two districts with the lowest rate for placement in a special day school or ESE center (3 percent); rates for the remaining peer enrollment group districts range from 4 percent (Miami-Dade County Public Schools and Duval County Public Schools) to 9 percent (Pinellas County Public Schools).

LEA Profiles for the period from 2005-06 through 2012-13 were reviewed to identify trends in the BCPS continuum of placements over time. During that time, the district steadily increased the percentage of students with disabilities served in regular class placement, exceeding the state rate each year. Concurrently, there was a steady decrease in the use of resource rooms and separate class placements. Specifically:

- **Regular class placement** increased annually from 68 percent in 2005-06 to 79 percent in 2012-13. During that same period the enrollment group rate increased from 54 percent to 69 percent and the state rate increased from 55 percent to 71 percent.
- **Resource room placement** decreased from 20 percent in 2005-06 to 7 percent in 2012-13. During that same period the enrollment group rate decreased from 20 percent to 13 percent and the state rate decreased from 19 percent to 11 percent.
- **Separate class placement** decreased from 18 percent in 2005-06 to 11 percent in 2012-13. During that same period both the enrollment group rate and state rate decreased from 22 percent to 14 percent.

Broward County Public Schools implements a cluster site model that provides more intensive or specialized services needed by some students with disabilities at selected traditional school sites across the district. Cluster site programs for students who need services commonly associated with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), intellectual disability (InD), and emotional/behavioral disability (E/BD) provide for smaller classes; an ASD, InD, or E/BD program specialist assigned to the school; use of one-on-one and/or classroom paraprofessionals; and floating pool subs to ensure students receive the level of support they need.

Exhibit 4.12-2 provides the number and type of cluster programs and number of classrooms represented during 2013-14.



Exhibit 4.12-2
Specialized Cluster Programs – Traditional School Campus
2013-14 School Year

Special Program	School Sites	Classrooms		
		ES	MS	HS
Deaf/Hard-of-Hearing	5	10	2	2
Emotional/Behavioral Disability	7	22	-	-
Intellectual Disability	16	16	-	-
Language/Learning Disability	2	2	-	-
Autism Spectrum Disorder	33	145	-	-
Total	62	195		

Source: Created by Evergreen Solutions from reports provided by BCPS, 2014.

While the majority of students placed in specialized cluster programs by their IEP Teams are served at the separate class level, some use of regular and resource placements was reported as well. During interviews and focus groups with district- and school-based staff, the programs and services provided within the cluster programs was consistently cited as one of the strongest components of the BCPS ESE program. The use of the cluster site model on such a large scale was cited by many respondents as having a positive impact on increasing the inclusive culture of schools preventing many students from more restrictive settings (i.e., separate ESE schools) where they would have little or no interaction with nondisabled peers.

COMMENDATIONS

BCPS is commended for its focus on and commitment to providing access to the general curriculum through regular class placement for students with disabilities.

BCPS is commended for its progress in ensuring students with significant disabilities have access to nondisabled peers to the maximum extent appropriate by decreasing placements in ESE center schools and embedding additional supports in traditional school campuses through specialized cluster programs.

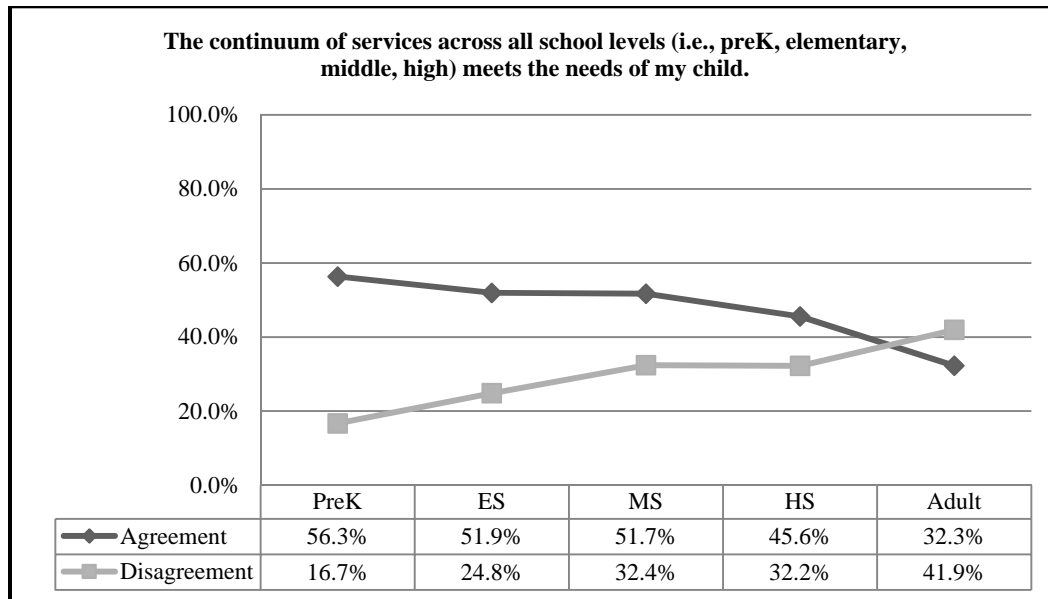
FINDING

Input regarding the extent to which the continuum of available services is sufficient and effective was solicited from parents and staff through the survey. Responses from parents to the statement “The continuum of services across all school levels (i.e., preK, elementary, middle, high) meets the needs of my child” are provided by school level in **Exhibit 4.12-3**. Aggregated categories of agreement (strongly agree and agree) and disagreement (strongly disagree and disagree) are reported.

Parents of PreK students were most likely to respond favorably to the statement (56.3 percent). The rate of agreement fall slightly to approximately 52 percent for parents of students in elementary and middle school, and continues to decrease through high school (45.6 percent) and on to adult services for students ages 18 through 21 (32.3 percent).



Exhibit 4.12-3
Evergreen Parent Survey Statement on
Continuum of Services Satisfaction



Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.

Results do not sum to 100 percent as neutral and N/A responses were removed for clarity.

Responses from district and school staff are provided in **Exhibit 4.1-4**. Graphical representation aggregated by agreement (strongly agree and agree) and disagreement (strongly disagree and disagree) are presented in **Exhibit 4.11-5**.

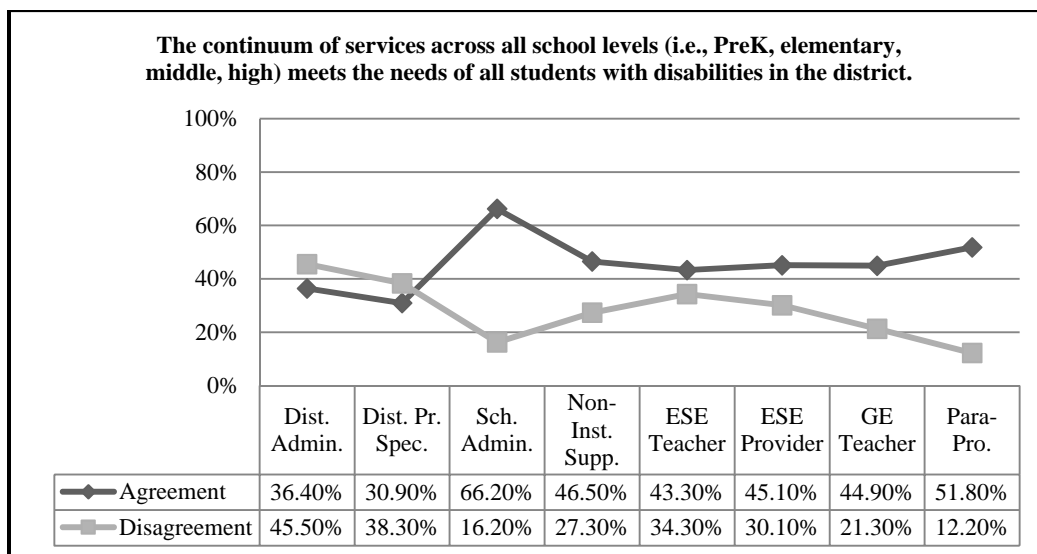
Exhibit 4.12-4
Evergreen Staff Survey Statement on
Continuum of Services Satisfaction

Survey Statement: The continuum of services across all school levels (i.e., preK, elementary, middle, high) meets the needs of all students with disabilities in the district.						
Survey Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
District Staff						
District Administrator	18.2%	18.2%	9.1%	27.3%	18.2%	9.1%
District Program Specialist	7.4%	23.5%	26.5%	30.9%	7.4%	4.4%
School Staff						
School Administrator	24.5%	18.2%	15.3%	27.3%	18.2%	47.3%
Non-instructional Support	18.0%	23.5%	21.5%	30.9%	7.4%	34.1%
Special Education Teacher	15.3%	41.7%	19.2%	13.0%	3.2%	43.0%
Special Education Provider	13.4%	28.5%	21.0%	15.7%	11.6%	47.4%
General Education Teacher	16.0%	28.0%	24.2%	21.6%	12.7%	46.2%
Paraprofessional	20.8%	31.7%	23.4%	18.8%	11.3%	58.5%
Other	17.4%	28.9%	18.6%	12.2%	9.1%	50.3%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.



Exhibit 4.12-5
Evergreen Staff Survey Statement on
Continuum of Services Satisfaction
Aggregated Responses



Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.

As can be seen, school administrators responded positively at a higher rate than any other group, and this was the only group for which more than half of the group expressed agreement (66.2 percent). This supports the impressions gleaned during school visits that instructional staff perceive their efforts to meet the needs of their students with disabilities to be less effective than school principals perceive them to be.

Responses for staff most likely to be directly involved in the student educational services—ESE teachers, ESE providers, and general education teachers—were relatively consistent with slight less than half expressing agreement (43.3 percent, 45.1 percent, and 44.9 percent, respectively). Although slight, the pattern of responses for district-level staff are notable in that fewer individuals expressed agreement than disagreement (36.4 percent compared to 45.5 percent for district administrators and 30.9 percent compared to 38.3 percent of district program specialists).

In general, at the elementary school level the range of supports and service delivery models is greater than that at in middle schools and high schools. However, the continuum of services and supports in “non-cluster” schools is limited, and district support to schools through program specialists has been significantly reduced.

The inclusionary model at the middle and high school levels focuses on ensuring that students with disabilities pursuing a standard diploma are enrolled in general education courses. Direct ESE support is provided almost solely through support facilitation and teacher caseloads are very high. The amount of direct services and interventions the students actually receive is limited. Without more effective instructional strategies and sufficiently intensive and consistent support, the value of the increased “access to the general curriculum” may be limited.



It was noted during the record reviews and confirmed during interviews that counseling as a related service provided by district family counselors is commonly included on the IEPs of students transitioning from cluster programs in elementary school to full inclusion models in middle school. Based on performance and disciplinary data, it appears that many of these students would benefit more from a behavior management approach and/or social skills instruction provided in peer group settings. Anecdotal reports from IEP team members regarding specific students indicate that counseling as a related service is often the only option for direct ESE contact with a student beyond a minimum amount of support facilitation. As a result, it is often included on IEPs of some students who do not necessarily need it, and it is not sufficient to meet the academic and behavioral challenges of other students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 4.12-1:

Identify avenues to increase the level of specialized programmatic support available to all schools (e.g., behavior management, characteristics of ASD, access points and functional performance).

This recommendation should be implemented in conjunction with recommendation presented in other sections of this report related to staffing and support to schools. While the use of a cluster model serves to limit the number of students placed in ESE center schools, it may also reinforce a belief that placement and LRE are solely about time with nondisabled peers and overlook the importance of inclusive communities and neighborhood schools.

Recommendation 4.12-2:

Conduct a review of current policies and practices regarding routine use of counseling as a primary source of support.

This recommendation should be implemented in conjunction with recommendations presented in other sections of this report related to matriculation of students from one school level to another. While this may be very appropriate for some students, it may not be the most effective and efficient way to accomplish what the IEP team hopes to accomplish. A broader array of services should be identified for those students.

Recommendation 4.12-3:

Enhance technical assistance provided to principals to reinforce the expectation that IEP teams consider the unique and individualized needs of a student first, and then work with school leadership to ensure the necessary supports are available.

The foundation of the IEP is the present level of academic achievement and functional performance. Effective IEP teams rely on all available student data to identify gaps between current and desired performance, and then design instructional programs to close those gaps. BCPS IEP teams must be supported as they focus on the “individualized” aspect of IEPs and schools must be supported as they strive to adapt services and supports to more appropriately meet their students’ needs.



FINDING

Throughout the school visits and interviews, school and district staff discussed the way IEP Teams determine how a student may be supported in an inclusive setting. They indicated that service delivery models within each school are determined by school administrators prior to the school year. Procedures for making these determinations varied widely. In a few schools the principals and ESE Specialists described a deliberative and collaborative planning process with attention to specific student or group characteristics or needs. In the majority of schools, however, the process described was based on the assumption that the current service delivery model would be maintained the following year, and the only changes that might occur would be the number of positions, based on FTE.

General education teachers at all levels expressed concern that they are expected to provide ESE instruction in addition to their general classroom instruction, stating that they are not trained in ESE and often feel overwhelmed by the responsibility. They described using the differentiated instruction techniques expected for all students, indicating that they often are sufficient to meet the needs of some students with disabilities. It was evident that general education teachers who have frequent and consistent interaction with ESE teachers were more comfortable and confident in their role as primary educator for the ESE students. As contact became less frequent, such as with monthly consultation, general education teachers expressed greater frustration.

Similarly, general education teachers were more likely to express confidence in their roles in schools where the ESE Specialists were strongest and most available to provide support to general education and ESE colleagues. This most often was the case in elementary schools; both general education and ESE support facilitators in the middle and high schools reported frustration with the number of students on their caseloads and concern about some students' high level of need.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 4.12-4:

Establish stronger district control of basic ESE programmatic procedures, including ensuring that sufficient special education, related services, and supplementary aids and services are available within each school to meet the needs of its students to the extent possible, and implement guidelines for reasonable caseloads and workloads.

As currently implemented in many middle and high schools, support facilitation and collaboration do not sufficiently meet the needs of many students with disabilities. These students and their general education teachers may not require a different service delivery model; instead, they need more intensive or specialized support that requires additional time with the ESE teacher.



Recommendation 4.12-5:**Provide training and/or technical assistance encouraging principals to pursue innovative and productive strategies to improve the effectiveness of ESE programs in their schools.**

For example, more creative or individualized scheduling procedures that include hand scheduling of students with disabilities into specific courses, classrooms, or periods can have a significant positive impact on the performance of teachers as well as students.

FINDING

Consideration of the impact allocation of resources across schools may have on LRE and inclusionary practices is addressed in the *Discussion and Comments* section of the regulations implementing IDEA:

Although [IDEA] does not require that each school building be able to provide all the special education and related services for all types and severities of disabilities, [the district] does have an obligation to make available a full continuum of alternative placement options that maximize opportunities for its children with disabilities to be educated with nondisabled peers to the extent appropriate. In all cases, placement decisions must be individually determined on the basis of each child's abilities and needs and each child's IEP, and not solely on factors such as category of disability, severity of disability, availability of special education and related services, configuration of the service delivery system, availability of space, or administrative convenience.

