

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

DIVISION OF K-12 PUBLIC SCHOOLS

BUREAU OF EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION AND STUDENT SERVICES

School District

Okeechobee

**EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT EDUCATION
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES (P&P)**

EFFECTIVE DATE:

2020-2021 through 2022-2023

Part I. General Policies and Procedures

Section A.1: Legal Requirements for General Policies and Procedures

Statutory and Regulatory Citations

Title 34 Code of Federal Regulations(CFR) § 300.641

Sections 1003.57, 1003.571, and 1003.573, Florida Statutes(F.S.)

Rules 6A - 6.03411 and 69A - 58.0084, Florida Administrative Code(F.A.C.)

Requirement Related to ESE Policies and Procedures

For a school district to be eligible to receive state or federal funding for specially designed instruction and related services for exceptional students, it shall do the following:

1. Develop a written statement of policies and procedures for providing an appropriate program of specially designed instruction and related services for exceptional students
2. Submit its written statement of policies and procedures to the Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services (Bureau) for approval
3. Report to FDOE the total number of students in the school district receiving instruction in each special program for exceptional students in the manner prescribed by FDOE

The IDEA corresponding federal regulations, state statutes, and State Board of Education rules relating to special programs for exceptional students serve as criteria for the review and approval of the district's SP&P document.

The school district will submit the SP&P document in accordance with the timelines established in s. 1003.57, F.S., s. 1003.573, F.S., and Rule 6A-6.03411, F.A.C.

Section A.2: Legal Requirement Related to the Use of Restraint and Seclusion

District and School-Based Standards for Documenting, Reporting, and Monitoring the Use of Manual, Physical, or Mechanical Restraint and Seclusion Developed by the FDOE

District Level Standards

Districts shall:

- Have written procedures for reporting incidents of restraint and seclusion using the FDOE web-based reporting system.
- Have policies and procedures for restraint and seclusion on file with the Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services.
- Have training for personnel on the use of restraint and seclusion and maintain records of such trainings. The records maintained should include, but not be limited to:
 - Names of personnel trained
 - Description of training received
 - Dates of trainings
- Have a written plan for reducing restraint and seclusion

District Monitoring Standards

Districts shall:

- Have written policies and procedures for monitoring the use of restraint and seclusion for students with disabilities at the classroom, building, school, and district levels.
- Have a plan for reviewing restraint and seclusion data and effectiveness of instructional and behavioral practices used to reduce the use of restraint and seclusion, to include when, where, and why the restraint or seclusion occurred.
- Have policies and procedures for monitoring the use of restraint and seclusion on file with the Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services.
- Implement a plan for the purpose of reducing the use of restraint and seclusion that includes activities, skills and resources.
- Ensure that rooms used for seclusion meet the requirements of Rule 69A-58.0084, F.A.C.

School Level Standards

Schools shall:

- Have written school-based procedures for reporting incidents of restraint and seclusion using the FDOE web-based reporting system.
- Have school-based personnel who are trained to enter and report incidents using the FDOE web-based reporting system.
- Follow procedures for written notification of incidents of restraint and seclusion on the day of the incident, including, but not limited to:
 - Providing parents with a notification in writing of any incident of restraint or seclusion. This written notification must include the type of restraint used and any injuries occurring during or resulting from the restraint.
 - Making reasonable efforts to contact the parent via telephone or email on the day of the incident.
 - Obtaining the parent's signed acknowledgement of receipt of the notification.
 - Maintaining the documentation of the parent's signed acknowledgement of notice.

- Follow procedures for written incident reporting, including, but not limited to:
 - Providing parents with a written incident report generated by the FDOE web-based reporting system by mail within three **school** days of any incident of restraint or seclusion.
 - Obtaining the parent's signed acknowledgement of receipt of the incident report.
 - Maintaining the documentation of the parent's signed acknowledgement of receipt of the incident.
- Make a minimum of two attempts to obtain written parent acknowledgement when parents fail to respond to initial notices or incident reports.

Requirement Related to the Use of Restraint and Seclusion

In accordance with s.1003.573, F.S. the district maintains policies and procedures related to the use of restraint and seclusion.

- ☒ The district has made no changes to their policies and procedures regarding the use of restraint and seclusion.
- ☐ The district has made changes to their policies and procedures regarding the use of restraint and seclusion.
- ☐ This section is not applicable for the Department of Corrections.

District Policies Regarding Restraint and Seclusion

Physical restraint – One of the following must be selected:

- ☐ In addition to this SP&P document, the district has a written policy regarding allowable use or prohibition of physical restraint. This policy is included in Appendix D.
- ☒ This SP&P document is the district's only written policy regarding the allowable use or prohibition of physical restraint.

Seclusion – One of the following must be selected:

- ☐ In addition to this SP&P document, the district has a written policy regarding allowable use or prohibition of seclusion. This policy is included in Appendix D.
- ☒ This SP&P document is the district's only written policy regarding the allowable use or prohibition of seclusion.

Assurances

1. School personnel will not use a mechanical restraint or a manual or physical restraint that restricts a student's breathing.
2. School personnel will not close, lock, or physically block a student in a room that is unlit and does not meet the requirements for seclusion time-out rooms provided in State Fire Marshal Rule 69A-58.0084, F.A.C.

Section A.3: Requirements Related To Documenting and Reporting Incidents of Restraint and Seclusion

Documentation and Incident Reporting

1. Schools are required to notify the parent or guardian each time manual or physical restraint or seclusion is used with a student with a disability. Such notification will be in writing and provided before the end of the school day on which the restraint or seclusion occurred. In accordance with standards developed by FDOE, the notice must include the type of restraint used and any injuries occurring during or resulting from the restraint. Additionally, reasonable efforts will be taken to notify the parent or guardian by telephone or email, or both, and those efforts will be documented.
2. The school will obtain, and keep in its records, the parent's or guardian's signed acknowledgement that he or she was notified of the student's restraint or seclusion. In accordance with standards developed by FDOE, the district must make a minimum of two attempts to obtain written parent acknowledgement of receipt of the notification when the parent fails to respond to the initial notice.
3. The school will prepare an incident report within 24 hours after a student is released from restraint or seclusion. If the student's release occurs on a day before the school closes for the weekend, a holiday, or another reason, the incident report will be completed by the end of the school day on the day the school reopens. The school will provide the parent with the completed incident report in writing by mail within three school days after the student was manually or physically restrained or secluded.
4. The school will obtain, and keep in its records, the parent's or guardian's signed acknowledgement that he or she **received a copy of the incident report**. In accordance with standards developed by FDOE, the district must make a minimum of two attempts to obtain written parent acknowledgement of receipt of the incident report when the parent fails to respond to the initial report.
5. The following will be included in the incident report:
 - a. The name of the student restrained or secluded
 - b. The age, grade, ethnicity, and disability of the student restrained or secluded
 - c. The date and time of the event, and the duration of the restraint or seclusion
 - d. The location at which the restraint or seclusion occurred
 - e. A description of the type of restraint used in terms established by the FDOE
 - f. The name of the person(s) using or assisting in the restraint or seclusion of the student
 - g. The name of any nonstudent who was present to witness the restraint or seclusion
 - h. A description of the incident, including the following:
 - i. The context in which the restraint or seclusion occurred
 - ii. The student's behavior leading up to and precipitating the decision to use manual or physical restraint or seclusion, including an indication as to why there was an imminent risk of serious injury or death to the student or others
 - iii. The specific positive behavioral strategies used to prevent and deescalate the behavior
 - iv. What occurred with the student immediately after the termination of the restraint or seclusion
 - v. Any injuries, visible marks, or possible medical emergencies that may have occurred during the restraint or seclusion, documented according to district policies
 - vi. Evidence of steps taken to notify the student's parent or guardian
6. Incidents of restraint and seclusion are reported to FDOE via a website developed for this purpose, in a manner prescribed by FDOE.

Section A.4: District Procedures Related To Documenting and Reporting Incidents of Restraint and Seclusion

District Procedures

The district has in place policies and procedures that govern (1) parent notification, (2) incident reporting, (3) reporting of district data review, (4) monitoring, (5) training programs, to include a plan for the selection of personnel to be trained, and (6) the district's plan for reducing the use of restraint and seclusion. (*Charter schools, DJJ facilities, and contracted residential facilities must be included.*)

1. Describe the district's procedures for providing the parent with a copy of the **written notice on the day of the incident**.

a. Describe how parents are provided written notice on the day the restraint or seclusion occurred.

The administrator or designee in each school is responsible for completing all necessary reporting requirements and ensuring the parent is notified. The administrator or designee makes every effort to complete the DOE report on the day of the incident. If the DOE report cannot be completed before the end of the school day, the district notification letter (O-EX-64) is prepared to send home in lieu of the DOE report. This notification letter is given directly to the parent, sent home in the student's agenda or mailed home. The administrator or designee maintains a file of all documentation regarding the restraint, including copies of notification letters, letters of receipt of DOE report signed by parent, and log (O-EX-65a) of any parent contact or attempts to contact (in writing, by phone or face-to-face) regarding the restraint. The administrator or designee retains this information for the length of the current school year.

b. Specify personnel (by role or title) responsible for preparing the written notice.

The administrator or designee is responsible for the written notice, which could be the DOE written report.

c. Describe how reasonable efforts are made on the day of the incident to contact the parent by phone or email or both.

Parents/guardians are informed of the episode of restraint/seclusion in writing before the end of the school day on which the restraint or seclusion occurs by the school administrator or designee. o They must be informed in writing, and acknowledge the notification by signing and returning the notification letter to the school. A copy of the notification letter will also be enclosed. Reasonable efforts must be taken to notify the parent/guardian by telephone, computer e-mail or both and these efforts must be documented. The administrator or designee maintains current information regarding home, cell or work numbers through the use of the Skyward Student System. o A copy of the signed notification letter (O-EX-64) is maintained in the student's discipline file at the school.

d. Describe how records of the parent's acknowledgement that the written notice was received are retained, and actions that are taken in the event the parent does not provide a signed acknowledgement of the initial written notice.

Parents/guardians are informed of the episode of restraint/seclusion in writing before the end of the school day on which the restraint or seclusion occurs by the school administrator or designee. o They must be informed in writing, and acknowledge the notification by signing and returning the notification letter to the school. A copy of the notification letter will also be enclosed. Reasonable efforts must be taken to notify the parent/guardian by telephone, computer e-mail or both and these efforts must be documented. The administrator or designee maintains current information regarding home, cell or work numbers through the use of the Skyward Student System. o A copy of the signed notification letter (O-EX-64) is maintained in the student's discipline file at the school.

2. Describe the district's procedures for providing parents with a copy of the incident report within three **school days** of the incident.

a. Specify personnel (by role or title) responsible for preparing the incident report.

The school administrator/designee completes the DOE state reporting data entry.

b. Describe how the parents are provided a copy of the incident report within three school days of the incident.

The written incident report will be mailed home or hand delivered within three school days of the incident. The administrator will document on their school log sheet (O-EX-65a) how the parent was provided a copy.

c. Describe how records of the parent's acknowledgement that the written report was received are retained, and actions that are taken in the event the parent does not provide a signed acknowledgement of the initial incident report.

All documents pertaining to the notice are maintained in the student's discipline file at the school. Also, it is not unheard of that the principal or designee make a home visit (documented on their log (O-EX-65a) of the incident to hand deliver the notice and return receipt of signature. At least three attempts are made through phone call, email, and/or letter.

3. How does the district monitor the implementation of restraint and seclusion practices to include reporting requirements in charter schools, DJJ facilities, and contracted residential facilities?