In general, “placement” for students with disabilities is defined by the amount of time the student is removed from the general education environment and access to nondisabled peers. For reporting purposes (i.e., educational environment reports required by USDOE and FLDOE) there is no difference between students served in their zoned schools or students moved to centralized traditional school campuses that house special programs (i.e., “cluster sites”). However, while this specific data element is not collected (i.e., zoned school or centralized school assigned by the IEP team), IDEA states that:

Unless the IEP requires some other arrangement, the student must be educated in the school he or she would attend if nondisabled. However, the IEP team must consider any potential harmful effect on the student and on the quality of services that he or she needs when determining the least restrictive environment.

The cluster site model enables the district to streamline the provision of support services in a more efficient and cost-effective manner, and may prevent some students from being placed in more restrictive public separate schools. However, some students placed in center schools could be supported in their home-zoned school if the continuum of services was expanded to include options for behavioral support and/or specialized programmatic support in addition to support facilitation and pullout ESE.



Broward County Public Schools implements a structured and rigorous documentation process to ensure due diligence by IEP teams considering placement of a student in a more restrictive setting such as a cluster program or separate school. However, close review of records and discussions with school-based staff indicate that the documentation process is perceived in large part as a paperwork requirement, and generally does not lead IEP teams to consider alternative approaches or “think outside the box.” Instead, the form is often used to provide documentation that the services commonly or routinely provided within a given school were not effective for the student in question. In some cases it may lead the IEP team to consider alternative approaches, but for the most part this is not the case.

As previously mentioned, district support to non-cluster schools through program specialists has been significantly reduced. The relatively small number of specialists available to address the needs of students with ASD, InD, and E/BD outside of cluster programs is a barrier to students remaining in their home zoned schools. This issue is addressed more thoroughly in **Sections 4.1** and **4.2** of this report, but it reflects a primary concern with regard to BCPS’s inclusionary practices as sufficient staff support is critical to an effective program.

The issue of school assignment is particularly important within the context of inclusive communities. Conceptually, inclusion extends beyond an individual student’s educational program. Relationships are nourished and a sense of community is fostered when students are able to attend the school alongside neighborhood friends.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 4.12-6:

Review recent organizational and staffing changes and current positions and develop strategies for increasing schools access to district-level program areas specialists and support services.

The current structure as implemented is not sufficient to meet the needs of schools throughout the district with regard to the increasing number of students with behavioral issues and higher levels of need associated with autism spectrum disorder, as well as students who may at some point require instruction in the access points but for whom that decision is not yet appropriate. Each of these populations present significant challenges to schools that can be met sufficient and effective district support.

Recommendation 4.12-7:

Evaluate current practices related to IEP team decisions regarding placement decisions that require the student to transfer to a traditional school campus other than the zoned school (i.e., cluster site) or to an ESE center school.

Rather than conducting a review of all similarly situated students, utilize a sample-based case review approach to include interviews with the sending and receiving teachers and school administrators and observations as well as document reviews. BCPS should utilize these sample



studies to glean a better understanding of the way IEP teams approach the problem solving process in these situations to ensure that due diligence is applied.

FINDING

BCPS has no mandatory school attendance for prekindergarten children, and therefore no built-in regular early childhood (EC) setting within most public school settings to provide access to “LRE.” However, the LRE requirements still apply—children with disabilities ages three to five are to be educated with nondisabled peers to the extent possible. The placements along the PreK continuum include consideration of the child’s entire day or week, not just the time the student is receiving services from the school district. Districts are expected to identify creative and flexible service delivery models as much as possible, including such things as providing push in services to children with disabilities in community-based or private EC programs or collaborating with staff in those programs to meet the children’s needs.

The percent of children with disabilities ages 3-5 served in the different placement categories for BCPS, the other districts in its peer group, and the State as a whole during the 2012-13 school year are provided in **Exhibit 4.12-6**.

Exhibit 4.12-6
Continuum of Alternative Placements
Percentage of Children with Disabilities Ages 3-5 by Placement Category

Florida Peer School District	Regular EC or K: Services Inside Class¹	Regular EC or K: Services Outside Class²	ESE PreK³	Home or Service Provider⁴
Broward County Public Schools	46%	<1%	48%	5%
Dade County Public Schools	35%	20%	41%	4%
Duval County Public Schools	27%	25%	43%	5%
Hillsborough County Public Schools	9%	61%	27%	4%
Orange County Public Schools	17%	14%	68%	2%
School District of Palm Beach County	2%	<1%	97%	<1%
Pinellas County Public Schools	77%	6%	17%	<1%
Enrollment Group	29%	18%	50%	3%
State	27%	17%	51%	4%

Source: 2013 LEA Profiles (<http://www.fldoe.org/ease/pdf/2013LEA/Orange.pdf>), 2014.

¹Children with disabilities ages 3-5 attending a regular early childhood program or kindergarten and receiving the majority of special education and related services inside the regular early childhood program

²Children with disabilities ages 3-5 attending a regular early childhood program or kindergarten and receiving the majority of special education and related services outside the regular early childhood program

³Children with disabilities ages 3-5 attending a special education program (separate class, separate school, or residential facility)

⁴Children with disabilities ages 3-5 served in another separate environment (home or service provider location)



As can be seen, the ranges in placement rates within the three most commonly utilized service delivery models (i.e., regular early childhood or kindergarten with ESE services provided in the classroom; regular early childhood or kindergarten with ESE services provided outside the classroom; ESE PreK classroom) vary widely across the peer school group districts. It is important to note that these data reflect both prekindergarten children ages three through five and children who have attained the age of five and are enrolled in kindergarten. Since the program and placement options change significantly between PreK and kindergarten, this mixing of populations limits the extent to which the results can be interpreted to reflect the prekindergarten ESE program alone.

The BCPS data pattern is notable in that almost half of the children (46 percent) are reported in a full inclusion model (i.e., in a regular early childhood or kindergarten classroom with ESE services provided in that regular environment) and an almost equal amount (48 percent) are reported in a separate ESE class. In contrast, less than one percent of the children attend a regular early childhood or kindergarten class and are pulled out for their ESE services.

In an effort to better understand the strikingly low rate reported for regular early childhood or kindergarten with ESE services provided outside the regular classroom (<1 percent), the *Broward County Public Schools Exceptional Student Education Database Guide (Updated 2-20-14)* was reviewed. The instructions provided on page 13 direct the user to “Use only codes A, B, K, L, S or J and determine which one of those codes apply” for students with disabilities ages 3-5 and then provides definitions for them. The list of codes does not align directly with that provided by FLDOE’s *Automated Student Information System Database Manual* for data element 117525, Exceptional Student, IDEA Educational Environments, which includes code M in addition to those cited in the BCPS document. The differences between the codes referenced in the BCPS manual and those provided by FLDOE are highlighted in bold in **Exhibit 4.12-7**.

Based on the district’s definition for educational environment code K and the unusual pattern in the data reported, it is possible that the two reporting options for PreK children who participate in some type of regular early childhood program for any part of the school day or week are conflated, with the critical difference regarding where they receive special education services not taken into account. This would explain the apparent contradiction between the placement data reported in **Exhibit 4.12-1** and the opinions voiced by district and school-based staff regarding limited access to inclusive settings at the PreK level.

Information provided by BCPS regarding the number and type of PreK classrooms within the district also reflect the majority of children receiving all of their PreK education in an ESE setting. The BCPS prekindergarten ESE model relies on district-operated ESE classrooms located in approximately 230 schools across the district, contracted placements in community agency programs for children with the most significant needs, and a limited number of integrated (i.e., inclusion) classrooms. The district operates provides six different types of PreK ESE programs or classrooms. **Exhibit 4.12-8** shows a description of each program, the number of schools in which it is available, and the total number of classrooms, districtwide, devoted to that particular type of program.



Exhibit 4.12-7
IDEA Educational Environment Codes – Ages Three through Five
Early Childhood Program

Code		Source	
		BCPS ESE Database Guide	FLDOE Database Manual
K	Title	Early Childhood Program (ages 3-5 only)	Early Childhood Program Receiving the Majority of Special Education Services Inside the Early Childhood Program (ages 3-5 only):
	Definition	Children with disabilities attending an early childhood program that includes 50% or more nondisabled children. (Include any child attending an early childhood program or kindergarten with 50% or more nondisabled children for any portion of the week.) Examples: Head Start, private preschools, Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) programs, and group child care. Attendance at an early childhood program need not be funded by IDEA, Part B funds.	Children with disabilities attending an early childhood program that includes 50 percent or more nondisabled children and who are receiving the majority of special education and related services inside the early childhood program setting. Include any child attending an early childhood program or kindergarten with 50 percent or more nondisabled children for any portion of the week who gets the majority of special education and related services in that program. Examples: Head Start, private preschools, Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) programs, and group child care. Attendance at an early childhood program need not be funded by IDEA, Part B funds.
M	Title	Not included	Early Childhood Program Receiving the Majority of Special Education Services Outside the Early Childhood Program (ages 3-5 only)
	Definition	Not included	Children with disabilities attending an early childhood program that includes 50 percent or more nondisabled children and who are receiving the majority of special education and related services outside the early childhood program setting. Include any child attending an early childhood program or kindergarten with 50 percent or more nondisabled children for any portion of the week who gets the majority of special education and related services outside of that program (such as pullout services). Examples: Head Start, private preschools, Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) programs, and group child care. Attendance at an early childhood program need not be funded by IDEA, Part B funds.

Source: FLDOE Automated Student Information System Database Manual, 2013-14.



Exhibit 4.12-8
Prekindergarten ESE Programs
2013-14 School Year

Program	Number of Schools	Number of Classes	ESE Services	Location	Primary Area(s) of Need	Typical Ratios	Service Provider
Speech/ Language Home School Services	All Elementary Schools	N/A	Direct speech and/or language therapy	Child's zoned school	Communication domain	Small Group	SLP
PreK ESE AM/PM	15	15	If S/L Eligible: Direct speech and/or language therapy If DD Eligible: Direct specialized instruction in academics, communication, independent functioning, and social skills	PreK ESE cluster site	All domains resulting from developmental, speech, or language delays	12-16 children 1 teacher 1 paraprofessional	SLP or ESE/PreK Teacher
Integrated PreK	11	14	Specialized instruction in academics, communication, independent functioning, and social skills	General education	All domains resulting from developmental, speech, or language delays	18 children 9 ESE 9 typical developing	ESE/PreK Teacher
Specialized PreK B	77	132	Specialized instruction in academics, communication, independent functioning, and social skills	PreK ESE	All domains	1-14 children 1 teacher 1 paraprofessional >15 children add a second paraprofessional	ESE/PreK Teacher
Intensive PreK C	48	59	Intensive instruction in academics, communication, independent functioning, and social skills, and behavior	PreK ESE	All Domains	1:2.5 ratio 4-5 children 1 teacher 1 paraprofessional	ESE/PreK Teacher
Intensive PreK Behavior	6	6	Intensive instruction in academics, communication, independent functioning, social skills, and behavior	PreK ESE	All Domains	1:3 ratio 6 children 1 teacher 1 paraprofessional	ESE/PreK Teacher

Source: Created by Evergreen from data provided by BCPS PreK ESE, 2014.

Broward County Public Schools has struggled to keep up with the steady increase in the number of children found eligible for prekindergarten ESE services. Finding space in schools that are willing and able to house the classrooms is made even more challenging by the practice of allowing principals to accept or reject special programs.



As the number of prekindergarten age children eligible for services increases throughout the school year, the number of new seats (and classrooms) also increases. This makes responsible financial and programmatic planning for this population very challenging.

The LRE requirement applies to prekindergarten (PreK) children with disabilities as well as school-age students. However, while districts are encouraged to collaborate with other early childhood education providers such as Head Start, Florida's Voluntary Prekindergarten Programs (VPK), or other community-based regular early childhood education programs to provide services in a more "natural" early childhood environment, they are not required to establish or operate a regular early childhood program for the sole purpose of providing access to nondisabled peers.

During the 2013-14 school year, BCPS contracted with nine providers for PreK ESE services. Some were for inclusion programs and others provided highly specialized ESE services. The providers, type of program, and number of children served are presented in **Exhibit 4.12-9**.

Exhibit 4.12-9
Contracted Prekindergarten ESE Placement
2013-14

ESE PreK Contracted Placements			
Agency	Program	Students	
		ESE	VPK
Alphabetland			
• Coral Springs Campus	VPK Inclusion	5	11
• Margate Campus	VPK Inclusion	6	8
• N. Lauderdale Campus	VPK Inclusion	5	12
• Chapel Trail E.S.	VPK Inclusion	3	12
• Coral Cove E.S.	VPK Inclusion	5	12
• Lloyd Estates E.S.	VPK Inclusion	2	12
• Manatee Bay E.S.	VPK Inclusion	5	13
• Martin Luther King, Jr. E.S.	VPK Inclusion	2	11
• Peters E.S.	VPK Inclusion	5	13
• West Hollywood E.S.	VPK Inclusion	5	12
Ann Storck Center	PreK ESE	38	
ARC Broward	PreK ESE	45	
	18-22 Year Olds	9	
Baby Boomers Preschool	VPK Inclusion	9	
Broward Children's Center			
• South Campus	PreK ESE	77	
• North Campus	PreK ESE	41	
	K-12 Medically Fragile	21	
Building Bridges	VPK Inclusion	85	7
Goodwill	18-22 Year Olds	11	
United Cerebral Palsy	PreK ESE	33	
Subtotal		268	123
Total		491	

Source: Created by Evergreen from data provided by BCPS PreK ESE, 2014.



Of the 491 placements provided through contracted services, 268 are for children with disabilities. Of those, 128 are for VPK inclusion slots—43 through programs operated by Alphabetland and 85 through Building Bridges. Staff reported that as of yet the district has not utilized a push-in model to provide services in early childhood education programs (e.g., speech/language pathologists, occupational therapists, ESE teachers, behavior specialists) in lieu of contracting for slots.

COMMENDATION

BCPS is commended for its use of contracted services as a tool to expand the continuum of PreK ESE services to meet the needs of the most significantly involved children and to expand opportunities for inclusion.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.12-8:

Expand efforts to identify high-quality regular early childhood programs within the community, and increase the district's portfolio of inclusive programs for young children with disabilities by increasing the number of contracted placements and implementing a push-in model of support.

Given the challenges the PreK ESE program is currently experiencing with regard to identifying potential sites within BCPS elementary schools to establish additional PreK classrooms and the associated costs of fitting out the spaces, it may be cost effective to expand capacity by using slots already available within the community. Push-in services can take the form of direct service to children, collaboration with facility staff, or a combination of both.