The Okeechobee County School District provides to targeted staff in all DJJ facilities the training, monitoring, and conferencing regarding the requirements for restraint or seclusion documentation and reporting procedures. The Director of ESE will monitor the documentation of implemented restraint practices across these facilities on a monthly basis. There are currently no charter schools or contracted residential facilities in our school district.

Section A.5: District Procedures Related To Review of Data and Reporting Procedures (to include monitoring and training)

1. Describe the district's review of data and reporting procedures.

Specify personnel (by role or title) responsible for collecting data in the web-based reporting system within the school, and to whom it is reported at the school and district level. (e.g., principal, ESE director, superintendent).

At the school level the Assistant Principal will is responsible for collecting data in the web-based reporting system and provides the data to the ESE director. District data from the Department of Education's website will be compiled monthly by the Director of ESE in order to evaluate the extent to which the use of manual physical restraint or seclusion is being used, and if those methods were in accordance with the district policies, to include reporting requirements.

Provide information regarding the timelines, process and documentation for review of data and reporting within the district.

This data will be reported within the district to the building level administrators on a quarterly basis by the Director of ESE. The Superintendent, the Assistant Superintendent of Instruction and Curriculum, and the Assistant Superintendent of Administrative Services are involved in the meeting. • In the event that district policies are violated, the situation(s) will be investigated on a case-by-case basis by the Director of ESE. • Training, if required will be arranged by the Director of ESE and presented in a timely manner to administrators.

2. Describe the district's procedures for monitoring data collection and reporting and the use of restraint and seclusion at the (a) classroom, (b) building, and (c) district level. These monitoring procedures must address when, where, and why students are restrained or secluded and the frequency of the occurrences of restraint or seclusion, including prone and mechanical restraint. *(Charter schools, DJJ facilities, and contracted residential facilities must be included.)*

Describe how the district will monitor school practices related to the data collection and reporting to parents, including (a) data entry into the FDOE web-based system; (b) content of the written notice; (c) email or telephone attempts to contact parents on the day of the incident; (d) provision of written notice and incident reports to the parent within the required timelines; (e) maintaining documentation of the parent's acknowledgements of the receipt of written notices and reports; and (f) making additional attempts to obtain written parent acknowledgement when the parent fails to acknowledge the initial written notice or incident report.

Reporting The district office will be notified of each incident by phone call to the director's office. Notification will be given to the Director of ESE by the school administrator/designee. The incident report draft will be available for district review immediately after input at the school level. At the district office documentation is maintained which contains the following, by school: copies of incident reports, copies of parent notifications and responses (including telephone calls and emails), copies of disciplinary reports as appropriate, and data reviewed by the Director of ESE. • Immediately following the episode of manual physical restraint/seclusion, the person implementing the restraint/seclusion will notify the administrator/designee of the incident. • Parents/guardians must be informed of each episode of restraint/seclusion in writing, before the end of the school day on which the restraint or seclusion occurs. o They must be informed in writing, and acknowledge the notification by signing and returning the notification letter to the school. A copy of the notification letter will also be enclosed. Reasonable efforts must also be taken to notify the parent/guardian by telephone, computer e-mail or both and these efforts must be documented. o A copy of the signed notification letter is maintained in the student's discipline file at the school. (O-EX-64) The administrator/designee shall prepare an incident report within 24 hours after a student is released from restraint or seclusion. • If the student's release occurs on a day before the school closes for the weekend, a holiday, or another reason, the incident report must be completed by the end of the school day on the day the school reopens. • The person implementing the restraint/seclusion will complete the O-EX-65 and submit it the principal for review. o The Administrator/Designee completes the State Reporting Data Entry and prints the report to send to Parent/Guardian with a District cover letter. o A self-addressed stamped envelope will be included for Parent/Guardian to use to return signature page. (State law requires that parents receive a copy of the Incident Report no later than three days after the incident.) o A hard copy of this report is maintained in the student's discipline file at the school. (O-EX-65) • Okeechobee County uses the Parent Notification Letter to record dates of telephone or computer e-mail, and written contacts with parents. The FLDOE Restraint/Seclusion Incident Report is used to inform parents of the incident.

Describe how the district will monitor school practices related to when, where, and why students are restrained and secluded at the (a) classroom, (b) building, and (c) district level.

Data Collection and Monitoring School level Assistant Principals collect and monitor the data at the classroom level and shares the data with the ESE Director. District data from the Department of Education's website will be compiled monthly by the Director of ESE in order to evaluate the extent to which the use of manual physical restraint or seclusion is being used, and if those methods were in accordance with the district policies, to include reporting requirements.

Describe how information about restraint and seclusion data is (a) shared with school and classroom personnel directly involved in the use of restraint and seclusion and (b) reviewed to assess, develop or revise and implement effective behavioral strategies and instructional practices for students who are frequently restrained or secluded.

Restraint data is shared with school and classroom personnel during a review of procedures in the occurring incident. During that process, the DOE restraint report is reviewed, and the problem-solving team, which involves those involved in the restraint, assists to help identify possible setting events, antecedents and reinforcing consequences to the behaviors leading to the restraint, and to determine the appropriateness of the procedure used and safety factors involved. The information obtained during that review will be used by the School Based Intervention Team/IEP Team to develop or make adjustments to existing behavior strategies and follow up on the implementation of strategies. If the student involved does not have a Tier 2 Behavior plan, the School Based Intervention Team/IEP Team will initiate a Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) and a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) for the student involved.

3. Describe the district's training for personnel on the use of restraint and seclusion and how records of such trainings are maintained. The records maintained should include, but not be limited to, names of personnel trained, description of training received, and dates of trainings. *(Charter schools, DJJ facilities, and contracted residential facilities must be included.)*

Describe the programs the district uses to train personnel with regard to the use of restraint and seclusion; if multiple programs are used within the district, describe how decisions are made with regard to when a particular program is selected.

Manual Physical Restraint/Seclusion Training • Okeechobee County Public Schools has selected Non-Crisis Intervention/Crisis Prevention Intervention (NCI/CPI) approved training for manual physical restraint. Training is provided by certified NCI/CPI trainers, credentialed through the Crisis Prevention Institute, Inc. • The goal of the NCI/CPI program is to provide a safe, restraint free environment that educates both student and staff in alternative measures to address aggressive behavior. • CPI encompasses understanding student behavior and interaction; communication (verbal and nonverbal); assessing agitation; physical intervention procedures (blocks and releases) and includes control techniques. • Only school staff trained and credentialed in NCI/CPI will provide manual physical restraint.

Describe how the district implements professional development on the selected training program(s).

Coordination between the ESE department and professional development services occurs at the beginning of each year to schedule the full course and refresher courses for employees. The training(s) are placed on the district calendar of in-service opportunities. Flyers of training are sent to all school principals and all district users to inform the staff of upcoming training(s). At the completion of the training the sign in sheets are submitted to the Professional Development Coordinator for documentation of participation. Cards are produced and given to participants by the trainer after completion of training.

Describe how the district maintains records on the training of personnel with regard to restraint and seclusion.

All records are maintained in the ESE office of trained staff and expiration date of certification for staff.

If the training program used requires periodic "refresher training," indicate the intervals at which this occurs and how.

Refresher courses for NCI/CPI are given by certified instructor(s) at least two times during the school year to maintain qualified school based teams.

Describe the district's plan with regard to the selection of personnel to be trained in restraint and seclusion.

The principal of each school is requested to have at least one team of staff to be certified in both NCI/CPI.

Indicate whether all charter schools in the district use the same crisis management program as that described for use in district-operated schools.

N/A. No charter schools located in the district at this time.

If no, indicate by charter school the name of the crisis management program used?

N/A. No charter schools located in the district at this time.

Section A.6: District Plan Related to Reducing the Use of Restraint

Does the district prohibit the use of restraint?

- ☐ Yes
☒ No

1. Even if the district prohibits the use of restraint, if restraint incidents occurred during the 2018-19 and 2019-20 school years, the district will have a plan for reducing the use of restraint.

If the district allows the use of restraint, specify the district's measurable annual goal for the 2019-20 and 2020-21 school years for reducing the number of incidents of restraint (goal must include a percentage for reduction).

The district will reduce the use of manual physical restraint by 15% during the 2019-2020 school year and 15% during the 2020-2021 school year. Okeechobee County School District will use a problem-solving process to develop a plan to decrease the use of restraint.

2. The district is required to have a plan for reducing the use of restraint, particularly in settings where it occurs frequently or with students who are restrained repeatedly, and for reducing the use of prone restraint and mechanical restraint. The plan must include a goal for reducing the use of restraint and must include activities, skills, and resources needed to achieve that goal. Charter schools, DJJ facilities, and contracted residential facilities must be included. Activities may include, but are not limited to, the following:
- a. Additional training in positive behavioral support and crisis management
 - b. Parental involvement
 - c. Data review
 - d. Updates of students' Functional Behavioral Assessments (FBAs) and Positive Behavioral Intervention Plans (PBIPs)
 - e. Additional student evaluations
 - f. Debriefing with staff
 - g. Use of schoolwide positive behavior support
 - h. Changes to the school environment

Total number of incidents of restraints for the 2017-18 school year.

37

Total number of incidents of restraints for the 2018-19 and 2019-20 school years.

Total number of incidents of restraints for the 2018-19 and 2019-20 school years. There were 22 incidents of restraint in 2018-2019 and 14 incidents of restraint in 2019-2020.

Indicate the percentage of increase or decrease in the 2018-19 and 2019-20 rates.

The district obtained a 44% decrease from 2017-2018 to 2018-2019 school year. The 2018-2019 to 2019-2020 shows a 36% decrease for the 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 school years. The district obtained a 44% decrease from 2017-2018 to 2018-2019 school year.

Provide a rationale for the district's increase or decrease in incidents when comparing the data.

In reviewing the data, the decrease of incidents occurred within all schools. Collaboration with discretionary projects and training of school staff with the focus on de-escalation and relationship building continues to be the key to the decrease. The district provided additional supports as well in the classrooms and schools that had higher rates of rates restraint.

Note whether or not the district attained the 2018-19 goal for rate reduction of restraint and the difference between 2018-19 percentage goal and the actual 2018-19 percentage rate.

The district goal of 15% rate of reduction of restraint was obtained in 2018-2019. The actual rate of reduction for 2018-2019 was 44%. This is a 21% difference.

How many students in the district were restrained 15 or more times? What were the specific activities, skills, and resources implemented to reduce these rates?

There were zero students in the district that were restrained 15 or more times.

Does the district have a policy in place that prohibits the use of prone restraint?

- ☐ Yes
☒ No

If not, describe how and when prone restraint is being used.

While the District does not prohibit the use of prone restraint, its use is to be limited to instances in which less restrictive measures have been unsuccessful. The OCSD plan is to focus on the reduction of prone restraint by debriefing and reviewing each incident in order to determine if a less restrictive technique could have been used. If it is determined that this is the case, re-training is conducted with staff to emphasize the use of less restrictive techniques when possible.

If there is no policy that prohibits the use of prone restraint, include a plan for reducing the use of prone restraint.

Based on the data from the 2019-2020 school year, the review of data determined that 0 out of the 14 restraints were prone restraints. During monthly reviews, time is allocated to review prone restraint incidents versus other advanced control procedures and team members review specific incidents and problem solve alternatives. Using least restrictive physical intervention is a component within the NCI/CPI training. The NCI/CPI trainer focuses on antecedent and defensive techniques and the importance of using least restrictive advanced control procedures and even role play certain scenarios and how to safely utilize other techniques rather than restraint. Additionally, monthly meetings are also held at the district level in which the data is further disaggregated by school, ethnicity, gender, and eligibility to determine if any additional technical assistance is required. If additional support is required, a team including a Behavior Analyst (BCBA) is sent to the school to observe and problem solve with the school-based team.