FINDING

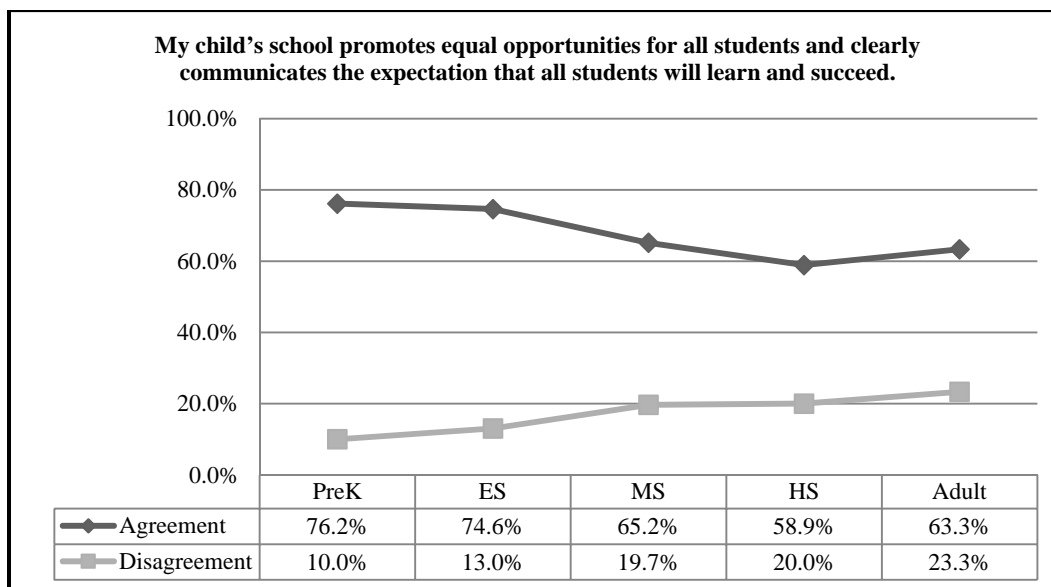
BCPS staff at all levels express support for and belief in the value of inclusive schools and classrooms for students with disabilities, and feel the district has made great strides in this area. The extent to which the culture of schools and school leadership reflects ensures equity for and holds high expectations for all students was assessed through the following prompt in the parent survey: "My child's school promotes equal opportunities for all students and clearly communicates the expectation that all students will learn and succeed." The parent survey results are presented as **Exhibit 4.12-10**.

The majority of parents across all student groups responded favorably to this item. The rate of agreement was highest for parents of PreK children (76.2 percent), almost the same for elementary grades (74.6 percent), then dropped to 65.2 percent in middle school, then to 58.9 percent in high school. The rate of positive responses rose slightly again for parents of adult students, with 63.3 percent expressing agreement.

Results on the staff survey on a parallel item were even more positive. The results are presented in **Exhibit 4.12-11**.

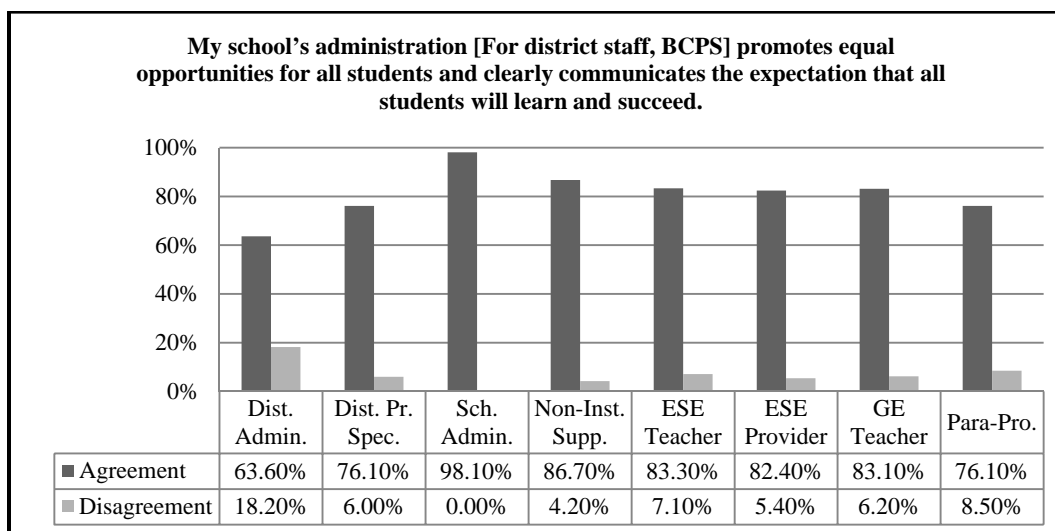


Exhibit 4.12-10
Evergreen Parent Survey Statement on
Equity and Expectations
Disaggregated by School Level



Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014

Exhibit 4.12-11
Evergreen Staff Survey Statement on
Equality and Expectations
Aggregated Agreement and Disagreement by Respondent Type



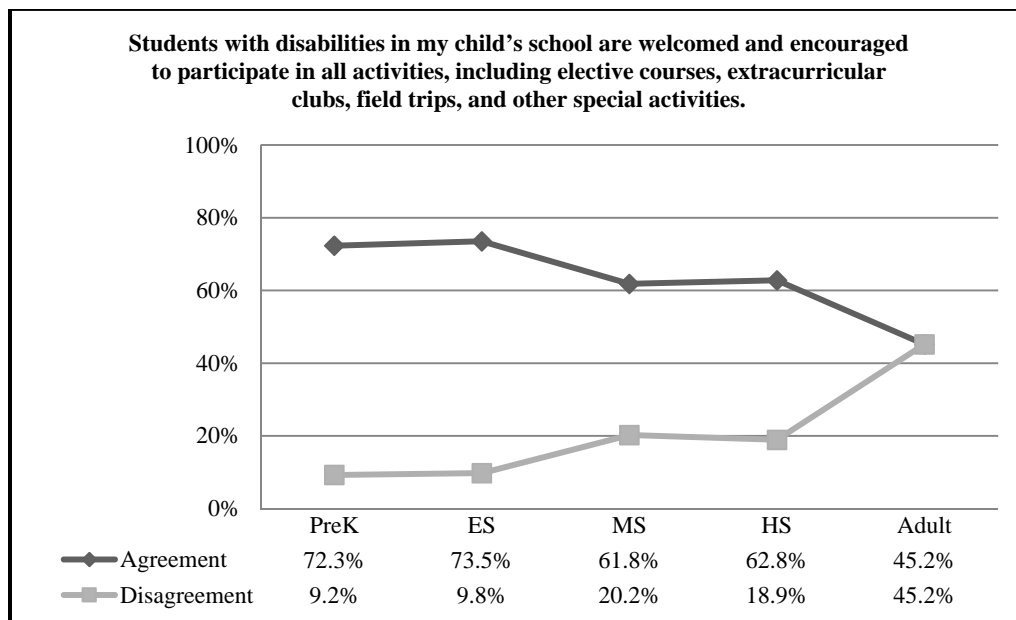
Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014



Staff almost universal in their agreement (98.1 percent), and none disagreed (sums less than 100 percent are due to omission of neutral and N/A responses). All other school based staff also had high rates of agreement: 86.7 percent for non-instructional support personnel; 83.3 percent of ESE teachers; 82.4 percent of ESE providers; 83.1 percent of general education teachers; and 76.1 percent of paraprofessionals. The lowest rate of agreement and the highest rate of disagreement were from district administrators (63.6 percent and 18.2 percent respectively).

In addition to aspirational issues of equity and expectations, parents were presented with the following prompt related to participation in school activities: “Students with disabilities in my child’s school are welcomed and encouraged to participate in all activities, including elective courses, extracurricular clubs, field trips, and other special activities.” Results are presented in **Exhibit 4.12-12**.

Exhibit 4.12-12
Evergreen Parent Survey Statement on
Participation in Nonacademic Activities
Disaggregated by School Level



Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014

With the exception of parents of adult students, the majority of parents within each group expressed agreement. Rates of disagreement were lowest for parents of PreK and elementary grade students (9.2 percent and 9.8 percent, respectively). Parents of middle school and high school students agreed at similar rates (61.8 percent and 62.8 percent, respectively) and also disagreed at similar rates (20.2 percent and 18.9 percent, respectively).

IEPs reviewed during the onsite visit and interviews with ESE and general education teachers support statements by staff that there is a clear and strong expectation that students with disabilities working on the general state standards will be served in the general education



classroom. During individual interviews, parents from schools throughout the district described positive experiences their children have had, even as they were describing disagreements or challenges they have encountered with the school district.

COMMENDATION

BCPS principals, teachers, other faculty, and staff are commended for the supportive and welcoming environment they foster in their schools on a daily basis.



4.13 PERFORMANCE AND INSTRUCTION OF STUDENTS



4.13 PERFORMANCE AND INSTRUCTION OF STUDENTS

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) ensures services to children with disabilities. IDEA governs how states and public schools provide early intervention, special education, and related services to children and youth with disabilities. The law requires established goals for the performance of children with disabilities that:

- promote the purposes of IDEA as stated in §300.1 of the final Part B regulations and Section 601(d) of the Act;
- are the same as the State's objectives for progress by children in its definition of adequate yearly progress (AYP), including the State's objectives for progress by children with disabilities;
- address graduation rates and dropout rates, as well as such other factors as Florida may determine;
- are consistent, to the extent appropriate, with any other goals and standards for children established by the Student Performance Standards in Florida; and
- include performance indicators to assess progress toward achieving the goals, including measurable annual objectives for progress by children with disabilities.

Student Performance Standards in Florida establish the core content of the curricula to be taught and specify the core content knowledge and skills that K-12 public school students are expected to acquire. The standards are rigorous and reflect the knowledge and skills students need for success in college and careers. The standards and benchmarks describe what students should know and be able to do at grade level progression for kindergarten through grade eight and in grade bands for grade levels nine through 12. The access points and core content connectors contained in the standards provide access to the general education curriculum for students with significant cognitive disabilities. Public schools must provide appropriate instruction to assist students in the achievement of these standards for special diploma, as appropriate.

The Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services, characterizes effective districts as those that are:

- known to be engaged in certain practices believed to be associated with higher learning;
- committed to districtwide implementation of such practices; and
- committed to and showing evidence of improving performance of all students and student groups.

The Bureau further identifies key practices for improving outcomes for students with disabilities, including:

- using data well;



- focusing on goals;
- selecting and implementing shared instructional practices;
- implementing deeply;
- monitoring and providing feedback and support; and
- inquiring and learning.

Florida's school districts are challenged to redesign systems that:

- support shared work on improvement of instructional practice and achievement;
- promote culture of share accountability;
- redefine leadership as a set of essential practices that must be implemented at all levels; and
- provide consistent structures for helping people put essential practices in place.

FINDING

The BCPS Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services has identified a number of action initiatives, including implementation of new curricula and pilot projects. For example:

- The ReThink Middle School SVE Curriculum Project includes the purchase of a comprehensive curriculum based on the principles of applied behavioral analysis. It includes over 1,200 video based exercises and lesson plans for classroom use. A total of 24 Specialized Varying Exceptionalities (SVE) classes have been selected based on the results of the Middle School SVE Indicator Checklist. Consideration was also given to the number of ASD students in each class. Teachers receive ongoing support provided by ReThink staff as well as ESE Program Specialists.
- The Failure Free Reading Middle School SVE Curriculum is a research-based, diagnostic/prescriptive reading intervention program designed to improve reading outcomes for students who have not responded to remedial reading instruction. It has a unique language development approach to intervention designed to rapidly build comprehension, vocabulary, and fluency—along with efficacy, confidence, and esteem.
- The Leaps Program is an online, research-based, social/ behavioral, K-12 assessment and intervention resource. Leaps lessons are correlated to the Common Core Standards and to the character traits and bullying. Implementation of Leaps allows schools to address Levels I, II, and III of RtI through individual, small group, and schoolwide implementation. BCPS has made Leaps available to schools via a three-year districtwide site license. Implementation of Leaps will positively impact student behavior; this will in turn lead to academic engagement. District staff monitor implementation, and determine and implement appropriate training and assistance.



- The Middle School Support Pilot is focused on meeting the behavioral and social needs of middle school students, primarily those with an eligibility of ASD or EBD. These students are included in general education and are supported through this pilot by the addition of behavioral technicians and family counselors on two middle school campuses.
- The Reduction of Restraint/Seclusion Project provides an emphasis on high quality instruction including positive behavioral supports, the district will continue the trend of reducing the use of restraint and seclusion. In collaboration, with school staff, district staff monitor the use of restraint and of seclusion, and determine and implement appropriate districtwide, schoolwide, classroom specific, and/or student-specific interventions.
- The ESE Program Standards Project helps to ensure the standardization of ESE cluster programs throughout the district.
- The Alternate Standards Report Cards Project is designed to align the skills being taught through Access Points/Core Content Connectors to the standards being reported on the report card for students who meet exemption criteria for state/district testing and are being instructed on Access Points.

Exhibit 4.13-1 shows the human capital commitment and priority level for each initiative.

District ESE staff have worked together to assess the key areas of need to establish specific initiatives for implementation. The initiatives are student-focused and based on best practices, research, and Florida standards.

COMMENDATION

The Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services is commended for its action initiatives that offer opportunities for expanded services and greater support to schools. ESE staff worked collaboratively with school staff to assess and identify key initiatives of action.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.13-1:

Evaluate the effectiveness of the action initiatives to determine continuation, modification, and expansion.

As initiatives are implemented, key stakeholders should ensure that there is an evaluation plan in place to assess the effectiveness of each initiative. The evaluation of pilot programs and curriculum materials based on student outcomes is an integral part of improving student performance.



Exhibit 4.13-1 Action Initiatives

Initiative	Description	Human Capital Commitment	Priority Level
ReThink – middle school SVE curriculum	A comprehensive curriculum based on the principles of applied behavioral analysis.	ESE Program Specialists ESE Curriculum Supervisors	High – High Quality Instruction
Failure Free Reading – middle school SVE curriculum	A research-based, diagnostic/prescriptive reading intervention program.	ESE Program Specialists ESE Curriculum Supervisors	High – High Quality Instruction
Leaps	An online, research-based, social/ behavioral, K-12 assessment and intervention resource.	ESE Program Specialists for Behavior School-based Leaps users	High – High Quality Instruction
Middle School Support Pilot	A behavioral and social needs support process the support services of family counselors and behavior technicians	Behavior Techs Family Counselors Program Specialist for Behavior	High – High Quality Instruction Continuous Improvement
Reduction: Restraint/Seclusion	A process for providing high-quality instruction including positive behavioral supports.	ESE Program Specialists for Behavior and school-based staff	High – Continuous Improvement Effective Communication
ESE Program Standards	The standardization of ESE cluster programs throughout the district.	ESE Program Specialists	High – High Quality Instruction
Alternate Standards Report Cards	The alignment of skills being taught through Access Points/Core Content Connectors to the standards being reported on the report cards.	ESE Program Specialists Selected school cluster staff	High – Effective Communication

Source: BCPS Exceptional Student Education and Support Division, 2014.

FINDING

The community-based instruction (CBI) program offered throughout BCPS is exemplary. Bright Horizons School defines CBI as an:

instructional method in which functional skills are taught in the student's natural environment. CBI is typically divided into four domains: daily living, recreation/leisure, general community living, and vocational. The basic goal of the instructional programs for students with disabilities is preparation for meaningful functioning in integrated work, play,



domestic, and general community environments. Students with disabilities often have difficulties transferring the skills learned in the classroom situation to actual community environments. Students who participate in CBI programs achieve better integration into the community.