Does the district have a policy in place that prohibits the use of mechanical restraint?

- ☐ Yes
☒ No

If not, describe what mechanical restraints are being used and how they are being used.

School district personnel that work with students daily would never use mechanical restraints. School Resource Officers may use physical restraints such as handcuffs if there is a legal situation they are involved with.

If there is no policy that prohibits the use of mechanical restraint, include a plan for reducing the use of mechanical restraint.

There were 0 incidents using mechanical restraint for the 2019-2020 school year. The measurable goal for the 2020-2021 school year will be to maintain 0% in the reduction in mechanical restraints.

Describe the data reviewed from the 2018-19 and 2019-20 school years (which must include primary exceptionality and race or ethnicity of students restrained and type of restraint used).

2018-2019 Incidents ASD- 5 students with 16 incidents; 4 White, 1 Black EBD- 1 student with 1 incident; 1 white OHI- 1 student with 1 incident; 1 Multiracial SLD- 1 student with 1 incident; 1 White DD- 1 student with 1 incident; 1 Hispanic SI- 1 student with 1 incident, 1 White Section 504- 1 incident, 1 White Types of Restraint- 16 seated 4 standing 1 prone 1 immobilization while in transport 2019-2020 Incidents ASD- 4 students with 7 incidents; 4 White EBD- 1 students with 1 incident; 1 Black, SI- 1 student with 1 incident, 1 White Section 504- 1 student with 2 incidents, 1 Hispanic InD- 2 students with 3 incidents; 1 White, 1 Black Types of Restraint- 13 seated 1 standing

Describe how the data and the problem-solving process informed your district's plan to reduce the use of restraint.

The 2017-2018 data showed a 51% decrease in restraints from the previous school year. The 2018-2019 school year showed a 44% decrease. The 2019-2020 school continued with a decrease at 36%. The district reviewed the data to determine the school, primary disability of each student, and the staff training that had occurred from the previous year.

Describe how the data and the problem-solving process determined the measurable annual goal for the reduction of restraint for the 2019-20 and 2020-21 school years.

The data and problem solving process determined the 15% decrease due to the training and supports that have been received this school year through DOE and the discretionary projects we are currently in collaboration.

The following are examples of activities that may be considered for the purpose of reducing the use of restraint.

- Implement student-specific strategies such as: reviewing individual educational plans (IEPs) and Section 504 plans; conducting evaluations or reevaluations and FBAs; evaluating the effectiveness of PBIPs and health care plans specific to individual students' responses and progress
- Implement district and school strategies for increasing parental involvement
- Introduce or strengthen Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS), which could include schoolwide positive behavioral support
- Provide additional professional development training in positive behavioral support and crisis management
- Problem solve with school administrators to make data-driven decisions regarding school environments

Describe the activities that are a part of the district's plan to reduce the use of restraint.

Okeechobee will also utilize the following tools to reduce restraints. -Reviewing individual educational plans (IEPs); conducting evaluations/reevaluations and Functional Behavior Assessments (FBAs); and evaluating effectiveness of Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs) specific to individual students' responses/progress. -Implement district and school strategies for increasing parental involvement - Continue the multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS), which includes the three tiers of positive behavioral support. -Data is reviewed with the school-based MTSS team at the beginning, middle and end of the school year to make data-driven decisions. -Professional development training in positive behavioral support and crisis management are provided quarterly to all staff. -Work group with USF/Rtl for Restraint and Seclusion reduction -Discussion of Tier 3 re-write If the majority of restraints are in a specific setting or with a particular population, specialized professional development will be provided to these groups and may include: supports from CARD, Trauma Informed Care, Advanced Nonviolent Crisis Prevention from Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI) and verbal de-escalation.

Describe the resources that are a part of the district's plan to reduce the use of restraint.

USF/Rtl-working with the restraint/seclusion work group; include a TIER 3 rewrite for behavior FLPIS-continued training and rebuild of PBIS in all schools FLRS-CHAMPS training and coaching of teachers provided CARD-individual work with students and families

Section A.7: District Plan Related to Reducing the Use of Seclusion

Does the district prohibit the use of seclusion?

- ☐ Yes
☒ No

1. Even if the district prohibits the use of seclusion, if seclusion incidents occurred during the 2018-19 school year, the district will have a plan for reducing of the use of seclusion.

If the district allows the use of seclusion, specify the district's measurable annual goal for the 2019-20 and 2020-21 school years for reducing the number of incidents of seclusion (goal must include a percentage for reduction).

The district will decrease the use of seclusion by 25% during the 2019-2020 school year and 25% during the 2020-2021 school year

2. The district is required to have a plan for reducing the use of restraint, particularly in settings where it occurs frequently or with students who are restrained repeatedly, and for reducing the use of prone restraint and mechanical restraint. The plan must include a goal for reducing the use of restraint and must include activities, skills, and resources needed to achieve that goal. Charter schools, DJJ facilities, and contracted residential facilities must be included. Activities may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. Additional training in positive behavioral support and crisis management
- b. Parental involvement
- c. Data review
- d. Updates of students' Functional Behavioral Assessments (FBAs) and Positive Behavioral Intervention Plans (PBIPs)
- e. Additional student evaluations
- f. Debriefing with staff
- g. Use of schoolwide positive behavior support
- h. Changes to the school environment

Total number of incidents of seclusion for the 2017-18 school year.

2

Total number of incidents of seclusion for the 2018-19 and 2019-20 school years.

There were 14 incidents of seclusion in 2018-2019 and 11 incidents of seclusion in 2019-2020.

Indicate the percentage of increase or decrease in the 2018-19 and 2019-20 rates.

The rate of seclusion increased from the 2017-18 school year to the 2018-2019 school year by 600%. There was decrease of 21% in 2019-2020 school year.

Provide a rationale for the district's increase or decrease in incidents when comparing the data.

During the 2018-2019 school year, there was increase in seclusion incidents. The rationale of the increase is due to a change in teaching staff and paraprofessionals. This team was intensively trained throughout the year. The following year was a decrease the rationale behind the decrease is due to the amount of training for both teachers and paraprofessionals in trauma informed care, Mental Health First Aid, classroom management tools such as CHAMPS and the use of mentors as needed within the school.

Note whether or not the district attained the 2018-19 goal for rate reduction of seclusion and the difference between 2018-19 percentage goal and the actual 2018-19 percentage rate.

The district did not attain the goal of 15% for rate of reduction of seclusion in 2018-2019. The rate of increase was at 600% for seclusion incidents. The rate of reduction for seclusion in 2019-2020 for this was 21%.

How many students in the district were secluded 15 or more times in the district? What were the specific activities, skills, and resources implemented to reduce these rates?

None

3. Describe the district's procedures for ensuring that seclusion rooms meet the requirements of State Fire Marshal Rule 69A-58.0084, F.A.C., by addressing each of the following:

Who coordinates the inspection conducted by the Fire Marshal?

The coordination of the inspection is conducted by the Okeechobee County Schools Director of Operations.

How is the safety of the seclusion rooms monitored?

The school based administrator(s) are charged with the monitoring of the seclusion room on a monthly basis.

How are the results of the inspection reported to the district?

The report to the district is obtained through the SREF reports annually.

Describe the district's procedures for correction when a seclusion room is found to be in violation of State Fire Marshal Rule 69A-58.0084, F.A.C.

The Director of Operations and school based administrator(s) work closely to ensure the safety of the room. If there is a violation it is corrected for compliance.

4. Describe the district's use of seclusion rooms by addressing each of the following.

How many seclusion rooms does the district have that meet State Fire Marshal Rule 69A-58.0084, F.A.C.?

Okeechobee County School District currently has one seclusion room located at Okeechobee Achievement Academy.

Where are the schools in which the seclusion rooms are located?

Okeechobee Achievement Academy

When are the seclusion rooms used?

The seclusion room would be used only after all other less restrictive measures have been implemented and have been unsuccessful. Seclusion would only be used in emergency situations when there is an imminent risk of serious injury or death to the student or others.

How are the seclusion rooms used?

It is only used as a last resort in emergency situations when an immediate significant and imminent threat to the physical safety of the student and/or others exists.

Describe the data reviewed from the 2018-19 school year (which must include primary exceptionality and race or ethnicity of students secluded).

During the 2018-2019 school year, there were fourteen (14) incidents of seclusion. All of the fourteen (14) students have a primary exceptionality of Emotional Behavioral Disabilities and all fourteen (14) students are white. Four (4) of these students have more than one incident of seclusion.

Describe how the data and the problem-solving process informed your district's plan to reduce the use of seclusion.

The review of data shows a decrease of seclusion that occurred at one school. In problem-solving, it was determined that the need for training in trauma informed care was evident. The students being placed in seclusion was not an ideal solution for the students during the time of duress. The discussion ensued on the use of time out versus the use of seclusion. A training of the definition of seclusion was reviewed with the school based team and supports were provided by our district Behavior Interventionist and a contracted ABA therapist.

Describe how the data and the problem-solving process determined the measurable annual goal for the reduction of seclusion for the 2019-20 and 2020-21 school years.

The data and problem solving allowed for a decision to decrease seclusion by 50% for the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years.

The following are examples of activities that may be considered for the purpose of reducing the use of seclusion.

- Implement student-specific strategies such as: reviewing IEPs and Section 504 plans; conducting evaluations or reevaluations and FBAs; evaluating the effectiveness of PBIPs and health care plans specific to individual students' responses and progress
- Implement district and school strategies for increasing parental involvement
- Introduce or strengthen MTSS, which could include schoolwide positive behavioral support
- Provide additional professional development training in positive behavioral support and crisis management
- Problem solve with school administrators to make data-driven decisions regarding school environments

Describe the activities that are a part of the district's plan to reduce the use of seclusion.

According to our current data, the majority of seclusion incidents are in a specific setting and with a particular exceptionality. Specialized professional development will be provided to the teachers and administration of this group and may include: Trauma Informed Care, Mental Health First Aide, Advanced Nonviolent Crisis Prevention from Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI) and verbal de-escalation, and use of PBIS strategies. The SEDNET project will also be utilized to provide the supports needed specifically for our EBD population. The supports from this project will be guided to classroom management strategies for teachers in order to maintain a positive and respectful learning environment.

Describe the resources that are a part of the district's plan to reduce the use of seclusion.

IEP's, 504's will be reviewed and revisited as needed. Social/Emotional goals will be reviewed quarterly and revised if they are failing to meet the needs of the student. FBA's and BIP's effectiveness will be revisited and evaluated based on measurable behavior outcomes. Additional professional development will be provided to the facility in the use PBIS strategies

Section B.1: Assurances – Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)

Statutory and Regulatory Citations

Title 34 CFR §§99.7, 300.111, 300.172, 300.226, 300.613-300.621 and 300.646

Chapters 468, 486, 490 and 491, F.S.

Sections 393.17, 627.6686, 641.31098, 1002.20, 1002.22, 1003.4282, 1003.57, 1003.572, 1006.03, 1011.62, 1012.32 and 1012.321, F.S.

Rules 6A-1.0955, 6A-6.03028 and 6A-6.0311, F.A.C.

Full Educational Opportunity Goal (FEOG)

The district assures provision of full educational opportunity to all children with disabilities, aged three through 21, using the kind and number of facilities, personnel, and services necessary to meet this goal. A Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) is available to all students with disabilities upon determination of need.

Information to be Provided at Initial Meeting of a Student's IEP Team

In accordance with s. 1003.57(1)(j), F.S., the district school board shall provide each parent with information regarding the amount that the school district receives from the state appropriation for each of the five exceptional student education support levels for a full-time student. The school district shall provide this information at the initial meeting of a student's Individual Educational Plan (IEP) team.