Many students with disabilities have the opportunity to participate in community work or recreation/leisure activities each day. Schools offer an array of opportunities for students and have established partnerships with local businesses throughout Broward County. CBI activities are carefully planned and are based on the individual goals and objectives of each student's IEP. CBI sites are selected and evaluated using a job site environment analysis document. Based on the specific needs of the students and the site analysis, students are paired with an appropriate work site. A job coach or classroom teacher accompanies the students to the various sites for instruction and monitoring of student performance.

General guidelines for the CBI program are specific in that:

- It is not a field trip and does not include the entire class on the trip.
- It must be related to the student's annual IEP goals.
- Experiences must be related to an instructional objective.
- Activities must be documented in the teachers plan book or activity log.
- Parents must be included in the planning of CBI activities for their child.
- Parents must be notified that their child will be going out for CBI prior to leaving the building.
- Experiences must be individualized to meet the student's needs.
- Activities must be chronologically age appropriate.
- Natural proportions of disabled to nondisabled individuals must be considered.
- Whenever possible, students should interact with typical peers in the community.

COMMENDATION

The community-based instruction (CBI) program offers instruction of functional skills in natural environments to students with moderate and severe disabilities. The district's program is comprehensive, based on the individual needs of students, and highly supported by local business partners.



FINDING

The majority of BCPS students with disabilities are performing below grade level. Most students with disabilities in grades three through eight in BCPS are not passing state assessments. Only eighth and ninth grade students with disabilities are successfully passing end-of-course exams in algebra, biology, and geometry. Staff survey results found that approximately half or fewer teachers of special and general education believe they have adequate resources and support to meet the needs of students with disabilities.

Exhibit 4.13-2 shows the FCAT 2 student performance results for grades three through eight in 2013 for BCPS students with disabilities. As can be seen, 32 percent or fewer scored 3 or greater in reading, and 21 percent or fewer scored 3 or greater in math. In addition, 38 percent of fourth graders, 31 percent of eighth graders, and 44 percent of tenth graders scored 3.5 or higher on the Florida Writes assessment (not shown in exhibit).

Exhibit 4.13-2
FCAT 2 Student Performance Results
Students With Disabilities
Grades 3-8
Percent 3 \geq Achievement
2013-13 School Year

Grade	Reading	Math	Science
3	26	19	NA
4	32	21	NA
5	29	18	16
6	26	15	NA
7	27	17	NA
8	23	19	12

Source: Florida Department of Education, FCAT 2.0 Student Performance Results Demographic Report, 2013.

Exhibit 4.13-3 shows the end-of-course student performance results for algebra, biology, and geometry. As shown, ninth graders performed well on the biology and geometry end-of-course exams. Other end-of-course scores, however, are not very promising:

- thirty-one (31) percent in grade nine to only 4 percent in grade 12 for algebra;
- eighty-one (81) percent in grade nine to 17 percent in grade 12 for biology; and
- ninety-one (91) percent in grade nine to 4 percent in grade 12 for geometry.

These data suggest that if students with disabilities do not pass the end-of-course exams by ninth grade, it is not likely they will pass them in later grades.

Broward County Public Schools has established district instructional targets for students with disabilities. These targets are shown in **Exhibit 4.13-4**. Meeting the instructional targets for 2013-14 would increase grade three performance by 28 percent; grade five performance by 27 percent; grade eight performance by 20 percent; the graduation rate by 19 percent; and college and career readiness by 25 percent.



Exhibit 4.13-3
End-Of-Course Student Performance Results
Students With Disabilities
Grades 9-12
Percent Passing
2012-13 School Year

Grade	Algebra	Biology	Geometry
9	31	81	91
10	11	31	46
11	12	18	14
12	4	17	4

Source: Florida Department of Education, End of Course Student Performance Results Demographic Report, 2013.

Exhibit 4.13-4
District Instructional Targets for Students With Disabilities
High Quality Instruction

Measure		2011-12 Baseline	2012-13 Target/ Benchmark	2013-14 Target/ Benchmark
Early Childhood Readiness 3 rd Grade Reading & Math Proficiency	SWD	30%	39%	58%
	NON-SWD	56%	68%	87%
Middle School Readiness 5 th Grade Reading, Math, & Science Proficiency	SWD	22%	30%	49%
	NON-SWD	47%	56%	73%
High School Readiness 8 th Grade Reading, Math, & Science Proficiency	SWD	19%	25%	39%
	NON-SWD	44%	40%	60%
Graduation Rate 4 year cohort	SWD	57%	64%	76%
	NON-SWD	82%	84%	88%
College & Career Readiness	SWD	37%	45%	62%
	NON-SWD	69%	74%	81%

Source: BCPS Exceptional Student Education and Support Division, 2014.

As shown in **Exhibit 4.13-5** staff survey results regarding the academic curriculum and programs indicate that:

- More than half (57 percent to 60 percent) of special and general education teachers agreed/strongly agreed that the reading curriculum includes effective strategies, lessons, or other supports that meet the needs of most students with disabilities. In comparison, 84 percent of school administrators agreed/strongly agreed, while only 35 percent of district program specialists agreed/strongly agreed.
- Approximately half (50 percent to 54 percent) of special and general education teachers agreed/strongly agreed that the math curriculum includes effective strategies, lessons, or other supports that meet the needs of most students with disabilities. In comparison, 84 percent of school administrators agreed/strongly agreed, while only 34 percent of district program specialists agreed/strongly agreed.



- More than half (55 percent) of special and general education teachers agreed/strongly agreed that the language arts curriculum includes effective strategies, lessons, or other supports that meet the needs of most students with disabilities. In comparison, 84 percent of school administrators agreed/strongly agreed, while only 36 percent of district program specialists agreed/strongly agreed.

Exhibit 4.13-5
Evergreen Survey Statements on
Academic Curriculum and Programs

Survey Statement: The reading curriculum or program used in my school includes effective strategies, lessons, or other supports that meet the needs of most students with disabilities. [For district staff, the reading curricula or programs used across the district...]						
Survey Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
District Administrator	22.2%	11.1%	11.1%	22.2%	0.0%	33.3%
District Program Specialist	1.5%	33.3%	30.3%	13.6%	3.0%	18.2%
School Administrator	30.2%	53.7%	8.3%	5.4%	1.5%	1.0%
Non-Instructional Support	18.4%	41.8%	16.1%	8.4%	2.6%	12.7%
Special Education Teacher	20.3%	40.2%	15.0%	12.6%	5.5%	6.4%
Special Education Provider	12.4%	38.2%	25.3%	6.7%	3.9%	13.5%
General Education Teacher	16.2%	40.9%	19.6%	8.8%	7.1%	7.5%
Paraprofessional	16.2%	36.5%	15.8%	6.0%	6.0%	19.5%
Other	20.7%	36.6%	17.2%	8.6%	4.5%	12.4%
Survey Statement: The math curriculum or program used in my school includes effective strategies, lessons, or other supports that meet the needs of most students with disabilities. [For district staff, the math curricula or programs used across the district...]						
Survey Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
District Administrator	22.2%	11.1%	0.0%	22.2%	11.1%	33.3%
District Program Specialist	1.5%	31.8%	25.8%	18.2%	1.5%	21.2%
School Administrator	28.2%	55.8%	6.8%	6.3%	1.9%	1.0%
Non-Instructional Support	15.0%	36.7%	17.6%	12.1%	4.0%	14.5%
Special Education Teacher	16.3%	38.3%	16.1%	13.6%	7.5%	8.2%
Special Education Provider	7.9%	31.5%	27.5%	9.0%	3.9%	20.2%
General Education Teacher	13.0%	37.4%	22.4%	9.4%	6.2%	11.6%
Paraprofessional	16.7%	31.1%	20.1%	5.7%	6.4%	20.1%
Other	19.4%	35.8%	19.4%	8.3%	4.2%	12.8%
Survey Statement: The language arts curriculum or program used in my school includes effective strategies, lessons, or other supports that meet the needs of most students with disabilities. [For district staff, the language arts curricula or programs used across the district...]						
Survey Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
District Administrator	22.2%	11.1%	11.1%	22.2%	0.0%	33.3%
District Program Specialist	1.6%	33.9%	30.6%	16.1%	1.6%	16.1%
School Administrator	23.9%	60.4%	8.6%	6.1%	0.5%	0.5%
Non-Instructional Support	15.3%	40.5%	18.6%	9.9%	2.4%	13.2%
Special Education Teacher	15.7%	38.6%	18.4%	16.2%	3.8%	7.4%
Special Education Provider	9.0%	38.3%	28.7%	6.6%	3.0%	14.4%
General Education Teacher	14.8%	40.4%	19.9%	10.6%	5.2%	9.2%
Paraprofessional	16.9%	35.3%	18.5%	5.6%	4.8%	18.9%
Other	18.6%	35.4%	19.3%	8.8%	5.1%	12.8%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.

Exhibit 4.13-6 shows staff survey results regarding the availability of resources. As can be seen, when rating the resources needed to provide effective services to students with disabilities, less than half (44 percent) of special and general education teachers agreed/strongly agreed that they had adequate resources. In comparison, 77 percent of school administrators agreed/strongly agreed, while only 31 percent of district program specialists agreed/strongly agreed.



Exhibit 4.13-6
Evergreen Survey Statements on
Adequate Resources for Students with Disabilities

Survey Statement: Teachers and other service providers have the resources they need to provide effective services to the students with disabilities they serve (e.g., books, computers and software, supplemental materials, and instructional space).						
Survey Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
District Administrator	22.2%	11.1%	22.2%	22.2%	0.0%	22.2%
District Program Specialist	3.1%	28.1%	20.3%	26.6%	15.6%	6.3%
School Administrator	26.7%	49.5%	9.2%	12.1%	2.4%	0.0%
Non-Instructional Support	15.5%	33.9%	17.8%	18.7%	7.8%	6.3%
Special Education Teacher	13.6%	29.7%	14.9%	23.1%	18.1%	0.7%
Special Education Provider	9.0%	38.8%	18.5%	20.2%	10.1%	3.4%
General Education Teacher	10.8%	33.3%	19.9%	18.4%	13.4%	4.1%
Paraprofessional	19.4%	32.7%	15.6%	9.5%	10.3%	12.5%
Other	18.2%	35.7%	14.4%	16.2%	10.3%	5.2%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014

Staff survey results regarding curriculum support are shown in **Exhibit 4.13-7**. The ratings indicate that:

- Approximately half (45 percent to 50 percent) of special and general education teachers agreed/strongly agreed that they receive sufficient support regarding curriculum for students with disabilities. In comparison, 68 percent of school administrators agreed/strongly agreed, while only 34 percent of district program specialists agreed/strongly agreed.
- Slightly more than half (52 percent to 56 percent) of special and general education teachers agreed/strongly agreed that they receive sufficient support regarding the use of accommodations, differentiation, and/or learning strategies for students with disabilities. In comparison, 83 percent of school administrators agreed/strongly agreed, while only 46 percent of district program specialists agreed/strongly agreed.

Onsite visits, interviews with key staff, and review of multiple sources of data indicate a number of factors that could contribute to the poor academic achievement of students with disabilities. Generally, inconsistent implementation of the following are noted:

- **Collaborative Planning** – As reported in **Section 4.1**, support facilitators, speech-language pathologists, and teachers of intensive courses do not consistently plan together or coordinate their intervention schedules even though they share a common case load of students and work on the same IEP goals. In general, support facilitators do not have shared planning or the opportunity to work with school data teams for review of student performance data or for planning specific interventions with the general education faculty. With collaborative planning, special and general education teachers would have the opportunity to plan for text complexity and leveled goals.



Exhibit 4.13-7
Evergreen Survey Statements on
Curriculum Support for Teachers and Administrators

Survey Statement: Teachers and administrators in my school receive sufficient support regarding curriculum for students with disabilities. [For district staff, schools and staff across the district....]						
Survey Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
District Administrator	11.1%	11.1%	33.3%	33.3%	0.0%	11.1%
District Program Specialist	4.8%	29.0%	25.8%	32.3%	4.8%	3.2%
School Administrator	22.6%	44.6%	14.9%	14.9%	3.1%	0.0%
Non-Instructional Support	14.8%	32.9%	24.8%	13.6%	6.6%	7.3%
Special Education Teacher	15.2%	35.4%	20.2%	17.5%	9.6%	2.1%
Special Education Provider	7.7%	35.5%	25.4%	19.5%	4.7%	7.1%
General Education Teacher	11.2%	33.5%	25.5%	16.1%	9.2%	4.4%
Paraprofessional	14.5%	32.1%	19.7%	6.8%	4.4%	22.5%
Other	14.9%	36.7%	18.9%	13.8%	7.6%	8.0%
Survey Statement: Teachers and administrators in my school receive sufficient support regarding the use of accommodations, differentiation, and/or learning strategies for students with disabilities. [For district staff, schools and staff across the district]						
Survey Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
District Administrator	11.1%	22.2%	22.2%	33.3%	0.0%	11.1%
District Program Specialist	6.5%	38.7%	27.4%	21.0%	3.2%	3.2%
School Administrator	22.6%	49.7%	12.3%	12.8%	2.6%	0.0%
Non-Instructional Support	18.5%	36.4%	20.6%	13.6%	4.5%	6.4%
Special Education Teacher	17.5%	38.0%	19.3%	14.9%	8.4%	1.9%
Special Education Provider	10.7%	43.2%	17.8%	18.3%	4.7%	5.3%
General Education Teacher	13.1%	39.2%	21.8%	13.5%	8.9%	3.5%
Paraprofessional	14.1%	33.9%	20.2%	6.9%	4.4%	20.6%
Other	18.8%	40.4%	16.6%	10.8%	6.5%	6.9%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014

- **Consistent Lesson Plan Format** – School administrators reported that they could not mandate a specific lesson plan template. They can, however, create suggested lesson plan templates or identify specific components that should be included in a lesson plan. Lesson planning is a vital component of the teaching-learning process. Identifying specific learning strategies, how instruction will be differentiated, leveled instructional goals, and questioning could enhance the instruction of all students—especially those with disabilities.
- **Strategic Data Analysis** – While schools are accessing state and local assessment data, it is not evident that special education teachers are, or have the opportunity, to review performance data for students with disabilities. The data reports reviewed in the schools report percentage of pass of battery subtest, but there was no evidence of item analysis or use of item analysis for planning of interventions or re-teaching skills.
- **Focus on High-Yield Strategies and Differentiation** – BCPS is a Marzano district and uses the iObservation tool for teacher evaluation. It was not always evident, however, that high-yield strategies are integrated throughout instruction. Marzano's book, *Classroom Instruction that Works: Research-based Strategies for Increasing Student Achievement*, identifies nine high-yield instructional strategies that these nine strategies have the greatest positive affect on student achievement for all students, in all subject



areas, at all grade levels. **Exhibit 4.13-8** summarizes the nine strategies, supportive research, and examples for classroom use.

- **Ongoing Formative Assessment** – When incorporated into classroom practice, the formative assessment process provides information needed to adjust teaching and learning while they are still happening. The process serves as practice for the student and a check for understanding during the learning process. Called *Assessment for Learning*, the process supports learning in two ways:
 - Teachers can adapt instruction on the basis of evidence—making changes and improvements that will yield immediate benefits to student learning.
 - Students can use evidence of their current progress to actively manage and adjust their own learning (Stiggins, Arter, Chappuis, & Chappuis, 2006).