Ages of Students Served

One of the following must be selected. For students with disabilities who have not graduated with a standard diploma, the district will:

- ☐ Provide services until the day the student turns twenty-two (22)
- ☒ Provide services until the end of the semester in which the student turns twenty-two (22)
- ☐ Provide services through the last instructional day of the school year for all students in the district in which the student turns twenty-two (22), provided that the student was twenty-one (21) years old on the first instructional day of school for all students in the district

One of the following must be selected. Indicate if the district (including charter schools) serves infants and toddlers with disabilities, ages birth through two, in collaboration with Local Early Steps:

- ☐ Yes
- ☒ No

Note: Districts may provide FAPE to a child who will turn three during the school year. If this is the only circumstance for which the district would provide services to a child who is two years of age, **no** should be checked.

One of the following must be selected. Indicate if the district (including charter schools) serves prekindergarten children with disabilities, ages three through five:

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No

Section B.2: Parental Input and Meetings

Parental Input and Meetings

In accordance with section 1002.20(21)(a), F.S., Meetings with school district personnel, parents of public school students may be accompanied by another adult of their choice at any meeting with school district personnel. School district personnel may not object to the attendance of such adult or discourage or attempt to discourage, through any action, statement, or other means, the parents of students with disabilities from inviting another person of their choice to attend any meeting. Such prohibited actions include, but are not limited to, attempted or actual coercion or harassment of parents or students or retaliation or threats of consequences to parents or students.

1. Such meetings include, but are not limited to, meetings related to: the eligibility for exceptional student education or related services; the development of an individual family support plan (IFSP); the development of an IEP; the development of a 504 accommodation plan issued under s. 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; the transition of a student from early intervention services to other services; the development of postsecondary goals for a student with a disability and the transition services needed to reach those goals; and other issues that may affect the educational environment, discipline, or placement of a student with a disability.
2. The parents and school district personnel attending the meeting shall sign a document at the meeting's conclusion stating whether any school district personnel have prohibited, discouraged or attempted to discourage the parents from inviting a person of their choice to the meeting.

One of the following must be selected:

- ☒ I have read and understand the above information.
- ☐ This section is not applicable for the Department of Corrections.

Section B.3: Collaboration of Public and Private Instructional Personnel

Collaboration of Public and Private Instructional Personnel

Section 1003.572, F.S., provides:

1. As used in this section, the term "private instructional personnel" means:
 - a. Individuals certified under s. 393.17 or licensed under chapter 490 or chapter 491 for applied behavior analysis services as defined in ss. 627.6686 and 641.31098 ,F.S.
 - b. Speech-language pathologists licensed under s. 468.1185.
 - c. Occupational therapists licensed under part III of chapter 468.
 - d. Physical therapists licensed under chapter 486.
 - e. Psychologists licensed under chapter 490.
 - f. Clinical social workers licensed under chapter 491.
2. The collaboration of public and private instructional personnel shall be designed to enhance but not supplant the school district's responsibilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The school as the local education agency shall provide therapy services to meet the expectations provided in federal law and regulations and state statutes and rules. Collaboration of public and private instructional personnel will work to promote educational progress and assist students in acquiring essential skills, including, but not limited to, readiness for pursuit of higher education goals or employment. Where applicable, public and private instructional personnel shall undertake collaborative programming. Coordination of services and plans between a public school and private instructional personnel is encouraged to avoid duplication or conflicting services or plans.
3. Private instructional personnel who are hired or contracted by parents to collaborate with public instructional personnel must be permitted to observe the student in the educational setting, collaborate with instructional personnel in the educational setting, and provide services in the educational setting according to the following requirements:
 - a. The student's public instructional personnel and principal consent to the time and place.
 - b. The private instructional personnel satisfy the requirements of s. 1012.32 or s. 1012.321, F.S.
4. For the purpose of implementing this subsection, a school district may not impose any requirements beyond those requirements specified in this subsection or charge any fees.
5. The provision of private instructional personnel by a parent does not constitute a waiver of the student's or parent's right to a free and appropriate public education under IDEA.

Written Agreements

The district assures that written agreements are on file in the district for multi-district programs and for the assignment of instructional personnel to a facility operated by another agency or organization. These written agreements have been developed and approved by all participating school boards or agencies. Each such agreement, in accordance with Rule 6A-6.0311, F.A.C., includes but is not limited to:

1. Designating responsibilities for the implementation of district procedures
2. Providing transportation
3. Providing program and staff supervision
4. Funding programs
5. Dissolving the agreement

Written agreements are on file for the provision of special education and related services to this district's exceptional students through multi-district programs.

- ☒ Yes
☐ No

If the answer to the above question is yes, include the name(s) of the district(s) providing services and the types of ESE services provided by each district.

St. Lucie County School Board is contracted to provide services to students with severe Deaf/Hard of Hearing services if the IEP team determines that their needs cannot be met in an Okeechobee County School.

Written agreements are on file for the provision of special education and related services to exceptional students from other districts through multi-district programs.

- ☒ Yes
☐ No

If the answer to the above question is yes, include the name(s) of the district(s) receiving services and the types of ESE services provided for each district.

Okeechobee County contracts with St. Lucie County to provide services to their students with hearing impairments.

Agreements for assigning instructional personnel to a facility operated by other agencies or organizations are on file in this district.

- ☐ Yes
☒ No

If the answer to the above question is yes, include the name of each agency and the instructional personnel assigned for each facility.

NA

Section B.4: Department of Juvenile Justice Facilities

Department of Juvenile Justice Facilities

Statutory and Regulatory Citations

Sections 1002.42, 1003.01, 1003.52, 1003.57, 1003.573, 1011.62 and 1012.42, F.S.

Rules 6A-1.045111, 6A-1.0503, 6A-6.0334, 6A-6.0361 and 6A-6.05281, F.A.C.

The district school board of the county in which the residential or nonresidential Department of Juvenile Justice facility is located shall provide appropriate educational assessments and an appropriate program of instruction and special education services, including all services and documentation required by federal and state laws. Districts have the option of providing the educational services directly or may enter into a contract with a private provider to provide educational services.

In accordance with section 1003.01(11)(b), F.S., "Juvenile justice provider" means the Department of Juvenile Justice, the sheriff, or a private, public, or other governmental organization under contract with the Department of Juvenile Justice or the sheriff that provides treatment, care and custody, or educational programs for youth in juvenile justice intervention, detention, or commitment programs.

How does the district provide educational programs for students with disabilities in the district's county jail?

The School District of Okeechobee County works collaboratively with the Okeechobee County Jail to provide educational programs for students with disabilities who are in jail. The school district maintains a collaborative relationship between a designated ESE Resource Specialist and a designated educational liaison at the county jail. The county jail educational liaison will notify the designated ESE Resource Specialist when an enrolled school-age student is incarcerated within the Okeechobee County jail. The designated educational liaison will provide the school district with student name, phone number and contact information, address of the facility, and information pertinent to the terms of incarceration. The designated ESE Resource Specialist will determine if the student is identified with a disability via the district student information system database. The ESE Resource Specialist will coordinate and develop a plan for service delivery based on individual student needs. The ESE Resource Specialist will make contact with the educational liaison at the Okeechobee County Jail to establish a schedule to provide educational services within the Okeechobee County Jail. The ESE Resource Specialist will notify and work with the student's school at which the student is enrolled. The designee will make arrangements to obtain the student's assignments and materials to be completed/utilized while incarcerated. Educational services will be provided at the Okeechobee County Jail as scheduled during the incarceration period. If the student is incarcerated from another district, the Resource Specialist will contact the previous district and determine the services and educational levels the students is performing. If the student is a student with a disability the district will then request a copy of the IEP and determine comparable services. The educational services provider will document the services delivered on a log as evidence of Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) during the period of incarceration.

Districts that enter into a contract with a private provider are responsible for oversight. For exceptional students, districts should ensure that exceptional students have a current individual educational plan (IEP), that the IEP contains measurable annual goals (including academic and functional), that the IEP is being implemented, that parents are invited to the IEP team meeting, and that the appropriate team members are present at the meeting.

Placement in a residential facility of a student with a disability by a public agency other than the school district

1. In accordance with s. 1003.57(3), F.S., an exceptional student with a disability may be placed in a private residential care facility by the Department of Children and Families, Agency for Persons with Disabilities, or Agency for Health Care Administration. For this purpose, "placement" is defined as the funding or arrangement of funding by an agency for all or a part of the cost for an exceptional student with a disability to reside in a private residential care facility and the placement crosses school district lines.
2. The private residential care facility, or a residential facility that is operated, licensed, or regulated by a public agency shall ensure that, within 10 business days of a student with a disability being placed in the facility, written notification of the placement is provided to the school district where the student is currently enrolled and counted for funding purposes under s. 1011.62, F.S. (sending school district), and the school district where the residential facility is located (receiving school district). If the student is not currently counted for funding purposes in the school district in which the legal residence of the student is located, the school district in which the legal residence of the student is located also shall be notified by the residential facility in writing within the required timeline. The placing agency shall collaborate with the residential facility to determine how that notification will be provided within the required timeline.

3. In accordance with subsection (3) of Rule 6A-6.0334, F.A.C., the sending school district shall take reasonable steps to promptly respond to the residential facility's request for transmittal of the student's educational records. If the student's placement in the residential care facility occurs while the notification and procedures regarding payment are pending, the student shall remain enrolled in the sending school district and the sending school district shall collaborate with the residential care facility to ensure that the student receives a free and appropriate public education, special education, and related services, including services comparable to those described in the current IEP, until the notification and procedures regarding payment are completed.

Each school district is responsible for assuring the proposed program at the nonpublic school or community facility is appropriate to meet the educational needs of the exceptional student with a disability, or early intervention needs of the infant or toddler with a disability, placed through a contractual agreement. This is not meant to limit the responsibility of agencies in the state other than the district school boards from providing or paying some or all of the cost of a free appropriate public education or early intervention services to be provided to children with disabilities ages birth through 21 years.

Contractual Arrangements with Private Schools

Statutory and Regulatory Citations

Section 1003.52, F.S.

Rules 6A-6.0361, F.A.C.

1. Each school district shall provide special education and related services to an exceptional student with a disability through a contractual agreement with an approved nonpublic school or community facility under **any** of the following circumstances:
 - a. When the school district determines that no special educational program offered by the district, a cooperating school district, or a state agency can adequately meet the educational program needs for a student
 - b. For the provision of the educational component of a residential placement for an exceptional student with a disability when such a placement is made by another public agency for the primary purpose of addressing residential or other noneducational needs. The student's IEP may reflect that the residential placement is not required for the student to benefit from special education that could otherwise be provided by the school district during the day
 - c. For the provision of a non-residential interagency program for an exceptional student with a disability that provides educational programming in accordance with the student's IEP
 - d. In collaboration with the Part C Early Steps Program for the provision of early intervention services for an infant or toddler with a disability when the school district has determined that a nonpublic or community facility can provide appropriate services for the infant or toddler in accordance with an Individualized Family Support Plan (IFSP)

The requirements of this subsection do not apply when a school district provides educational assessments and a program of instruction and special education services to students in the custody of Department of Juvenile Justice programs who are served in residential and nonresidential care facilities and juvenile assessment facilities located in the school district in accordance with section 1003.52(3), F.S.

District Responsibilities

1. Before the school district executes a contract with a nonpublic school or community facility, the school district will determine that the school or facility:
 - a. Has qualified personnel as defined in Rule 6A-1.0503, F.A.C., or appropriate licensing entities and appoints noncertified instructional personnel according to the policies required in Rule 6A-1.0502, F.A.C. Personnel in an out-of-state nonpublic school or community facility shall be certified or licensed in accordance with the standards established by the state in which the nonpublic school or community facility is located.
 - b. Provides instructional school day and year consistent with s. 1011.61, F.S, taking into account the number of school hours or school days provided by the school district.
 - c. Maintains current sanitation and health certificates and fire inspections for each appropriate building and will be open for inspection by appropriate authorities.