As previously addressed in **Section 4.1**, the overarching factor that could contribute to the underachievement of students with disabilities is lack of collaborative efforts between the Division of Instruction and Interventions and the Exceptional Student Education and Support Division. With the newly established vision and initiatives in the Exceptional Student Education and Support Division, opportunities for improving these factors are promising.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 4.13-2:

Establish opportunities for collaborative planning for special and general education teachers using common lesson planning tools and templates.

Collaborative planning is essential for providing appropriate special education services in the general education setting. BCPS has established professional learning communities in all of the schools for various initiatives. The professional learning community is an excellent way for special and general education teachers to review task specific student data, and plan for differentiation, text complexity, and leveled goals.

Recommendation 4.13-3:

Incorporate high-yield strategies and formative assessment throughout instruction.

High-yield strategies offer a multitude of ways to differentiate instruction for students with disabilities. While monitoring student performance and assuring that accommodations are being provided are essential, it is also important that special and general education teachers incorporate research-based instruction methods throughout instruction. Careful planning for teaching the strategies to students and monitoring their progress is essential to their overall improved academic performance.



Exhibit 4.13-8
High-Yield Instructional Strategies

HIGH-YIELD INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES	RESEARCH SAYS	EXAMPLES
1. Identifying similarities and differences	Students should compare, classify, and create metaphors, analogies and graphic representations.	T-charts, Venn diagrams, classifying, analogies, cause and effect links, compare and contrast organizers, QAR, sketch to stretch, affinity, Frayer model, etc.
2. Summarizing and note taking	Students should learn to delete unnecessary information, substitute some information, keep important information, write / rewrite, and analyze information.	Teacher models summarization techniques, identify key concepts, bullets, outlines, clusters, narrative organizers, journal summaries, break down assignments, create simple reports, quick writes, graphic organizers, column notes, affinity, etc.
3. Reinforcing effort and providing recognition	Teachers should reward based on standards of performance; use symbolic recognition rather than just tangible rewards.	Hold high expectations, display finished products, praise students' effort, encourage students to share ideas and express their thoughts, honor individual learning styles, conference individually with students, authentic portfolios, stress-free environment etc.
4. Homework and practice	Teachers should vary the amount of homework based on student grade level (less at the elementary level, more at the secondary level), keep parent involvement in homework to a minimum, state purpose, and, if assigned, should be debriefed.	Retell, recite and review learning for the day at home, reflective journals, parents are informed of the goals and objectives, interdisciplinary teams plan together for homework distribution, etc.
5. Nonlinguistic representations	Students should create graphic representations, models, mental pictures, drawings, pictographs, and participate in kinesthetic activity in order to assimilate knowledge.	Visual tools and manipulatives, problem-solution organizers, spider webs, diagrams, concept maps, drawings, maps, sketch to stretch, K.I.M., etc.
6. Cooperative learning	Teachers should limit use of ability groups, keep groups small, apply strategy consistently and systematically but not overuse.	Integrate content and language through group engagement, reader's theatre, pass the pencil, circle of friends, cube it, radio reading, shared reading and writing, plays, science projects, debates, jigsaw, group reports, choral reading, affinity, etc.
7. Setting objectives and providing feedback	Teachers should create specific but flexible goals, allowing some student choice. Teacher feedback should be corrective, timely, and specific to a criterion.	Articulating and displaying learning goals, KWL, contract learning goals, etc.
8. Generating and testing hypothesis	Students should generate, explain, test and defend hypotheses using both inductive and deductive strategies through problem solving, history investigation, invention, experimental inquiry, and decision making.	Thinking processes, constructivist practices, investigate, explore, social construction of knowledge, use of inductive and deductive reasoning, questioning the author, etc.
9. Questions, cues, and advance organizers	Teachers should use cues and questions that focus on what is important (rather than unusual), use ample wait time before accepting responses, eliciting inference and analysis. Advance organizers should focus on what is important and is more useful with information that is not well organized.	Graphic organizers, provide guiding questions before each lesson, think alouds, inferencing, predicting, drawing conclusions, skim chapters to identify key vocabulary, concepts and skills, A.C.E. anticipation guide, annotating the text, etc.

Source: Marzano, Robert, *Classroom Instruction that Works: Research-based Strategies for Increasing Student Achievement*, 2001.



FINDING

Broward County Public Schools does not offer the Strategic Intervention Model (SIM) as a learning strategies approach for students with disabilities. Also, the district does not produce Content Enhancement as a method for planning and leading instruction. FDLRS promotes SIM and Content Enhancement as statewide models and offers training and support to school districts at no cost.

FDLRS works with the Center for Research on Learning based at the University of Kansas to offer SIM to schools districts throughout Florida. The Center for Research on Learning has developed numerous strategies that are placed into an overall program called the Strategic Intervention Model (SIM) Strategies. The model promotes effective teaching and learning of critical content in schools. SIM strives to help teachers make decisions about what is of greatest importance, what can be taught to students to help them to learn, and how to teach them well.

The Center for Research on Learning developed specific learning strategies for assisting students in understanding information and solving problems. Students who do not know or use good learning strategies often learn passively and ultimately fail in school. Learning strategy instruction focuses on making the students more active learners by teaching them how to learn and how to use what they have learned to solve problems and be successful.

Exhibit 4.13-9 shows the SIM strategies by content area. The model offers a number of strategies in reading, studying and remembering information, writing, improving assignment and test performance, interaction with others, motivation, and math. SIM is based on 30 years of validated research and has shown remarkable results in improved student performance for students with disabilities.

Content Enhancement Routines is another research-validated approach that was developed by the Center for Research on Learning. The routines are used to teach curriculum content to academically diverse classes in ways that all students can understand and remember key information. Content Enhancement is an instructional method that relies on using teaching devices to organize and present curriculum content in an understandable and easy-to-learn manner. Teachers identify content that they deem to be most critical and teach it using a teaching routine that actively engages students with the content.

Exhibit 4.13-10 shows the content enhancement routines and examples of each. All of the routines promote direct, explicit instruction. This type of instruction helps students who are struggling, and also facilitates problem-solving and critical-thinking skills for students who are doing well in class.

SIM and Content Enhancement Routines are supported with 30 years of validated research. Their implementation has shown significant performance gains in students with disabilities across the country. SIM and Content Enhancement Routines have long been recognized in Florida as methods that support academic success across the curriculum. Further, SIM addresses such skills as organization, memory, self-advocacy, and interactions with others—which are often challenging tasks for students with language and learning disabilities.



Exhibit 4.13-9
Strategic Intervention Model
Learning Strategies

CONTENT	STRATEGIES
Reading	Word Identification Strategy Self-Questioning Strategy Visual Imagery Strategy Inference Strategy Fundamentals of Paraphrasing and Summarizing Paraphrasing Strategy Word Mapping Strategy
Studying and Remembering Information	FIRST-Letter Mnemonic Strategy Paired Associates Strategy LINC'S Vocabulary Strategy Listening and Note-Taking
Writing	Sentence Writing Strategy (Fundamentals) Sentence Writing Strategy (Proficiency) Paragraph Writing Strategy Theme Writing (Fundamentals) Error Monitoring Strategy InSPECT Strategy (for word-processing spellcheckers) EDIT Strategy
Improving Assignment & Test Performance	Assignment Completion Strategy Strategic Tutoring Test-Taking Strategy Essay Test-Taking Strategy
Effectively Interacting with Others	SLANT - A Classroom Participation Strategy Cooperative Thinking Strategies THINK Strategy (Problem Solving) LEARN Strategy (Learning Critical Information) BUILD Strategy (Decision Making) SCORE Skills: Social Skills for Cooperative Groups Teamwork Strategy The Community Building Series Focusing Together Following Instructions Together Organizing Together Taking Notes Together Talking Together
Motivation	Self-Advocacy Strategy Possible Selves
Math	Strategic Math Series: Addition Facts 0 to 9 Addition Facts 10 to 18 Subtraction Facts 0 to 9 Subtraction Facts 10 to 18 Multiplication Facts 0 to 81 Division Facts 0 to 81 Place Value

Source: The Center for Research on Learning based at the University of Kansas, Strategic Intervention Model, 2011.



Exhibit 4.13-10
Content Enhancement Routines

ROUTINE	EXAMPLE
Planning & Leading Learning	Course Organizer Routine Unit Organizer Routine Lesson Organizer Routine
Exploring Text, Topics, & Details	Clarifying Routine Framing Routine Survey Routine Vocabulary LINCing Routine
Teaching Concepts	Concept Mastery Routine Concept Anchoring Routine Concept Comparison Routine
Increasing Student Performance	Recall Enhancement Routine Question Exploration Routine Quality Assignment Routine ORDER Routine

Source: The Center for Research on Learning based at the University of Kansas, Content Enhancement Routines, 2011.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.13-4:

Participate in the Strategic Intervention Model and Content Enhancement Routines training offered by FDLRS, and establish pilot sites in BCPS secondary schools for implementation.

BCPS should take advantage of the training opportunities offered by the Florida FDLRS network. The district should select a team of teachers and support staff to commit to the extensive training and pilot the strategies and routines in selected secondary classrooms. The district should also select key personnel for SIM and Content Enhancement train-the-trainer series to establish trainers within the district.

FINDING

Broward County Public Schools does not have an approved bank of approved instructional materials for special programs that are aligned with the Florida Standards access points to the general education curriculum.

Exhibit 4.13-11 shows the special education teacher responses to the survey statement regarding adequate resources. As can be seen, less than 50 percent of the teachers agreed/strongly agreed that they had adequate resources.



Exhibit 4.13-11
Evergreen Survey Statement on
Adequate Resources for Teachers and Other Service Providers

Survey Statement: Teachers and other service providers have the resources they need to provide effective services to the students with disabilities they serve (e.g., books, computers and software, supplemental materials, and instructional space).						
Survey Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
Special Education Teacher	13.6%	29.7%	14.9%	23.1%	18.1%	0.7%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.

As part of the revision to the Florida Standards, access points for students with significant cognitive disabilities have been developed. These access points are expectations written for students with significant cognitive disabilities to access the general education curriculum. Embedded in the Sunshine State Standards, access points reflect the core intent of the Standards with reduced levels of complexity. The three levels of complexity include participatory (Pa), supported (Su), and independent (In) with the participatory level being the least complex. The new Florida Alternate Assessment will measure student achievement on the access points in Reading, Writing, Mathematics, and Science.

The Florida Department of Education has developed an online toolbox of information, CPALMS, which helps educators implement teaching standards. Access courses have been developed and there are some educator-submitted resources that support the teaching of Access Points or benchmarks. Not all access points or benchmarks, however, have related instructional resources.

During onsite visits and interviews with key personnel, it was reported that teachers use a variety of instructional materials to support the instruction of the access points. Those materials varied from program to program. Some teachers rated their resources as adequate, while others did not. As a whole, it was reported that BCPS has not assessed the materials that are being used in special programs serving students with severe cognitive disabilities.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.13-5:

Identify instructional materials and curricula being used in special programs and develop a district-approved bank of resources that support the instruction of access points to the general education curriculum.

Key district and school designees should review the instructional materials and curricula being used in special programs throughout the district. While the district has developed standards of quality for the special programs, instructional materials and curricula are not included in those standards. A bank of resources that support instruction of access points and demonstrate best practices can be very helpful to teachers of special programs across the district.



FINDING

A life-centered curriculum is not available for students with disabilities who are not successful in the general education program. There are limited opportunities for students with disabilities to complete the necessary requirements for a Special Diploma Option 2 with a focus on employment.

The Special Diploma Option 2 requires that students attain achievement of all the annual goals and short-term objectives/benchmarks specified on the IEP related to the employment and community competencies. Employment is required in a community-based job, for the number of hours per week specified in the student's training plan—for the equivalent of one semester, and paid a minimum wage in compliance with the requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act. Students must also mastery the employment and community competencies specified in the training plan. Students may be eligible to enroll in career and technical certificate programs, GED, or adult basic education. Students receiving a special diploma are not eligible for military service. Programs at colleges and universities provide comprehensive transition and postsecondary programs for students with intellectual disabilities. **Section 4.11** reviews BCPS graduation requirements and all other special diploma options.

Exhibit 4.13-12 shows the staff survey results on postsecondary preparation. It can be seen that fewer than 30 percent of all of those surveyed agreed/strongly agreed that students with disabilities are prepared for postsecondary employment and education or training when they graduate or age out. The highest rating of 29.1 percent was that of school administrators and the lowest rating was from the district program specialists and the general education teachers (19 percent).

Exhibit 4.13-12 Evergreen Survey Statement on Postsecondary Preparation

Survey Statement: Middle and high school students with disabilities are adequately prepared for postsecondary employment and education or training when they graduate or age out.						
Survey Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
District Administrator	11.1%	11.1%	33.3%	11.1%	11.1%	22.2%
District Program Specialist	4.6%	13.8%	20.0%	26.2%	16.9%	18.5%
School Administrator	12.8%	16.3%	14.8%	6.4%	2.5%	47.3%
Non-Instructional Support	7.2%	19.1%	22.3%	10.1%	7.2%	34.1%
Special Education Teacher	7.8%	16.8%	15.8%	10.5%	6.1%	43.0%
Special Education Provider	5.7%	13.1%	23.4%	8.6%	1.7%	47.4%
General Education Teacher	5.2%	14.0%	22.5%	7.4%	4.7%	46.2%
Paraprofessional	8.7%	12.1%	12.1%	4.9%	3.8%	58.5%
Other	8.4%	12.6%	16.4%	8.7%	3.5%	50.3%

Source: Evergreen Survey, 2014.

A review of sample BCPS student IEPs shows that some students do not have realistic post-secondary goals based on their academic performance nor is there any documentation to support vocational evaluation. **Exhibit 4.13-13** provides a few examples.



Exhibit 4.13-13
Sample Transition Student Goals, Performance and
Vocational Evaluation in IEPs

Student Goal	Academic Performance	Transitional Vocational Evaluation
College/Business	FCAT Reading and Math – Level 1	There are no concerns at this time.
College/Medicine, Law, Psychology	GPA – 1.77 to 2.22	N/A
College/Nursing	Grades: Reading D; Intensive Math – D, FCAT Reading and Math – Level 2	Evaluation by VR
College/Medical Field	FCAT Math – Level 2 FCAT Reading – Level 1	None
College/Criminal Justice	FCAT Reading – Level 1 FCAT Math – Level 2	There are no concerns at this time.

Source: BCPS, Easy IEP, 2014.

The district employs one transition services specialist and seven transition teachers. These staff are assigned to the PASS Program which serves students with disabilities from 18 to 22 years of age. There are no transition personnel assigned to high school students with disabilities who are struggling with content courses; maintain low grade point averages; are not passing the FCAT; and are not offered any alternative programs.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4.13-6:

Adopt a life-centered curriculum for students with disabilities who are not being successful in general education and create opportunities for graduation with special diploma based on employability skills.

The Division of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services should work with the Florida Department of Education's Project 10 to adopt a life-centered curriculum. Project 10 is a resource to the district and provides technical assistance at no cost to the district. The ESE district support team should work with secondary teachers to review transition IEPs and create appropriate goals and objectives related to preparation for postsecondary employment opportunities.