- d. Protects the confidentiality of student records and information and assures the provision to the parent or student whose rights have transferred upon reaching the age of majority (age 18), the right of access, copies, amendments, and hearings as specified in Rule 6A-1.0955, F.A.C.
- e. Designates staff member to be responsible for the administration of the provisions of the contract and supervision of the educational program provided to each student, or early intervention services provided to each child age birth through two years, under the contract.
- f. Has written procedures for admission, dismissal, and separation of students, if appropriate.
- g. Has a written description of the support services that are available and will be provided to each student placed under a contract in accordance with each student's IEP or each child's IFSP.
- h. Has written policies concerning: care of the student in emergencies; clinical and administrative records; personnel policies; staff duties; fee schedules; food services; and insurance coverage.
- i. Complies with requirements of: the Office for Civil Rights (OCR); the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA); Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975; the Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act (Section 9525 of the Elementary and Secondary Act of 1965, as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001).
- j. Files reports with the Department of Education as prescribed in s. 1002.42, F.S., if applicable.

Contents of Contract

1. A contract between a district school board and a nonpublic school or community facility to provide educational programs for an exceptional student with a disability, or early intervention services to a child with a disability age birth through two, shall not extend beyond the school district's fiscal year, and shall include at least the following:
 - a. Written assurance that the nonpublic school or community facility is staffed by qualified personnel as defined by rule 6A-1.0503, F.A.C., or an appropriate and identified licensing entity.
 - b. A description of the scope of service provided by the nonpublic school or community facility and how it relates to the IEP of the exceptional student with a disability or the IFSP of the infant or toddler with a disability.
 - c. Provision for reporting to appropriate school district personnel and the parent on the student's progress in meeting the annual goals in accordance with the IEP or the child's and family's progress in meeting the major outcomes in accordance with the IFSP.
 - d. Provision for appropriate school personnel to review the program provided by the nonpublic school or community facility and to confer with the staff of the nonpublic school or community facility at reasonable times.
 - e. Provision for reporting to appropriate school district personnel any non-attendance of the exceptional student with a disability or the infant or toddler with a disability.
 - f. Provision for notifying appropriate school district personnel and the parent of the use of seclusion or restraint of the student, in accordance with section 1003.573, F.S.
 - g. The method of determining charges and sharing costs with other agencies for the placements under the contract, including the projected total cost to the school district.
 - h. Identification of financial responsibility.
 - i. Method of resolving interagency disputes. Such methods may be initiated by district school boards to secure reimbursement from other agencies.
 - j. A schedule for review of the program being provided to the exceptional student with a disability or the infant or toddler with a disability, through the contract.
 - k. Provision for terminating the contract.

- I. Written assurance of compliance with applicable provisions of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1974, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Additional District Responsibilities

When contracting with a nonpublic school or community facility, in accordance with Rule 6A-6.0361, F.A.C., the school district shall be responsible for at least the following:

1. Selecting an appropriate nonpublic school or facility in consultation with the parent and other appropriate agency personnel
2. Providing for transportation for students age three through 21 years
3. Maintaining a case file including progress reports and periodic evaluations of the exceptional student with a disability, or infant or toddler with a disability
4. Verifying that the child is a resident of the school district and is enrolled in, or has made application for admittance to, a school district program
5. Providing for the cost of the student's educational program or early intervention services as specified in the contract
6. Maintaining documentation of the qualifications of personnel in nonpublic schools or community facilities as required in Rule 6A-6.0361, F.A.C., or by the appropriate licensing entity, including the out-of-field notification requirements of s. 1012.42, F.S.
7. Providing an appropriate educational program for the student in the least restrictive environment based on an annual or more frequent review of the student's IEP, or early intervention services in a natural environment based on a six-month or more frequent review of the child's IFSP
8. Maintaining copies of the IEPs or IFSPs in the district and providing copies of the IEPs of students who are in residential placements to the Department of Education, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services
9. Reporting, data collection, and monitoring the use of seclusion or restraint of the student, in accordance with s.1003.573, F.S.

Section B.5: Florida Educational Finance Program (FEFP) Funds

Florida Educational Finance Program (FEFP) Funds

When an exceptional student with a disability, or infant or toddler with a disability, is enrolled in a nonpublic school or community facility program under contractual arrangement for providing a special educational program or early intervention services as provided herein, the student, or infant or toddler, shall generate FEFP funds for the school district in the appropriate cost categories as established in s. 1011.62, F.S., as outlined below.

1. The nonpublic school or community facility program meets the criteria referenced under **District Responsibilities** in Part I, Section B.4.
2. The student is regularly attending the program, and the length of the school day and minimum number of days are in compliance with Rule 6A-1.045111, F.A.C.
3. The student is appropriately identified as an exceptional student with a disability by the school district, or the infant or toddler has been determined eligible as an infant or toddler with a disability by the Part C Early Steps Program, but does not include students identified solely as gifted.
4. An IEP or IFSP for the student has been developed as required.
5. Full-time equivalent student membership for each exceptional student with a disability, or infant or toddler with a disability, under a contractual arrangement is included in the school district's report of membership.
6. Annually and prior to the first report of full-time equivalent membership for a student in a residential placement in a nonpublic or community facility program, a copy of the contracts signed by all participating parties shall be filed with the Department of Education, Division of Public Schools, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services, 325 West Gaines Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32399.

When a school district contracts for the educational component of a residential placement for a group of students, one (1) contract with student names or individual contracts shall be filed.

Notes:

When an exceptional student with a disability is offered an appropriate educational program by the school district and the parent waives his opportunity in favor of a nonpublic program selected by the parent, the parent shall assume full financial responsibility for the student's education.

Section 1003.57(2)(a), F.S., states, "an exceptional student with a disability who resides in a residential facility and receives special instruction or services is considered a resident of the state in which the student's parent is a resident." The statute further indicates that nonresident students with disabilities being serviced in residential facilities "may not be reported by any school district for FTE funding in the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP)."

The district contracts for special education and related services with nonpublic schools, residential facilities, or community facilities.

- ☐ Yes
☒ No

If **yes**, describe the district's procedures for the following:

Determining that the school or facility meets the required criteria before a contract with a nonpublic school or community facility is completed.

| N/A

Maintaining documentation of the qualifications of personnel in nonpublic schools or community facilities as required in Rule 6A-6.0361, F.A.C., or by the appropriate licensing entity, including the out-of-field notification requirements of s. 1012.42, F.S.

N/A

Maintaining copies of the IEPs or IFSPs in the district and providing copies of the IEPs of students who are in residential placements to the Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services.

N/A

Section B.6: Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Students

Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Students

The school district assures that LEP students who are also students with disabilities have programming and services pursuant to federal and state laws and regulations

Section B.7: Child Find

Child Find

1. The State has assigned to local school districts and the Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System (FDLRS) associate centers the responsibility for fully informing parents about the requirements of identifying, locating, and evaluating students with disabilities in accordance with 34 CFR §300.111 and ss. 1006.03 and 1003.57, F.S.
2. The focus for FDLRS's child find activities is children birth to five years of age and children attending **nonpublic** schools. FDLRS also serves as a link between school districts and the identification, location, and evaluation services of the local Early Steps programs, county health units, Head Start, Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind (FSDB), and the individual school districts.
 - a. In addition to these functions, FDLRS centers have been authorized to provide testing and evaluation services to nonpublic school pupils or other children who are not enrolled in public schools and to assist districts in providing testing and evaluation services for high-risk or infants and preschool children with disabilities.
3. For parentally-placed private school students, the district in which the private school is located has the responsibility for child find if the private school is **nonprofit**. If the private school is **for-profit**, the district of the student's residence has the child find responsibility.

Section B.8: Confidentiality of Student Records

Confidentiality of Student Records

In accordance with 20 United States Code (U.S.C.) §1232g, 34 CFR §§300.613–300.621, s. 1002.22, F.S., and Rule 6A-1.0955, F.A.C., the district assures that a formal policy is in place to guarantee the confidentiality of student records. This policy includes the following:

1. Access rights

- a. The district will permit parents to inspect and review any educational records relating to their children that are collected, maintained, or used by the district, without unnecessary delay and before any meeting regarding an IEP, IFSP, or educational plan (EP), or any hearing relating to the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of the child, or the provision of FAPE to the student, and in no case more than 30 days from the request. The parent has the right to:
 - A response from the district for reasonable explanation and interpretation of the records
 - Request that the district provide copies of the records if failure to do so would deprive the parent of the right to review the records
 - Have a representative of the parent inspect and review the records
- b. The district presumes that the parent has authority to inspect and review records relating to that parent's child unless otherwise advised that the parent does not have such authority.
- c. The district keeps a record of parties obtaining access to student records, other than the parent or authorized district or school employees, which includes the name of the party, the date access was given, and the purpose for which the party is authorized to use the records.
- d. When the educational record includes information about more than one student, the parent may review the information relating only to that parent's child.
- e. The district will provide the parent, upon request, a list of the types and locations of educational records relating to that parent's child.
- f. The district may charge a fee for copies of records if the fee does not prevent the parent from accessing the records. A search or retrieval fee may not be charged.

2. Amendment of student records

- a. The student's parent who believes that information within the student's educational records contains inaccurate or misleading information, or violates the privacy or other rights of the child, may request that the district amend the information.
- b. The district will decide whether to amend the information in accordance with the request within a reasonable period of time.
- c. If the district refuses to amend the information, it will inform the parent of the refusal and advise the parent of the right to a hearing, in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974.
- d. If, as a result of the hearing, the district decides that the information is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the privacy or other rights of the child, it will amend the record accordingly and inform the parent in writing.
- e. If, as a result of the hearing, the district decides that the information is not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the privacy or other rights of the child, it will inform the parent of the right to place in the record a statement commenting on the information or setting forth any reason for disagreement with the decision of the district.
- f. Any explanation placed in the student's record will be maintained by the district as part of the student's record as long as the district maintains the record or the contested portion. If the record is disclosed by the agency to any party, the explanation will also be disclosed.

3. Consent

- a. Parental consent will be obtained before personally identifiable information is disclosed to anyone other than officials of the district or other party with a legitimate interest in the record, or as specifically authorized by FERPA and s. 1002.22, F.S.
- b. Parental consent or the consent of an eligible student, who has reached the age of majority, must be obtained before personally identifiable information is released to officials of participating agencies that provide or pay for transition services.
- c. Parental consent or the consent of an eligible student, who has reached the age of majority, must be obtained before any personally identifiable information about a child is released between school district officials where a private school is located and officials in the school district of the parent's residence in situations involving parentally placed private school students.

4. Safeguards

- a. The district will protect the confidentiality of personally identifiable information during the collection, storage, disclosure, and destruction of records.
- b. The principal or designee at each school assumes responsibility for ensuring confidentiality of student records.
- c. All persons using or collecting personally identifiable information must receive training in confidentiality procedures.
- d. The district will maintain for public inspection a current listing of the names and positions of those employees within the district who have access to personally identifiable information.

5. Destruction of information

- a. The district will inform parents when personally identifiable information is no longer needed to provide education services to the student. This information must be destroyed at the request of the parent.
- b. A permanent record of the student's name, address, telephone number, grades, attendance record, classes attended, grade level completed, and year completed may be maintained without time limitation.