APPENDICES



***APPENDIX A:
STAFF SURVEY RESULTS BY SURVEY GROUP***



Appendix A

Independent Review of ESE Services

Broward County Public Schools

Staff Survey

N = 5,024

Completion % = 29.6%

A. DEMOGRAPHICS

1. Which of the following best describes your position or role in the district?	%
District administrators and program specialists	32.1%
School administrator	44.3%
Non-instructional support	64.5%
Special education teacher	63.3%
Special education provider	82.3%
General education teacher	21.1%
Paraprofessional	18.1%
Other	NA

2. Indicate the current level in which you are teaching/working (check all that apply).	%
Prekindergarten	9.1%
Elementary school	45.4%
Middle school	18.3%
High school	21.2%
Adult/18-21	4.1%
All	1.9%

3. How many students with disabilities do you serve? General education teachers should include students with disabilities for whom they provide accommodations or other supports within the general education classroom.	%
None	9.3%
1-5	28.2%
6-10	18.6%
11-30	17.2%
31-50	7.2%
51-100	8.8%
101-150	5.0%
More than 150	5.7%



4. Indicate the number of students for which you are the case manager for (i.e., responsible for the IEP).	%
None	65.3%
1-5	9.5%
6-10	8.4%
11-30	5.1%
31-50	3.5%
51-100	3.9%
101-150	2.4%
More than 150	2.0%

B. CONTENT ITEMS

Survey Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
5. ESE central office staff work effectively with school administrators to ensure delivery of special education services.						
District administrator	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%	25.0%	16.7%	8.3%
District program specialist	17.6%	42.6%	13.2%	13.2%	1.5%	11.8%
School administrator	16.7%	53.7%	17.6%	8.3%	3.2%	0.5%
Non-instructional support	10.2%	33.5%	20.5%	9.7%	5.0%	21.1%
Special education teacher	13.7%	34.1%	23.5%	14.1%	7.3%	7.3%
Special education provider	9.1%	38.0%	33.2%	11.8%	3.7%	4.3%
General education teacher	13.0%	28.7%	26.3%	7.7%	4.8%	19.6%
Paraprofessional	16.6%	30.6%	20.8%	6.8%	3.3%	21.8%
Other	14.2%	31.5%	22.7%	8.8%	6.0%	16.7%
6. My school's administration promotes equal opportunities for all students and clearly communicates the expectation that all students will learn and succeed. [For district staff, BCPS promotes equal opportunities for all students...]						
District administrator	54.5%	9.1%	18.2%	9.1%	9.1%	0.0%
District program specialist	17.9%	58.2%	17.9%	4.5%	1.5%	0.0%
School administrator	75.9%	22.2%	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	1.4%
Non-instructional support	54.2%	32.5%	5.8%	2.8%	1.4%	3.3%
Special education teacher	41.8%	41.5%	9.0%	4.6%	2.5%	0.6%
Special education provider	42.0%	40.4%	10.1%	4.3%	1.1%	2.1%
General education teacher	40.7%	42.4%	9.7%	3.8%	2.4%	0.9%
Paraprofessional	38.7%	37.4%	10.2%	5.9%	2.6%	5.2%
Other	51.7%	35.4%	6.3%	2.5%	1.6%	2.5%



Survey Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
7. Students with disabilities in my school are welcomed and encouraged to participate in all activities, including elective courses, extracurricular clubs, field trips, and other special activities. [For district staff, students across the district are welcomed and encouraged...]						
District administrator	27.3%	54.5%	0.0%	9.1%	0.0%	9.1%
District program specialist	20.9%	43.3%	14.9%	10.4%	1.5%	9.0%
School administrator	86.6%	13.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Non-instructional support	59.4%	30.4%	5.0%	0.3%	0.6%	4.4%
Special education teacher	47.0%	36.7%	6.8%	5.9%	1.3%	2.4%
Special education provider	48.1%	39.6%	4.8%	2.7%	1.1%	3.7%
General education teacher	51.6%	40.0%	5.3%	1.2%	1.0%	0.9%
Paraprofessional	43.5%	35.9%	8.5%	3.9%	2.9%	5.2%
Other	57.9%	30.8%	4.4%	1.6%	1.3%	4.1%
8. The continuum of services across all school levels (i.e., preK, elementary, middle, high) meets the needs of all students with disabilities in the district.						
District administrator	18.2%	18.2%	9.1%	27.3%	18.2%	9.1%
District program specialist	7.4%	23.5%	26.5%	30.9%	7.4%	4.4%
School administrator	24.5%	41.7%	15.3%	13.0%	3.2%	2.3%
Non-instructional support	18.0%	28.5%	21.5%	15.7%	11.6%	4.7%
Special education teacher	15.3%	28.0%	19.2%	21.6%	12.7%	3.2%
Special education provider	13.4%	31.7%	21.0%	18.8%	11.3%	3.8%
General education teacher	16.0%	28.9%	24.2%	12.2%	9.1%	9.6%
Paraprofessional	20.8%	31.0%	23.4%	6.9%	5.3%	12.5%
Other	17.4%	30.6%	18.6%	14.8%	9.8%	8.8%
9. Students with disabilities in my school who are served in regular class placement receive the supports and services they need to be successful in the general education curriculum. [For district staff, students across the district...]						
District administrator	9.1%	36.4%	18.2%	18.2%	9.1%	9.1%
District program specialist	3.0%	29.9%	17.9%	29.9%	10.4%	9.0%
School administrator	45.8%	39.7%	7.0%	4.2%	0.5%	2.8%
Non-instructional support	28.0%	38.2%	10.2%	11.9%	5.0%	6.6%
Special education teacher	23.5%	34.3%	12.8%	12.1%	6.5%	10.7%
Special education provider	20.7%	46.3%	14.4%	9.0%	3.7%	5.9%
General education teacher	24.4%	37.3%	12.4%	14.3%	10.1%	1.5%
Paraprofessional	29.1%	31.5%	14.9%	8.3%	5.6%	10.6%
Other	30.3%	38.5%	9.5%	10.7%	4.4%	6.6%



Survey Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
10. My school provides adequate time for collaborative planning and consultation with colleagues (e.g., general education teachers, ESE teachers, ESE service providers such as therapists and behavior specialists). [For district staff, schools across the district provide staff adequate time...]						
District administrator	0.0%	27.3%	27.3%	9.1%	27.3%	9.1%
District program specialist	3.0%	22.4%	22.4%	28.4%	16.4%	7.5%
School administrator	40.7%	42.6%	7.9%	7.4%	1.4%	0.0%
Non-instructional support	20.2%	35.9%	18.5%	13.3%	6.4%	5.8%
Special education teacher	19.4%	34.1%	13.1%	21.0%	11.5%	0.8%
Special education provider	9.6%	35.8%	21.9%	18.7%	11.8%	2.1%
General education teacher	15.7%	31.2%	15.8%	21.3%	13.9%	2.2%
Paraprofessional	23.7%	35.2%	13.2%	7.6%	4.6%	15.8%
Other	23.5%	32.9%	14.7%	16.0%	7.5%	5.3%
11. I have been trained and know how to work collaboratively with other teachers to serve our shared students with disabilities.						
District administrator	9.1%	27.3%	0.0%	9.1%	0.0%	54.5%
District program specialist	49.3%	37.3%	3.0%	1.5%	0.0%	9.0%
School administrator	38.0%	35.6%	6.0%	2.8%	0.5%	17.1%
Non-instructional support	43.5%	40.4%	5.5%	1.9%	1.7%	6.9%
Special education teacher	40.5%	45.3%	7.0%	4.0%	2.1%	1.3%
Special education provider	45.2%	43.1%	5.9%	3.7%	2.1%	0.0%
General education teacher	20.3%	37.7%	17.6%	15.5%	6.1%	2.9%
Paraprofessional	25.7%	34.2%	12.2%	8.9%	7.9%	11.2%
Other	39.4%	36.3%	10.0%	5.3%	2.2%	6.9%
12. I have the skills and knowledge needed to provide effective services to the students with disabilities I serve.						
District administrator	9.1%	18.2%	9.1%	9.1%	0.0%	54.5%
District program specialist	52.2%	34.3%	3.0%	0.0%	0.0%	10.4%
School administrator	37.7%	34.4%	7.4%	1.9%	0.5%	18.1%
Non-instructional support	48.6%	36.9%	5.9%	1.4%	1.1%	6.1%
Special education teacher	63.6%	31.7%	3.0%	1.1%	0.3%	0.2%
Special education provider	74.3%	23.0%	1.1%	1.1%	0.5%	0.0%
General education teacher	23.4%	43.5%	15.3%	10.5%	4.4%	3.0%
Paraprofessional	33.0%	41.1%	8.8%	4.4%	4.7%	8.1%
Other	47.6%	34.2%	8.8%	3.4%	0.9%	5.0%



Survey Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
13. I am an active participant and provide valuable input during the IEP team meetings I attend.						
District administrator	18.2%	18.2%	9.1%	0.0%	0.0%	54.5%
District program specialist	32.8%	37.3%	9.0%	0.0%	0.0%	20.9%
School administrator	28.8%	33.5%	10.2%	2.8%	0.9%	23.7%
Non-instructional support	46.1%	26.2%	6.4%	1.7%	1.7%	18.0%
Special education teacher	71.2%	24.2%	2.1%	0.6%	0.6%	1.3%
Special education provider	80.1%	16.1%	1.1%	0.0%	1.1%	1.6%
General education teacher	27.7%	48.1%	12.1%	3.7%	2.1%	6.3%
Paraprofessional	8.8%	9.5%	9.5%	3.7%	8.1%	60.5%
Other	44.5%	19.1%	7.5%	4.1%	3.1%	21.6%
14. The BCPS EasyIEP system is easy to use and understand.						
District administrator	27.3%	18.2%	18.2%	0.0%	0.0%	36.4%
District program specialist	11.8%	57.4%	10.3%	10.3%	1.5%	8.8%
School administrator	17.1%	35.2%	19.9%	2.8%	1.9%	23.1%
Non-instructional support	16.9%	36.7%	13.3%	8.3%	2.2%	22.5%
Special education teacher	28.4%	45.2%	11.4%	8.7%	4.4%	1.9%
Special education provider	23.4%	44.1%	17.0%	9.6%	3.7%	2.1%
General education teacher	10.8%	32.0%	25.1%	9.2%	4.4%	18.5%
Paraprofessional	6.0%	13.7%	11.4%	1.3%	2.7%	64.9%
Other	17.0%	35.5%	14.5%	7.9%	3.8%	21.4%
15. The BCPS EasyIEP system guides teams to develop high quality IEPs.						
District administrator	9.1%	27.3%	9.1%	0.0%	9.1%	45.5%
District program specialist	8.8%	38.2%	25.0%	19.1%	0.0%	8.8%
School administrator	17.1%	38.0%	21.3%	2.3%	1.9%	19.4%
Non-instructional support	14.8%	32.3%	21.4%	6.4%	2.2%	22.8%
Special education teacher	22.7%	39.6%	20.7%	10.5%	4.6%	1.9%
Special education provider	18.6%	41.5%	22.9%	10.1%	4.8%	2.1%
General education teacher	9.2%	26.4%	31.6%	6.8%	4.4%	21.5%
Paraprofessional	6.7%	11.8%	12.5%	1.3%	2.4%	65.3%
Other	15.8%	30.6%	17.0%	8.8%	5.4%	22.4%



Survey Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
16. IEPs teams in my school do a good job of ensuring the IEPs they develop include all of the ESE services and supports necessary to meet the students' needs resulting from their disabilities (e.g., speech or language therapy, occupational therapy, counseling, direct specially designed instruction). [For district staff, IEP teams across the district...]						
District administrator	22.2%	11.1%	33.3%	11.1%	0.0%	22.2%
District program specialist	9.2%	40.0%	24.6%	16.9%	0.0%	9.2%
School administrator	55.8%	38.3%	3.9%	1.5%	0.0%	0.5%
Non-instructional support	40.4%	38.7%	9.2%	3.2%	0.9%	7.7%
Special education teacher	44.5%	42.5%	6.8%	3.1%	2.0%	1.2%
Special education provider	51.4%	37.4%	5.6%	3.4%	1.1%	1.1%
General education teacher	25.6%	44.6%	15.6%	6.7%	3.8%	3.7%
Paraprofessional	21.6%	30.6%	16.0%	4.5%	2.2%	25.0%
Other	38.1%	36.4%	10.3%	3.4%	2.1%	9.6%
17. Students with disabilities in my school receive all of the ESE services required by their IEPs (i.e., type and amount of special education, related services, accommodations, behavioral supports, etc.), [For district staff, students across the district...]						
District administrator	22.2%	22.2%	22.2%	11.1%	11.1%	11.1%
District program specialist	9.1%	24.2%	25.8%	30.3%	1.5%	9.1%
School administrator	53.9%	38.3%	1.5%	4.9%	1.0%	0.5%
Non-instructional support	39.1%	35.6%	10.9%	6.3%	1.4%	6.6%
Special education teacher	37.5%	38.3%	10.1%	9.4%	3.8%	1.0%
Special education provider	41.9%	38.0%	11.2%	4.5%	1.7%	2.8%
General education teacher	24.8%	39.1%	15.1%	11.4%	5.7%	3.9%
Paraprofessional	24.0%	33.7%	15.0%	10.1%	4.1%	13.1%
Other	37.5%	33.3%	12.4%	6.9%	1.7%	8.2%
18. Students with disabilities who no longer need direct special education services are dismissed from ESE.						
District administrator	11.1%	11.1%	55.6%	0.0%	0.0%	22.2%
District program specialist	6.2%	32.3%	27.7%	10.8%	3.1%	20.0%
School administrator	28.4%	42.6%	10.8%	6.9%	2.0%	9.3%
Non-instructional support	19.0%	34.0%	20.5%	8.1%	4.6%	13.8%
Special education teacher	18.9%	36.3%	21.7%	7.6%	2.5%	12.9%
Special education provider	25.1%	46.9%	12.8%	7.8%	1.7%	5.6%
General education teacher	12.3%	32.7%	32.5%	4.0%	1.5%	17.1%
Paraprofessional	7.2%	18.5%	21.9%	4.5%	4.5%	43.4%
Other	16.6%	30.8%	21.5%	6.6%	3.8%	20.8%