6. Annual written notice to parents

- a. The district will provide annual written notice to inform the adult student, or the parent or guardian, of the rights defined in s. 1002.22, F.S., and 34 CFR §99.7. Items to be included in the notice are:
 - The right to review and inspect the student's education records, including the procedures to exercise this right
 - The right to seek amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes to be inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights, including the procedures to request an amendment
 - The right to consent to disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA and state statute permits disclosure without consent
 - The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the district to comply with the requirements of FERPA
- b. The district will have developed alternate methods of notice for informing adult students or the parent or guardian unable to comprehend a written notice in English.

7. Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)

The district assures that FAPE is available to all students with disabilities residing in the district between the ages of three and 22 years, including: students with disabilities who have been suspended or expelled from school; students with disabilities who have graduated with a special diploma or certificate of completion, but have not attained the age of 22; students in the care and custody of DJJ, and students with disabilities who attend public charter schools. FAPE is also available to students identified as gifted in kindergarten through Grade 12. FAPE no longer applies to students who have graduated from high school with a standard diploma

and do not defer receipt of the diploma in accordance with s. 1003.4282(11)(c), F.S. A standard diploma does not include an alternative degree that is fully aligned with the state's academic standards, such as a certificate of completion or a General Educational Development credential (GED), in accordance with Rule 6A-6.03028(1)(a), F.A.C.

8. Transition from Part C to Part B

Children participating in early intervention programs under Part C, who will participate in prekindergarten programs under Part B, will experience a smooth and effective transition to the prekindergarten program for children with disabilities. By the child's third birthday, an IEP or IFSP is developed and implemented. A representative of the school district participates in transition planning conferences arranged by Children's Medical Services (CMS), and Local Early Steps, the designated lead agency for Part C.

9. Funding formula

The district assures that, in accordance with s. 1011.62, F.S., in order to generate funds using one of the two weighted ESE cost factors, a new matrix of services form is completed by trained personnel at the time of initial placement and at least once every three years. Additionally, the district ensures that matrices reflect current services. If services change as the result of an IEP team decision, the district will complete a new matrix. The nature and intensity of the services indicated on the matrix is consistent with the services described in each student's IEP, IFSP, or EP. Nothing listed in the matrix limits the services the school district provides in order to ensure that exceptional students are provided a free appropriate public education.

Students identified as exceptional who do not have a matrix of services will generate funds on the basis of full-time equivalent student membership in the FEFP at the same funding level per student as provided for basic students. These students will be reported at 111 for grades prekindergarten through 3, 112 for grades 4 through 8, and 113 for grades 9 through 12. Additional funding for these students is provided through the ESE Guaranteed Allocation component of the FEFP.

Section B.9: Coordinated Early Intervening Services (CEIS)

Coordinated Early Intervening Services (CEIS)

IDEA regulations, 34 CFR §300.226, permit an local educational agency (LEA) to voluntarily use up to 15 percent of Part B funds to develop and implement coordinated early intervening services. CEIS is for students who have not been identified as students with disabilities under IDEA, but who have been identified as needing additional academic and behavioral supports to succeed in general education.

CEIS may be used for:

- Direct instruction of students in kindergarten through Grade 12, with a particular emphasis on students in kindergarten through Grade three;
- Professional development for teachers and other school staff for the delivery of scientifically based academic instruction and behavioral interventions, including scientifically based literacy instruction and instruction in the use of adaptive and instructional software; and
- Educational and behavioral evaluations, services and supports.

Any LEA that uses Part B funds for coordinated early intervening services must annually report to the State Educational Agency (SEA) the number of students served by CEIS.

The SEA may require an LEA to reserve 15 percent of its Part B funds for CEIS, when significant disproportionately based on race or ethnicity is determined according to IDEA regulations 34 CFR §300.646(b)(2).

Section B.10: National Instructional Materials Access Center (NIMAC)**National Instructional Materials Access Center (NIMAC)****Statutory and Regulatory Citations**

34 CFR §300.172

1. The school district assures compliance with the National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard (NIMAS) to provide instructional materials to blind persons or other persons with print disabilities in a timely manner.
2. Instructional materials may be purchased through the NIMAC in the same manner and conditions as authorized by the state.
3. School districts may choose not to coordinate with the NIMAC, but must ensure that children with disabilities who need instructional materials in accessible formats receive those materials in a timely manner.

Section C.1: Exceptional Student Education Procedural Safeguards

Statutory and Regulatory Citations

34 CFR §§300.500–300.536

Sections 1003.57 1003.571, 1002.22 and 1008.212, F.S.

Rules 6A-6.03311, 6A-6.03313, and 6A-1.0955, F.A.C.

Procedural Safeguards

Parents of exceptional students are entitled to information about their rights. These rights, or *procedural safeguards*, are intended to ensure that parents have the opportunity to be partners in the educational decisions made regarding their children.

The procedural safeguards notice must be written in language understandable to the general public and provided in the native language of the parent or other mode of communication used by the parent, unless it is clearly not feasible to do so. If the native language or other mode of communication of the parent is not a written language, the district must take steps to ensure that the notice is translated orally or by other means to the parent in his or her native language or other mode of communication, that the parent understands the content of the notice, and that there is written evidence that these requirements have been met.

1. Procedural safeguards for students with disabilities

This applies to students with disabilities enrolled in public schools and to students with disabilities enrolled by their parents in nonprofit private schools.

The district **assures** that the *Notice of Procedural Safeguards for Parents of Students with Disabilities* is made available to parents at least one time a school year. In addition, a copy also must be given to the parents:

- Upon initial referral or the parent's request for an evaluation
- In accordance with the discipline procedures when a change of placement occurs
- Upon receipt of the first state complaint in a school year
- Upon the receipt of the first request for a due process hearing in a school year
- Upon the parent's request to receive a copy
- In accordance with the provisions of s. 1008.212, F.S., upon the school district superintendent's recommendation to the commissioner of education that an extraordinary exemption for a given state assessment administration be granted or denied.

One of the following must be selected:

- ☒ The district will use the Department of Education's Notice of Procedural Safeguards for Parents of Students with Disabilities, as posted on the Department's website, to inform the parents as required.
- ☐ The district will use a different notice of procedural safeguards for parents of students with disabilities to inform the parents as required. A copy of this notice is located in Appendix A.1

2. Procedural safeguards for exceptional students who are gifted

The district **assures** that the notice of the *Procedural Safeguards for Exceptional Students who are Gifted* is made available to parents of a child who is gifted, and must be given to the parents, at a minimum:

- Upon initial referral for evaluation
- Upon refusal of a parent's request to conduct an initial evaluation
- Upon notification of each educational plan meeting
- Upon receipt of a request for a due process hearing by either the school district or the parent

One of the following must be selected:

- ☒ The district will use the Department of Education's Procedural Safeguards for Exceptional Students who are Gifted , as posted on the Department's website to inform the parents as required.
- ☐ The district will use a different notice of procedural safeguards for parents of students who are gifted to inform the parents as required. A copy of this notice is located in Appendix A.2
- ☐ This requirement is not applicable for the Department of Corrections.

Describe the district's policies and procedures to ensure that within 15 days (7 days if expedited) of receiving notice of a parent's due process hearing request, the district convenes a resolution meeting with the parent and the relevant member or members of the IEP team unless the parent and the district agree in writing to waive the meeting or use the mediation process.

Upon receipt of a parent's due process hearing request in the district ESE office, it is date stamped. At this time, the ESE director contacts the parent and ESE Resource Specialist to collaborate on mutually agreeable dates for the meeting within ten days of the date stamp. If this is an expedited request the meeting will be scheduled within 7 days of receiving notice. The parent is provided with a meeting notice in person, or by certified mail. If the parent is not available for input regarding a mutually agreed upon time for the meeting, the district ESE director sets a time for the meeting and a parent invitation is sent by certified mail, with a letter explaining that contact attempts have not been successful. If the parent agrees to the meeting, the ESE director or ESE Resource Specialist notifies all required IEP team members (parent/guardian; interpreter of data; LEA; special education teacher; general education teacher; representative of the district who has the decision-making authority) and others who have relevant information concerning the student's needs/progress (participants will be listed on the parent's invitation.) If the parent requests or brings counsel, the district will also have counsel for the district present at the meeting. Otherwise, attorneys will not participate. If the parent and district agree to waive the meeting or use the mediation process, the parent and ESE director sign a form stating this. The form will be signed within 15 days of receiving notice of the parent's due process hearing request and may be obtained as agreed upon by the parent and ESE director. It may be accomplished by the parent returning the form by mail; a home visit by the ESE director and district safety officer or the parent visiting the school board office to sign the waiver.

Section C.2: Parental Revocation of Consent for Special Education and Related Services

Statutory and Regulatory Citations

34 CFR §§300.9, 300.300 and 300.503

Section 1003.4282, F.S.

Procedures

A parent of a student with a disability who has been receiving specially designed instruction and related services may revoke consent for such services.

1. The parent's request for revocation must be in writing.
2. The district will provide the parent with written notice under 34 CFR §300.503 before ceasing the provision of special education and related services.
3. The district may not continue to provide special education and related services to the child.
4. The district will not use mediation or due process procedures to challenge the parent's revocation of consent.
5. The district is not required to convene an IEP team or develop an IEP for further provision of special education and related services for the student.
6. The district is not required to amend the child's education records to remove any reference to the child's previous receipt of such services.
7. The district will not be considered to be out of compliance with IDEA for failure to provide a FAPE to an otherwise eligible child.

Requirements or Options No Longer Applicable

When a parent of a student with a disability revokes consent for services, the requirements that previously applied solely as a result of the student's status as a student with a disability will no longer apply. Examples include:

1. The revocation applies to all services the student is receiving as a student with a disability, including instructional and testing accommodations; the revocation cannot be for some services but not others.
2. The procedural safeguards that apply to students with disabilities, including disciplinary protections, will no longer apply to the student.
3. The options in accordance with s. 1003.4282 (10), F.S., for a student with an individual educational plan to satisfy the standard high school diploma requirements will not be available.

Section C.3: Transfer of Parental Rights at Age of Majority

Statutory and Regulatory Citations

34 CFR §§300.520 and 300.320

Chapter 744, F.S.

Section 393.12, F.S.

Rules 6A-6.03028, 6A-6.03011, 6A-6.0311 through 6A-6.0361, and 6A-6.03311, F.A.C.

Procedures

1. When a student with a disability reaches the age of 18, except for a student with a disability who has been determined incompetent under state law or who has had a guardian advocate appointed to make educational decisions as provided by s. 393.12, F.S., all rights afforded to parents under Rules 6A-6.0311 through 6A-6.0361, F.A.C., transfer to the student. However, the right to notice under Rules 6A-6.0311 through 6A-6.0361, F.A.C., is retained as a shared right of the parent and the student.
2. At least one year before the student's eighteenth birthday, the district will inform the student of his or her rights under Part B of the Individual with Disabilities Educational Act (IDEA), if any, that will transfer from the parent to the student on reaching the age of majority, which is 18 years of age. The student's individual educational plan will include a statement that the student has been informed of the rights, if any, that will transfer to the student at 18 years of age.
3. The school district will notify the student and the parent of the transfer of rights when the student attains the age of 18; this notice is separate and distinct from the notice that was provided to the student and the parent at least one year before the student's eighteenth birthday.
4. For a student with a disability who has attained age 18 and is incarcerated in a juvenile justice facility or local correctional facility, all rights accorded to parents under Part B of the IDEA transfer to the student, including the right to notice.
5. For students incarcerated in state correctional facilities, all rights accorded to parents under Part B of the IDEA transfer to the student, including notice, regardless of the age of the student.
6. If a student with a disability has reached the age of majority and does not have the ability to provide informed consent with respect to his or her educational program, procedures established by statute may be used by the parent to take one of the following actions:
 - a. Have the student declared incompetent and the appropriate guardianship established in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 744, F.S.
 - b. Be appointed to represent the educational interests of the student throughout the student's eligibility for Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) under Rules 6A-6.03011 through 6A-6.0361, F.A.C.
 - c. Have another appropriate individual appointed to represent the educational interests of the student throughout the student's eligibility for FAPE under Rules 6A-6.0311 through 6A-6.0361, F.A.C., if the parent is not available in accordance with s. 393.12, F.S.

Section D: Surrogate Parents

Statutory and Regulatory Citations

34 CFR §300.519

Sections 39.0016 and 1002.22, F.S.

Rule 6A-6.0333, F.A.C.

Definition

A surrogate parent is an individual appointed to act in the place of a parent in educational decision-making and in safeguarding a student's rights under IDEA and s. 39.0016, F.S., when no parent can be identified; the student's parent, after reasonable efforts, cannot be located by the school district; the student is a ward of the state under state law; the student is an unaccompanied homeless youth; or a court of competent jurisdiction over the student has determined that no person has the authority, willingness, or ability to serve as the educational decision maker for the student without judicial action.

Procedures

1. A surrogate parent appointed by the district school superintendent or the court:
 - a. Must be at least 18 years old.
 - b. Must have no personal or professional interest that conflicts with the interests of the student to be represented.
 - c. Must not be an employee of the FDOE, the local school district, a community-based care provider, the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF), or any other public or private agency involved in the education or care of the student.
 - This prohibition includes group home staff and *therapeutic* foster parents.
 - A person who acts in a parental role to a child, such as a foster parent or relative caregiver, is not prohibited from serving as a surrogate parent if he or she is employed by such agency, willing to serve, and knowledgeable about the child and the exceptional student education process.
 - The surrogate parent may be a court-appointed guardian ad litem or a relative or nonrelative adult who is involved in the child's life regardless of whether that person has physical custody of the child.
 - d. Must have the knowledge and skills acquired by successfully completing training using materials developed and approved by the FDOE to ensure adequate representation of the child.
2. Appointment of a surrogate parent for a student who has or is suspected of having a disability
 - a. A surrogate parent for a student who is eligible for or who is suspected of being eligible for special programs made available through a school district or agency under contract with the school district shall be appointed by the district's school superintendent not more than 30 days after the school district determines that the student needs a surrogate parent.
 - b. The surrogate parent for a student who is eligible for or who is suspected of being eligible for special programs made available through a contract from the FDOE shall be appointed by the individual specified in the contract.
 - c. In the case of a student who is a ward of the state, the surrogate parent alternatively may be appointed by the judge overseeing the student's case, provided the surrogate meets the qualifications above.
 - d. If a guardian ad litem has been appointed for a child, the district school superintendent must first consider the child's guardian ad litem when appointing a surrogate parent.
 - The district school superintendent must accept the appointment of the court if he or she has not previously appointed a surrogate parent.
 - The court must accept a surrogate parent duly appointed by a district school superintendent.

- e. A surrogate parent appointed by the district school superintendent or the court must be accepted by any subsequent school or school district without regard to where the child is receiving residential care so that a single surrogate parent can follow the education of the child during his or her entire time in state custody.
- f. Nothing in s. 39.0016, F.S., or in Rule 6A-6.0333, F.A.C., shall limit or prohibit the continuance of a surrogate parent appointment when the responsibility for the student's educational placement moves among and between public and private agencies.
- g. For a child known to the DCF, the responsibility to appoint a surrogate parent resides with both the district school superintendent and the court with jurisdiction over the child.
 - If the court elects to appoint a surrogate parent, notice shall be provided as soon as practicable to the child's school.
 - At any time the court determines that it is in the best interests of a child to remove a surrogate parent, the court may appoint a new surrogate parent for educational decision-making purposes for that child.
- h. The surrogate parent shall continue in the appointed role until the occurrence of one of the following circumstances:
 - The child is determined to no longer be eligible or in need of special programs, except when termination of special programs is being contested
 - The child achieves permanency through adoption or legal guardianship and is no longer in the custody of DCF
 - The parent who was previously unknown becomes known, whose whereabouts were unknown is located, or who was unavailable is determined by the court to be available
 - The appointed surrogate no longer wishes to represent the child or is unable to represent the child
 - The superintendent of the school district in which the child is attending school, the FDOE contract designee, or the court that appointed the surrogate determines the appointed surrogate parent no longer adequately represents the child
 - The child moves to a geographic location that is not reasonably accessible to the appointed surrogate
- i. The appointment and termination of appointment of a surrogate shall be entered as an order of the court with a copy of the order provided to the child's school as soon as practicable.

3. The person appointed as a surrogate parent:

- a. Must be acquainted with the child and become knowledgeable about his or her disability and educational needs
 - b. Must represent the child in all matters relating to identification, evaluation, and educational placement and the provision of a free and appropriate education to the child
 - c. Must represent the interests and safeguard the rights of the child in educational decisions that affect the child
4. The responsibilities of the person appointed as a surrogate parent shall not extend to the care, maintenance, custody, residential placement, or any other area not specifically related to the education of the child, unless the same person is appointed by the court for such other purposes.
5. A person appointed as a surrogate parent shall enjoy all of the procedural safeguards afforded a parent with respect to the identification, evaluation, and educational placement of a student with a disability or a student who is suspected of having a disability.
6. A person appointed as a surrogate parent shall not be held liable for actions taken in good faith on behalf of the student in protecting the special education rights of the child.
7. A school district may compensate persons appointed as surrogate parents. A person acting as a surrogate parent is not an employee of the school district or FDOE-contracted program solely because he or she is paid by the school district or FDOE-

contracted program to serve as a surrogate parent.

8. In the case of a student who is an unaccompanied homeless youth, appropriate staff of emergency or transitional shelters, independent living programs, and street outreach programs, as well as McKinney-Vento liaisons or other school district staff, may be appointed as temporary surrogate parents without regard to the requirements until a surrogate can be appointed who meets all of the requirements.

One of the following must be selected:

- ☒ I have read and understand the above information.
- ☐ This section is not applicable for the Department of Corrections.

Describe the district's procedures for determining when a student who has or is suspected of having a disability needs a surrogate parent, including documentation of reasonable efforts to locate or contact the parent, if applicable. (i.e., no clear evidence that parental rights have been terminated).

When the school is unable to reach a parent when necessary such as in case of an emergency, school communication, extra-curricular activities, student is suspected of having a disability or has a disability and consent is needed to conduct an evaluation or to provide services as determined at the eligibility, IEP or EP staffing and there is not a parent present and the school district cannot locate the parent, has no knowledge of where the parent can be located or if the student is a ward of the state and every effort has been made by the school administrator(s) and Social worker to locate friends and family of the parent and student, home visits are made by the school staff and Social worker. After exhausting every avenue, it is then determined that the student is in need of a surrogate parent.

Describe the district's procedures for recruiting and training surrogate parents, including those surrogates appointed by a judge.

Community organizations, such as the Lions Club, Kiwanis Club, and senior citizens group, such as Foster Grandparent Program through the Council on Aging that perform community service for people with disabilities and the Guardian Ad Litem Program, are a good source of possible volunteers to serve as surrogate parents. Leaders of religious organizations may be willing to encourage their members to participate if they are informed of the pressing need for surrogate parents in their community. College students who are majoring in education, social work, counseling, law, or related fields, serving as a surrogate parent can provide valuable experience with the education system and with exceptional students. Such experience can help college students refine their career goals; develop communication, negotiation, and research skills; and make contacts within the local school district that may be able to provide references or job tips when they are ready to begin their professional careers. Retired school district personnel are a possible source of volunteers. Parents of current or former students may also be willing to serve as a surrogate for a student at their child's school. Districts will:

- Place a notice in the community news section of the local newspaper; asking the newspaper to run a feature article on the service provided by surrogate parents and the need for volunteers.
- Request to be on the program meetings of organizations, such as the Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO).
- Request assistance from our FDLRS Galaxy staff to train potential surrogates. Districts shall protect the confidentiality of student information during all recruitment activities.

Section E: Individual Educational Plans and Educational Plans for Transferring Exceptional Students

Statutory and Regulatory Citations

34 CFR §§99.31 and 300.323

Sections 1003.01 and 1003.57, F.S.

Rules 6A-6.030191, 6A-6.03028, 6A-6.0331, 6A-6.0334 and 6A-6.0361, F.A.C.

Definition

A transferring exceptional student is one who was previously enrolled as an exceptional student in any other school district or agency and who is enrolling in a different Florida school district or in an educational program operated by the Florida Department of Education through grants or contractual agreements in accordance with s. 1003.57, F.S.

Procedures

1. IEPs or EPs for students who transfer school districts within Florida

If an exceptional education student who had an IEP or EP that was in effect in a previous Florida school district transfers to the school district and enrolls in a new school, the new school district (in consultation with the parents or legal guardians) will provide FAPE to the student, which includes services comparable to those described in the child's IEP or EP from the previous Florida school district, until the school district does **one** of the following:

- a. Adopts the student's IEP or EP from the previous school district.
- b. Develops, adopts, and implements a new IEP or EP that meets the applicable requirements of Rule 6A-6.03028 - 6A-6.0361, F.A.C.

2. IEPs or EPs for students transferring to or from a Florida school district and a full-time virtual program

If an exceptional education student who had an IEP or EP that was in effect in a previous Florida school or school district enrolls in a full-time virtual program (in accordance with s. 1002.37 or 1002.45, F.S.), the virtual program must determine if the student meets the profile for success in this educational delivery context. If the student meets the profile for success in this educational delivery context, the virtual program will provide FAPE to the student, which includes services comparable to those described in the student's IEP or EP from the previous school or school district, until the IEP team for the virtual program either:

- a. Adopts the student's IEP or EP from the previous school or school district, or
- b. Develops, adopts and implements a new IEP or EP that meets the applicable requirements of Rules 6A-3.03011 - 6A-6.0361, F.A.C. A virtual program may not deny or delay enrollment pending review of a student's IEP or EP.

When an IEP team of a school district determines that the full-time virtual program is appropriate for a student in accordance with s. 1003.57(5), F.S., within fifteen (15) business days prior to the withdrawal from the school district, the school district must convene an IEP team meeting with at least one (1) representative specific to the full-time virtual program to determine appropriate goals, supports and services for the student. The receiving virtual program may adopt and implement the student's existing IEP from the previous school district or may revise the IEP as needed, to meet the student's needs in the virtual environment.

When an IEP team for a virtual program determines that the full-time virtual program is not appropriate for a student in accordance with s. 1003.57(5), F.S., the full-time virtual program must, within fifteen (15) business days, convene an IEP team meeting to determine appropriate goals, supports and services for the student. A representative from the school district of residence for the student must participate in this meeting. A student may not be disenrolled from a full-time virtual program until after the IEP team has met and determined appropriate services for the student.

3. IEPs for students who transfer from outside Florida

If an exceptional education student who had an IEP that was in effect in a previous school district in another state transfers to the school district and enrolls in a Florida school district within the same school year, the new Florida school district (in consultation with the parents) will provide the student with FAPE (including services comparable to those described in the student's IEP from the previous school district) until the school district does **both** of the following:

- a. Conducts an initial evaluation in accordance with Rule 6A-6.0331, F.A.C., or determines that evaluation is not necessary.

- b. Develops, adopts, and implements a new IEP or EP, if appropriate, that meets the applicable requirements of Rules 6A-6.03011 through 6A-6.0361, F.A.C.