Survey Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
19. My school provides outreach to encourage parents of students with disabilities to participate in school programs, IEP team meetings, and/or other activities. [For district staff, BCPS provides outreach to parents...]						
District administrator	33.3%	22.2%	11.1%	11.1%	11.1%	11.1%
District program specialist	13.6%	63.6%	7.6%	7.6%	0.0%	7.6%
School administrator	48.1%	45.6%	3.4%	1.5%	0.0%	1.5%
Non-instructional support	36.6%	40.4%	12.5%	4.4%	0.6%	5.5%
Special education teacher	33.9%	46.0%	11.2%	6.0%	2.0%	1.0%
Special education provider	40.2%	41.3%	10.6%	4.5%	1.1%	2.2%
General education teacher	24.2%	43.7%	19.0%	3.8%	1.9%	7.3%
Paraprofessional	22.6%	44.0%	12.4%	2.6%	2.3%	16.2%
Other	37.4%	36.3%	11.1%	2.8%	1.7%	10.7%
20. Middle and high school students with disabilities are adequately prepared for postsecondary employment and education or training when they graduate or age out.						
District administrator	11.1%	11.1%	33.3%	11.1%	11.1%	22.2%
District program specialist	4.6%	13.8%	20.0%	26.2%	16.9%	18.5%
School administrator	12.8%	16.3%	14.8%	6.4%	2.5%	47.3%
Non-instructional support	7.2%	19.1%	22.3%	10.1%	7.2%	34.1%
Special education teacher	7.8%	16.8%	15.8%	10.5%	6.1%	43.0%
Special education provider	5.7%	13.1%	23.4%	8.6%	1.7%	47.4%
General education teacher	5.2%	14.0%	22.5%	7.4%	4.7%	46.2%
Paraprofessional	8.7%	12.1%	12.1%	4.9%	3.8%	58.5%
Other	8.4%	12.6%	16.4%	8.7%	3.5%	50.3%
21. Middle and high school students with disabilities attend and are active participants in their IEP team meetings.						
District administrator	0.0%	12.5%	37.5%	0.0%	12.5%	37.5%
District program specialist	1.5%	27.7%	29.2%	15.4%	1.5%	24.6%
School administrator	13.7%	15.2%	12.7%	7.4%	1.5%	49.5%
Non-instructional support	15.4%	24.3%	15.7%	4.6%	1.4%	38.6%
Special education teacher	11.8%	19.9%	14.1%	5.1%	1.7%	47.5%
Special education provider	9.1%	24.4%	10.2%	4.0%	2.3%	50.0%
General education teacher	7.5%	19.8%	18.7%	4.7%	2.9%	46.4%
Paraprofessional	7.9%	10.9%	11.3%	2.6%	3.0%	64.2%
Other	14.0%	16.4%	11.2%	3.5%	1.7%	53.1%



Survey Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
22. Teachers and other service providers have the resources they need to provide effective services to the students with disabilities they serve (e.g., books, computers and software, supplemental materials, and instructional space).						
District administrator	22.2%	11.1%	22.2%	22.2%	0.0%	22.2%
District program specialist	3.1%	28.1%	20.3%	26.6%	15.6%	6.3%
School administrator	26.7%	49.5%	9.2%	12.1%	2.4%	0.0%
Non-instructional support	15.5%	33.9%	17.8%	18.7%	7.8%	6.3%
Special education teacher	13.6%	29.7%	14.9%	23.1%	18.1%	0.7%
Special education provider	9.0%	38.8%	18.5%	20.2%	10.1%	3.4%
General education teacher	10.8%	33.3%	19.9%	18.4%	13.4%	4.1%
Paraprofessional	19.4%	32.7%	15.6%	9.5%	10.3%	12.5%
Other	18.2%	35.7%	14.4%	16.2%	10.3%	5.2%
23. BCPS ensures that there is no delay in providing transportation as a related service once an IEP team determines it is needed.						
District administrator	11.1%	33.3%	22.2%	11.1%	11.1%	11.1%
District program specialist	0.0%	37.9%	25.8%	15.2%	6.1%	15.2%
School administrator	16.7%	38.7%	17.2%	19.1%	5.4%	2.9%
Non-instructional support	15.2%	31.2%	20.4%	9.9%	4.7%	18.7%
Special education teacher	14.7%	35.1%	21.2%	11.2%	5.8%	12.0%
Special education provider	8.5%	23.7%	26.6%	12.4%	2.3%	26.6%
General education teacher	9.3%	21.0%	29.0%	2.6%	1.9%	36.1%
Paraprofessional	17.3%	28.6%	16.2%	3.8%	2.6%	31.6%
Other	13.1%	26.2%	20.3%	11.0%	5.5%	23.8%
24. BCPS ensures that bus rides for students placed in other schools for specialized services (e.g., InD, ASD, DHH, E/BD cluster sites) are of reasonable length.						
District administrator	11.1%	11.1%	44.4%	11.1%	11.1%	11.1%
District program specialist	1.5%	32.3%	30.8%	13.8%	7.7%	13.8%
School administrator	18.4%	35.9%	19.4%	11.2%	7.3%	7.8%
Non-instructional support	11.8%	25.4%	25.4%	4.9%	4.6%	27.7%
Special education teacher	12.6%	31.1%	25.5%	6.8%	4.5%	19.7%
Special education provider	6.2%	19.8%	28.8%	5.1%	2.8%	37.3%
General education teacher	8.7%	19.4%	30.2%	1.4%	1.4%	38.8%
Paraprofessional	13.2%	23.0%	17.7%	3.8%	1.9%	40.4%
Other	10.5%	23.7%	24.4%	5.2%	5.2%	31.0%



Survey Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
25. The reading curriculum or program used in my school includes effective strategies, lessons, or other supports that meet the needs of most students with disabilities. [For district staff, the reading curricula or programs used across the district...]						
District administrator	22.2%	11.1%	11.1%	22.2%	0.0%	33.3%
District program specialist	1.5%	33.3%	30.3%	13.6%	3.0%	18.2%
School administrator	30.2%	53.7%	8.3%	5.4%	1.5%	1.0%
Non-instructional support	18.4%	41.8%	16.1%	8.4%	2.6%	12.7%
Special education teacher	20.3%	40.2%	15.0%	12.6%	5.5%	6.4%
Special education provider	12.4%	38.2%	25.3%	6.7%	3.9%	13.5%
General education teacher	16.2%	40.9%	19.6%	8.8%	7.1%	7.5%
Paraprofessional	16.2%	36.5%	15.8%	6.0%	6.0%	19.5%
Other	20.7%	36.6%	17.2%	8.6%	4.5%	12.4%
26. The math curriculum or program used in my school includes effective strategies, lessons, or other supports that meet the needs of most students with disabilities. [For district staff, the math curricula or programs used across the district...]						
District administrator	22.2%	11.1%	0.0%	22.2%	11.1%	33.3%
District program specialist	1.5%	31.8%	25.8%	18.2%	1.5%	21.2%
School administrator	28.2%	55.8%	6.8%	6.3%	1.9%	1.0%
Non-instructional support	15.0%	36.7%	17.6%	12.1%	4.0%	14.5%
Special education teacher	16.3%	38.3%	16.1%	13.6%	7.5%	8.2%
Special education provider	7.9%	31.5%	27.5%	9.0%	3.9%	20.2%
General education teacher	13.0%	37.4%	22.4%	9.4%	6.2%	11.6%
Paraprofessional	16.7%	31.1%	20.1%	5.7%	6.4%	20.1%
Other	19.4%	35.8%	19.4%	8.3%	4.2%	12.8%
27. The language arts curriculum or program used in my school includes effective strategies, lessons, or other supports that meet the needs of most students with disabilities. [For district staff, the language arts curricula or programs used across the district...]						
District administrator	22.2%	11.1%	11.1%	22.2%	0.0%	33.3%
District program specialist	1.6%	33.9%	30.6%	16.1%	1.6%	16.1%
School administrator	23.9%	60.4%	8.6%	6.1%	0.5%	0.5%
Non-instructional support	15.3%	40.5%	18.6%	9.9%	2.4%	13.2%
Special education teacher	15.7%	38.6%	18.4%	16.2%	3.8%	7.4%
Special education provider	9.0%	38.3%	28.7%	6.6%	3.0%	14.4%
General education teacher	14.8%	40.4%	19.9%	10.6%	5.2%	9.2%
Paraprofessional	16.9%	35.3%	18.5%	5.6%	4.8%	18.9%
Other	18.6%	35.4%	19.3%	8.8%	5.1%	12.8%



Survey Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
28. Sufficient training is available for general education teachers to support ESE students.						
District administrator	11.1%	11.1%	11.1%	33.3%	11.1%	22.2%
District program specialist	8.1%	21.0%	16.1%	45.2%	6.5%	3.2%
School administrator	15.7%	42.1%	10.2%	24.9%	5.1%	2.0%
Non-instructional support	8.7%	31.2%	18.9%	21.3%	10.8%	9.0%
Special education teacher	10.5%	24.1%	20.0%	26.5%	11.4%	7.6%
Special education provider	6.5%	27.6%	22.4%	28.2%	6.5%	8.8%
General education teacher	11.6%	33.0%	19.4%	23.8%	10.3%	1.8%
Paraprofessional	14.1%	28.5%	20.1%	7.2%	6.0%	24.1%
Other	14.3%	29.7%	16.5%	21.5%	10.4%	7.5%
29. Sufficient training on the use of instructional technology is available for staff and teachers to support ESE students.						
District administrator	0.0%	11.1%	33.3%	33.3%	0.0%	22.2%
District program specialist	4.9%	31.1%	31.1%	26.2%	3.3%	3.3%
School administrator	16.2%	44.2%	13.2%	20.8%	5.6%	0.0%
Non-instructional support	9.9%	34.6%	19.3%	20.5%	6.6%	9.0%
Special education teacher	11.8%	35.5%	17.1%	23.5%	10.4%	1.7%
Special education provider	5.9%	33.1%	25.4%	24.9%	4.7%	5.9%
General education teacher	10.9%	31.5%	20.6%	24.1%	10.5%	2.4%
Paraprofessional	14.9%	27.4%	19.8%	13.3%	6.9%	17.7%
Other	16.0%	27.3%	22.2%	19.6%	9.5%	5.5%
30. School and district leaders receive sufficient training to support teachers in meeting the needs of students with disabilities.						
District administrator	22.2%	11.1%	33.3%	22.2%	0.0%	11.1%
District program specialist	4.9%	27.9%	31.1%	27.9%	6.6%	1.6%
School administrator	16.8%	39.1%	19.3%	18.8%	3.6%	2.5%
Non-instructional support	10.0%	27.5%	29.9%	16.0%	5.4%	11.2%
Special education teacher	10.3%	25.7%	26.8%	17.8%	11.8%	7.5%
Special education provider	4.1%	27.2%	28.4%	27.2%	5.3%	7.7%
General education teacher	8.8%	26.5%	27.1%	12.7%	7.3%	17.7%
Paraprofessional	12.6%	21.1%	26.7%	7.3%	3.6%	28.7%
Other	11.6%	32.1%	23.5%	13.0%	9.4%	10.5%



Survey Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
31. Teachers and administrators in my school receive sufficient support regarding special education compliance. [For district staff, schools and staff across the district...]						
District administrator	11.1%	33.3%	22.2%	22.2%	0.0%	11.1%
District program specialist	8.1%	41.9%	17.7%	25.8%	6.5%	0.0%
School administrator	23.4%	50.8%	14.2%	9.1%	2.5%	0.0%
Non-instructional support	18.8%	36.7%	21.2%	11.2%	5.8%	6.4%
Special education teacher	16.3%	38.1%	20.1%	15.3%	8.4%	1.7%
Special education provider	10.7%	38.5%	23.7%	17.8%	3.6%	5.9%
General education teacher	12.3%	36.1%	25.5%	13.3%	8.0%	4.9%
Paraprofessional	14.1%	33.1%	19.0%	6.0%	4.4%	23.4%
Other	18.1%	35.5%	20.7%	9.4%	7.6%	8.7%
32. Teachers and administrators in my school receive sufficient support regarding curriculum for students with disabilities. [For district staff, schools and staff across the district....]						
District administrator	11.1%	11.1%	33.3%	33.3%	0.0%	11.1%
District program specialist	4.8%	29.0%	25.8%	32.3%	4.8%	3.2%
School administrator	22.6%	44.6%	14.9%	14.9%	3.1%	0.0%
Non-instructional support	14.8%	32.9%	24.8%	13.6%	6.6%	7.3%
Special education teacher	15.2%	35.4%	20.2%	17.5%	9.6%	2.1%
Special education provider	7.7%	35.5%	25.4%	19.5%	4.7%	7.1%
General education teacher	11.2%	33.5%	25.5%	16.1%	9.2%	4.4%
Paraprofessional	14.5%	32.1%	19.7%	6.8%	4.4%	22.5%
Other	14.9%	36.7%	18.9%	13.8%	7.6%	8.0%
33. Teachers and administrators in my school receive sufficient support regarding the use of accommodations, differentiation, and/or learning strategies for students with disabilities. [For district staff, schools and staff across the district]						
District administrator	11.1%	22.2%	22.2%	33.3%	0.0%	11.1%
District program specialist	6.5%	38.7%	27.4%	21.0%	3.2%	3.2%
School administrator	22.6%	49.7%	12.3%	12.8%	2.6%	0.0%
Non-instructional support	18.5%	36.4%	20.6%	13.6%	4.5%	6.4%
Special education teacher	17.5%	38.0%	19.3%	14.9%	8.4%	1.9%
Special education provider	10.7%	43.2%	17.8%	18.3%	4.7%	5.3%
General education teacher	13.1%	39.2%	21.8%	13.5%	8.9%	3.5%
Paraprofessional	14.1%	33.9%	20.2%	6.9%	4.4%	20.6%
Other	18.8%	40.4%	16.6%	10.8%	6.5%	6.9%



Survey Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
34. Communications from ESE central office staff to school-based staff are timely and provide useful information.						
District administrator	11.1%	11.1%	22.2%	33.3%	11.1%	11.1%
District program specialist	12.9%	41.9%	29.0%	6.5%	4.8%	4.8%
School administrator	18.8%	40.6%	24.4%	9.1%	6.1%	1.0%
Non-instructional support	9.7%	27.8%	27.8%	9.1%	7.3%	18.4%
Special education teacher	10.8%	34.3%	25.4%	13.7%	8.4%	7.4%
Special education provider	5.3%	44.7%	24.7%	16.5%	2.9%	5.9%
General education teacher	8.6%	22.7%	32.0%	6.8%	5.0%	25.0%
Paraprofessional	10.9%	25.0%	22.6%	4.8%	5.6%	31.0%
Other	10.5%	24.5%	27.8%	11.9%	6.5%	18.8%
35. The BCPS ESE Department proactively provides staff, parents, and the community with needed information on ESE services and activities.						
District administrator	11.1%	22.2%	33.3%	22.2%	0.0%	11.1%
District program specialist	8.2%	57.4%	23.0%	6.6%	1.6%	3.3%
School administrator	21.4%	46.9%	18.9%	7.1%	3.6%	2.0%
Non-instructional support	12.4%	39.1%	25.8%	6.7%	3.0%	13.0%
Special education teacher	14.7%	38.4%	27.2%	10.6%	5.9%	3.3%
Special education provider	8.3%	47.0%	26.2%	10.7%	2.4%	5.4%
General education teacher	10.5%	28.3%	31.3%	6.1%	4.0%	19.8%
Paraprofessional	14.1%	29.3%	20.9%	6.4%	6.0%	23.3%
Other	17.9%	36.9%	20.4%	5.8%	5.1%	13.9%
36. Parents of students with disabilities are satisfied with the special education services provided by BCPS.						
District administrator	0.0%	11.1%	55.6%	22.2%	0.0%	11.1%
District program specialist	3.2%	37.1%	35.5%	4.8%	3.2%	16.1%
School administrator	14.2%	49.7%	25.4%	6.1%	1.0%	3.6%
Non-instructional support	12.2%	38.9%	28.6%	7.0%	3.6%	9.7%
Special education teacher	14.3%	42.1%	27.1%	8.3%	3.1%	5.2%
Special education provider	9.0%	51.5%	28.7%	4.2%	1.8%	4.8%
General education teacher	9.4%	25.0%	35.6%	5.5%	3.7%	20.8%
Paraprofessional	9.2%	30.9%	22.9%	9.2%	3.6%	24.1%
Other	13.8%	30.8%	31.5%	5.8%	4.0%	14.1%



Survey Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
37. Strong partnerships exist between school staff and parents of students with disabilities.						
District administrator	0.0%	44.4%	22.2%	22.2%	0.0%	11.1%
District program specialist	4.9%	41.0%	36.1%	9.8%	0.0%	8.2%
School administrator	37.6%	45.7%	12.7%	2.5%	0.5%	1.0%
Non-instructional support	22.8%	45.3%	19.1%	5.8%	2.1%	4.9%
Special education teacher	24.9%	43.2%	18.5%	8.2%	4.3%	0.9%
Special education provider	24.2%	46.1%	24.2%	2.4%	3.0%	0.0%
General education teacher	16.0%	35.5%	28.3%	7.1%	3.9%	9.1%
Paraprofessional	20.6%	37.9%	16.5%	6.9%	5.2%	12.9%
Other	26.9%	39.3%	16.4%	6.9%	2.5%	8.0%
38. The BCPS ESE Department ensures that community partnerships benefiting ESE students are continuously cultivated and nurtured.						
District administrator	22.2%	0.0%	44.4%	22.2%	0.0%	11.1%
District program specialist	3.3%	36.1%	44.3%	4.9%	0.0%	11.5%
School administrator	12.4%	37.1%	32.0%	5.7%	3.1%	9.8%
Non-instructional support	9.5%	33.9%	32.4%	5.2%	2.8%	16.2%
Special education teacher	10.7%	30.4%	33.4%	11.9%	4.7%	8.8%
Special education provider	9.4%	29.6%	39.0%	6.3%	1.9%	13.8%
General education teacher	8.4%	24.0%	37.0%	4.7%	2.6%	23.4%
Paraprofessional	12.0%	30.0%	27.0%	3.9%	4.3%	22.7%
Other	11.9%	27.8%	33.0%	6.3%	4.8%	16.3%
39. Existing community partnerships have a positive impact on students with disabilities.						
District administrator	22.2%	11.1%	33.3%	22.2%	0.0%	11.1%
District program specialist	4.9%	39.3%	37.7%	4.9%	0.0%	13.1%
School administrator	16.4%	41.5%	27.7%	4.6%	1.0%	8.7%
Non-instructional support	11.3%	39.6%	29.1%	4.0%	0.9%	15.0%
Special education teacher	12.7%	33.6%	34.3%	6.8%	2.6%	10.1%
Special education provider	8.1%	36.9%	36.9%	3.1%	1.3%	13.8%
General education teacher	9.3%	26.0%	38.1%	3.4%	2.1%	21.1%
Paraprofessional	14.6%	28.3%	30.0%	3.4%	2.6%	21.0%
Other	14.8%	33.0%	29.6%	5.9%	3.7%	13.0%
40. Instructional technology is effectively implemented in the classroom for students with disabilities.						
District administrator	11.1%	11.1%	44.4%	22.2%	0.0%	11.1%
District program specialist	3.3%	29.5%	31.1%	26.2%	3.3%	6.6%
School administrator	17.9%	49.2%	17.9%	12.3%	2.1%	0.5%
Non-instructional support	11.6%	37.0%	21.4%	13.8%	4.0%	12.2%
Special education teacher	14.0%	37.4%	19.8%	17.2%	10.6%	1.0%
Special education provider	9.9%	44.7%	23.6%	11.8%	3.1%	6.8%
General education teacher	11.3%	34.0%	23.3%	15.6%	8.7%	7.0%
Paraprofessional	15.1%	38.8%	17.7%	10.3%	7.8%	10.3%
Other	13.4%	37.3%	20.5%	14.9%	4.9%	9.0%



Survey Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
41. The assistive technology (AT) assessment, recommendation, trial, and implementation process occurs in a timely manner.						
District administrator	11.1%	33.3%	22.2%	11.1%	0.0%	22.2%
District program specialist	6.6%	42.6%	26.2%	6.6%	1.6%	16.4%
School administrator	14.4%	45.4%	23.2%	6.2%	1.5%	9.3%
Non-instructional support	8.2%	26.8%	27.7%	8.8%	2.7%	25.6%
Special education teacher	12.3%	33.3%	25.1%	9.5%	7.8%	12.0%
Special education provider	8.8%	37.1%	22.6%	8.8%	3.1%	19.5%
General education teacher	6.2%	19.3%	34.8%	6.7%	5.0%	28.0%
Paraprofessional	10.7%	26.6%	21.5%	6.0%	6.0%	29.2%
Other	10.8%	24.5%	29.7%	8.2%	3.7%	23.0%
42. Assistive technology devices are kept up-to-date and removed from service if no longer useful.						
District administrator	11.1%	11.1%	33.3%	0.0%	11.1%	33.3%
District program specialist	8.2%	26.2%	36.1%	9.8%	3.3%	16.4%
School administrator	18.0%	44.8%	20.6%	5.2%	1.5%	9.8%
Non-instructional support	7.9%	28.7%	27.7%	6.7%	2.7%	26.2%
Special education teacher	11.2%	31.8%	24.4%	11.4%	8.5%	12.6%
Special education provider	10.7%	31.4%	27.7%	6.3%	3.8%	20.1%
General education teacher	6.3%	17.6%	34.0%	7.5%	6.2%	28.4%
Paraprofessional	10.8%	26.3%	21.6%	8.2%	10.3%	22.8%
Other	11.7%	22.9%	32.0%	7.1%	4.5%	21.8%
43. Students who could benefit from assistive technology devices receive them.						
District administrator	11.1%	22.2%	22.2%	11.1%	22.2%	11.1%
District program specialist	4.9%	41.0%	29.5%	11.5%	1.6%	11.5%
School administrator	23.6%	50.8%	13.3%	5.1%	1.0%	6.2%
Non-instructional support	12.2%	33.2%	23.5%	8.2%	1.2%	21.6%
Special education teacher	15.5%	38.3%	19.0%	12.3%	6.2%	8.6%
Special education provider	11.9%	43.1%	23.8%	4.4%	3.1%	13.8%
General education teacher	8.0%	24.9%	32.0%	6.1%	5.0%	24.1%
Paraprofessional	14.3%	33.0%	17.8%	10.0%	8.7%	16.1%
Other	13.5%	35.6%	22.8%	8.2%	3.7%	16.1%
44. Teachers are provided with sufficient AT training and professional development to meet the needs of the students with disabilities they serve.						
District administrator	0.0%	22.2%	33.3%	11.1%	22.2%	11.1%
District program specialist	6.6%	29.5%	26.2%	16.4%	4.9%	16.4%
School administrator	14.4%	44.3%	21.6%	9.8%	3.6%	6.2%
Non-instructional support	8.6%	20.9%	30.2%	14.8%	2.8%	22.8%
Special education teacher	12.3%	31.4%	21.8%	17.6%	8.5%	8.5%
Special education provider	7.5%	31.9%	26.3%	13.8%	4.4%	16.3%
General education teacher	6.9%	20.7%	28.1%	16.0%	9.7%	18.6%
Paraprofessional	11.2%	26.3%	21.1%	6.5%	8.2%	26.7%
Other	9.4%	26.6%	33.0%	10.9%	4.1%	16.1%



C. GENERAL QUESTIONS

Survey Statement	Improving	Staying the Same	Declining	No Opinion
45. Overall, the quality and effectiveness of core academic instruction for students with disabilities in BCPS is:				
District administrator	37.5%	25.0%	12.5%	25.0%
District program specialist	31.7%	40.0%	11.7%	16.7%
School administrator	48.3%	34.5%	13.8%	3.4%
Non-instructional support	29.2%	38.5%	15.7%	16.6%
Special education teacher	36.6%	34.5%	21.0%	8.0%
Special education provider	32.3%	34.8%	17.7%	15.2%
General education teacher	30.7%	32.4%	19%	17.9%
Paraprofessional	30.4%	20.7%	14.5%	34.4%
Other	40.2%	25.6%	16.2%	18.0%
46. Overall, the quality and effectiveness of positive behavioral supports and interventions implemented in BCPS are:				
District administrator	33.3%	22.2%	22.2%	22.2%
District program specialist	27.9%	32.8%	31.1%	8.2%
School administrator	44.8%	34.5%	17.2%	3.4%
Non-instructional support	26.1%	31.9%	27.0%	15.0%
Special education teacher	31.0 %	34.0%	27.8%	7.2%
Special education provider	28.5%	38.6%	20.3%	12.7%
General education teacher	28.5%	30.5%	23.9%	17.1%
Paraprofessional	27.4%	26.5%	16.8%	29.2%
Other	34.7%	27.2%	23.4%	14.7%
47. Overall, the quality and effectiveness of secondary transition planning and services provided by BCPS are:				
District administrator	11.1%	22.2%	22.2%	44.4%
District program specialist	27.9%	32.8%	16.4%	23.0%
School administrator	24.1%	17.2%	12.1%	46.6%
Non-instructional support	20.6%	23.7%	12.3%	43.4%
Special education teacher	20.1%	22.9%	14.8%	42.3%
Special education provider	15.8%	23.4%	9.5%	51.3%
General education teacher	19.9%	24.2%	11.6%	44.3%
Paraprofessional	22.8%	24.6%	12.1%	40.6%
Other	23.7%	19.5%	10.3%	46.6%



Survey Statement	Improving	Staying the Same	Declining	No Opinion
48. Overall, the quality and effectiveness of therapies and related services provided by BCPS are:				
District administrator	0.0%	44.4%	22.2%	33.3%
District program specialist	16.4%	52.5%	13.1%	18.0%
School administrator	36.2%	34.5%	17.2%	12.1%
Non-instructional support	25.7%	32.5%	23.2%	18.6%
Special education teacher	26.6%	39.7%	21.5%	12.2%
Special education provider	39.9%	41.8%	12.7%	5.7%
General education teacher	22.8%	28.7%	15.8%	32.7%
Paraprofessional	26.5%	25.2%	14.6%	33.6%
Other	25.8%	35.6%	13.6%	25.0%
49. Opportunities for ESE parent involvement/ engagement in BCPS are:				
District administrator	37.5%	25.0%	12.5%	25.0%
District program specialist	37.7%	44.3%	4.9%	13.1%
School administrator	44.8%	34.5%	8.6%	12.1%
Non-instructional support	36.6%	37.2%	4.9%	21.2%
Special education teacher	34.8%	40.3%	11.7%	13.3%
Special education provider	32.3 %	41.8%	6.3%	19.6%
General education teacher	28.8%	33.8%	7.2%	30.2%
Paraprofessional	29.8%	25.3%	8.9%	36.0%
Other	41.0%	31.0%	6.1%	21.8%
50. Overall, the quality and effectiveness of professional learning for teachers and administrators regarding ESE is:				
District administrator	22.2%	22.2%	33.3%	22.2%
District program specialist	26.2%	32.8%	34.4%	6.6%
School administrator	34.5%	39.7%	17.2%	8.6%
Non-instructional support	28.3%	38.2%	15.8%	17.7%
Special education teacher	33.0%	39.2%	22.3%	5.5%
Special education provider	28.7%	44.6%	17.8%	8.9%
General education teacher	28.4%	35.4%	19.0%	17.2%
Paraprofessional	29.0%	22.3%	14.3%	34.4%
Other	30.4%	37.3%	16.3%	16.0%



***APPENDIX B:
PARENT SURVEY RESULTS BY SURVEY GROUP***



Appendix B

Independent Review of ESE Services

Broward County Public Schools

Parent Survey

N = 1,029

Completion % = ~3.4%

Survey Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
3. My child's school promotes equal opportunities for all students and clearly communicates the expectation that all students will learn and succeed.	35.4%	34.9%	12.8%	10.5%	4.7%	1.6%
4. Students with disabilities in my child's school are welcomed and encouraged to participate in all activities, including elective courses, extracurricular clubs, field trips, and other special activities.	36.3%	32.5%	11.5%	8.2%	5.7%	5.7%
5. The continuum of services across all school levels (i.e., preK, elementary, middle, high) meets the needs of my child.	25.1%	25.6%	17.1%	14.7%	12.1%	5.4%
6. I am an active participant and provide valuable input during my child's IEP meetings.	59.7%	22.7%	8.3%	1.8%	1.4%	6.1%
7. BCPS effectively communicates information on available ESE programs and services to parents of students with disabilities.	24.7%	32.5%	16.2%	11.7%	8.6%	6.3%
8. My child's school provides outreach to encourage parents of students with disabilities to participate in school programs, IEP team meetings, and/or other activities.	27.4%	32.2%	16.3%	11.1%	6.1%	6.9%
9. Middle and high school BCPS students with disabilities are adequately prepared for postsecondary employment and education or training when they graduate or age out.	8.5%	8.5%	15.1%	6.9%	9.4%	51.5%
10. BCPS ensures that there is no delay in providing transportation as a related service once an IEP team determines it is needed.	15.2%	17.8%	15.3%	5.2%	6.5%	39.9%
11. BCPS ensures that bus rides for students placed in other schools for specialized services (e.g., InD, ASD, DHH, E/BD cluster sites) are of reasonable length.	12.1%	12.9%	16.5%	4.2%	6.3%	48.0%



Survey Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
12. I have attended parent workshops offered by BCPS ESE services to learn more about the ESE program.	12.6%	27.1%	17.5%	16.7%	4.7%	21.4%
13. BCPS ESE parent workshops provide useful information.	11.0%	27.3%	23.2%	3.2%	1.7%	33.6%
14. Locating information on BCPS ESE services is not difficult.	11.6%	29.0%	25.4%	15.0%	6.9%	12.2%
15. Strong partnerships exist between school staff and parents of students with disabilities.	20.9%	31.1%	15.2%	16.0%	10.4%	6.5%
16. The BCPS ESE Department ensures that community partnerships benefiting ESE students are continuously cultivated and nurtured.	14.0%	21.3%	27.8%	13.3%	9.9%	13.7%
17. Existing community partnerships have a positive impact on students with disabilities.	16.6%	24.3%	28.2%	8.8%	5.2%	16.8%
18. Instructional technology is effectively implemented in the classroom for students with disabilities.	17.7%	23.5%	18.4%	15.1%	12.6%	12.7%
19. Overall, I am satisfied with the special education services provided by BCPS.	20.9%	28.6%	13.7%	16.7%	14.1%	6.0%

C. GENERAL QUESTIONS

Survey Statement	Improving	Staying the Same	Declining	No Opinion
20. Overall, the quality and effectiveness of secondary transition planning and services provided by BCPS are:	21.8%	19.2%	19.4%	39.6%
21. Overall, the quality and effectiveness of therapies and related services provided by BCPS are:	23.5%	29.4%	27.1%	20.1%
22. Opportunities for ESE parent involvement/engagement in BCPS are:	30.8%	30.9%	18.7%	19.7%