If a transfer student enters the school district with a specific methodology or curriculum on their IEP that was provided through therapy as a related service (e.g., Handwriting without Tears®, sensory integration, neurodevelopmental treatment), and the particular program stated on the IEP is not used in the new school district, another comparable strategy or intervention can be used until the new school district is able to conduct an evaluation, if determined necessary, and develop, adopt and implement a new IEP, if appropriate.

4. EPs for gifted students who transfer from outside Florida

If a student who had a gifted plan that was in effect in a previous school district in another state transfers to a Florida school district and enrolls in a new school within the same school year, the new Florida school district (in consultation with the parents or legal guardians) must provide the student with services comparable to those described in the student's gifted plan from the previous school district, until the new Florida school district develops, adopts and implements a Florida EP that meets the applicable requirements of Rule 6A-6.030191, F.A.C. In accordance with Rule 6A-6.0334, F.A.C., students who transfer with gifted eligibility from another state do not need to meet the requirements of Rule 6A-6.03019, F.A.C., for continued services. A gifted plan could include documentation from the previous school district in another state that the student was determined eligible for gifted services in accordance with the applicable requirements of that district or state and was receiving gifted services.

5. Parental consent

The student's new school district is **not** required to obtain parental consent for the initial provision of services for transferring exceptional students determined eligible for services. However, written informed parental consent **is** required before the new school district can conduct an initial evaluation to determine if a student has a disability and needs special education and related services.

6. Transmittal of records

To facilitate the transition for a student described in subsections 1 and 2 above, the new school district in which the student enrolls will take reasonable steps to promptly obtain the student's records, including the IEP or EP and supporting documents and any other records relating to the provision of special education or related services to the student, from the previous school district in which the student was enrolled, in accordance with 34 CFR §99.31; and the previous school district in which the student was enrolled must take reasonable steps to promptly respond to the request from the new school district.

Section F: Access to a Student's Public Benefits or Insurance

Statutory and Regulatory Citations

34 CFR §300.154

Rules 6A-6.03011 through 6A-6.0361, 6A-6.03028 and 6A-6.03311, F.A.C.

Procedures

The school district may use the Medicaid or other public health benefits or insurance programs in which a student participates to provide or pay for services required under Rules 6A-6.03011 through 6A-6.0361, F.A.C., as permitted under the public benefits or insurance program, except as noted below:

1. With regard to services required to provide FAPE to an eligible student under the IDEA, the school district:
 - a. May not require parents to sign up for or enroll in public insurance programs in order for their student to receive FAPE under Part B of the IDEA.
 - b. May not require parents to incur an out-of-pocket expense such as the payment of a deductible or co-pay amount incurred in filing a claim for services provided pursuant to the IDEA— the district may pay the cost that the parent otherwise would be required to pay.
 - c. May not use a student's benefits under a public insurance program if that use would (any of the following):
 - Decrease available lifetime coverage or any other insured benefit.
 - Result in the family paying for services that would otherwise be covered by the public benefits or insurance program and that are required for the student outside of the time the student is in school.
 - Increase premiums or lead to the discontinuation of benefits or insurance.
 - Risk loss of eligibility for home and community-based waivers, based on aggregate health-related expenditures.
 - d. Prior to accessing the student's or parent's public benefits or insurance for the first time, and after providing notification to the student's parent as described in Rule 6A-6.03028(3)(q)1.e., F.A.C., the school district must obtain written, parental consent that specifies each of the following:
 - The personally identifiable information that may be disclosed, such as records or information about the services that may be provided to the student
 - The purpose of the disclosure, such as the purpose of billing for services
 - The agency to which the disclosure may be made
 - The parent understands and agrees that the school district may access the insurance to pay for the services required under Rules 6A-6.03011 through 6A-6.0361, F.A.C.
 - e. Prior to accessing a student's or parent's public benefits for the first time, and annually thereafter, the school district must provide written notification consistent with requirements found in Rule 6A-6.03311(1)(a) and (b), F.A.C., to the student's parents that includes all of the following:
 - A statement of the parental consent provision in Rule 6A-6.03028(3)(q)1.d., F.A.C.
 - A statement of the no cost provisions of Rule 6A-6.03028(3)(q)1., F.A.C.
 - A statement that the parents have the right to withdraw their consent to disclose their child's personal identifiable information to the agency responsible for the administration of the State's public benefits or insurance at any time.
 - A statement that the withdrawal of consent or refusal to provide consent to disclose personally identifiable information to the agency responsible for the administration of the State's public benefits or insurance program does

not relieve the school district of its responsibility to ensure that all required services are provided at no cost to the parents.

2. With regard to students with disabilities who are covered by private insurance, a school district may access a parent's private insurance proceeds to provide services required under the IDEA only if the parent provides written informed consent. Each time the school district proposes to access the parent's private insurance to provide services required under IDEA, the agency must obtain parental consent and inform the parents that their refusal to permit the school district to access their private insurance does not relieve the school district of its responsibility to ensure that all required services are provided at no cost to the parents.
3. If a school district is unable to obtain parental consent to use the parents' private insurance, or public benefits or insurance when the parents would incur a cost for a specified service required to ensure a FAPE, the school district may use its IDEA Part B funds to pay for the service. To avoid financial cost to parents who otherwise would consent to use private insurance, or public benefits or insurance if the parents would incur a cost, the school district may use its IDEA Part B funds to pay the cost that the parents otherwise would have to pay to use the parents' benefits or insurance (e.g., the deductible or co-pay amounts).

Section G: General Education Intervention Procedures

Statutory and Regulatory Citations

34 CFR §§300.302, 300.306, and 300.308–300.310

Sections 1008.25 and 381.0056, F.S.

Rules 6A-6.03018, 6A-6.03019, 6A-6.03020, 6A-6.0331 and 6A-6.03411, F.A.C.

Definition

General education intervention procedures are activities conducted by a district for kindergarten through Grade 12 students enrolled in public schools who need additional academic or behavioral support to succeed in the general education environment. These activities are embedded in the district's responsibility to implement a multi-tiered system of supports that is integrated into a continuum of evidence-based academic and behavioral interventions. In implementing a data-based problem-solving process designed to develop a coordinated continuum of evidence-based instruction and intervention practices, a district may engage in activities that include educational and behavioral evaluations, services, supports, evidence-based literacy instruction and professional development for teachers and other school staff, and where appropriate, instruction on the use of adaptive and instructional technology.

General Education Intervention Procedures for K-12 Students Suspected of Having a Disability Who are Enrolled in Public Schools

1. Parent involvement in general education intervention procedures

The district provides opportunities for parents to be involved in a data-based problem-solving process to address the student's academic or behavioral areas of concern. There must be discussion with the parent regarding the data used to identify the problem, the plan for addressing the problem through intervention, the plan for monitoring student progress, the student's responses to instruction and interventions, modification of the interventions when needed and anticipated future action to address the student's learning or behavioral needs. The district must maintain documentation of parental involvement and communication.

2. Observations of student in the educational environment

The school district conducts observations of the student in the educational environment and, as appropriate, in other settings to document the student's academic or behavioral areas of concern. At least one observation must include an observation of the student's performance in the general education classroom.

3. Review of data

The school district reviews social, psychological, medical, and anecdotal records and achievement data in the student's cumulative folder and demonstrates through data that the student was provided appropriate instruction in the regular education settings, which was delivered by qualified personnel. Attendance records are reviewed and used as one indicator of a student's access to instruction.

4. Sensory screenings and diagnostic assessments

- a. Hearing and vision screenings are completed for the purpose of ruling out sensory deficits that may interfere with the student's academic and behavioral progress. Hearing and vision screenings are conducted in accordance with the school district's school health plan. In certain circumstances, a current evaluation by a medical professional may be used as the screening report.
- b. Additional screenings and assessments are conducted to assist in determining academic or behavioral interventions, as appropriate. Student screenings to determine instructional and behavioral intervention strategies are not considered to be an evaluation for eligibility for special education and related services.

5. Implementation of evidence-based interventions

- o The school district implements evidence-based interventions addressing the identified areas of concern in the **general education environment**.
- o The interventions selected for implementation should be determined by a team through a data-based problem-solving process that uses student performance data to identify and analyze the area(s) of concern, select and implement interventions, monitor effectiveness of the interventions and modify intervention or intensity when needed.

- o Interventions must be implemented as designed for a period of time sufficient to determine effectiveness, and with a level of intensity that matches the student's needs.
- o The district must collect pre-intervention and ongoing progress-monitoring data regarding academic or behavioral areas of concern and communicate the data to the parents in an understandable format, which may include, but is not limited to, graphic representation.

6. General education interventions are **not** required for the following:

- o Children younger than kindergarten-entry age who are not enrolled in kindergarten
- o Students suspected of being gifted as described in Rule 6A-6.03019, F.A.C.
- o Students who are being considered for eligibility for specially designed instruction for students who are homebound or hospitalized as described in Rule 6A-6.03020, F.A.C.
- o Students who are not enrolled in a public school.

General education interventions **may not be required** for students suspected of having a disability if the student demonstrates a speech disorder; or severe cognitive, physical, or sensory disorders; or severe social or behavioral deficits that require immediate intervention to prevent harm to the student or others, and a team comprised of qualified professionals and the parent determines that these general education interventions are not appropriate.

Does the district have a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) procedures document or website?

☒ Yes

☐ No

If yes, how can this document or website be accessed?

The district MTSS Manual is complete and goes to the board for approval. This will be accessible on the district website in August 2020 at <http://www.okee.k12.fl.us/>.

If no, describe district policies and procedures for integrating a data-based, problem-solving process within an MTSS.

N/A

What academic and behavior progress monitoring tools and data do teams use to monitor student response to intervention? Address the following in your response: (a) How frequently are Tier 3 interventions reviewed and monitored? (b) What factors does the problem-solving team consider in determining that the student may be a student with a disability? (c) What is the decision criteria for initiating an evaluation?

Academic/Behavioral Focus of Supports Tier 1 - Designed for all students, with ongoing differentiation: Focus on alignment of instruction and instructional resources to common core. Tier 2: Small group problem solving: Targeted interventions for students not meeting expectations, in addition to core instruction. Tier 3: Individualized problem solving: Intensive and strategic interventions, in addition to core instruction. Focus on specific skills Assessments Used: Tier 1: Universal screenings and benchmarks; NWEA, iReady, Behavior/Mental Health Universal Screener Tier 2: Academic progress monitoring occurs once every 2 weeks. a) Academic progress monitoring occurs weekly or as appropriate for the targeted skill area. Weekly Mental Health and Behavior Progress Monitoring Sheet b) These risk factors include, but are not limited to: parent reporting concerns despite doing well on universal screening assessments, failing or noticeably declining grades and failing multiple subjects or not earning credits poor or noticeably declining progress on standardized assessments previous retentions numerous or increasing disciplinary referrals ? number of minor classroom incidents ? consistent inattention or lack of focus/concentration ? truancy problems or increased absences ? student stands out from peers socially or with consistent "odd" behaviors or language patterns ? information that the child has been hospitalized ? information that the child has received a DSM diagnosis (ADHD, ODD, OCD, etc.) ? information that the child is taking medication ? information that the child is seeing an outside counselor, therapist, etc. ? private evaluator suggests the need for supports c) Through the School Problem-Solving Team (SPS Team), a referral for exceptional student education will be determined when the data (i.e., progress monitoring, fidelity checks, intervention logs, parent letters, rate of improvement, gap analysis) indicate that Tier 3 support for a student in kindergarten through grade 12 meets one of the following criteria: (A) The team determines the student's response to intervention data indicate that intensive interventions implemented 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 (B) The team determines the student's response to interventions implemented indicates that the student does not make adequate growth given effective core instruction and intensive, individualized, evidence-based interventions; or (C) The nature or severity of the suspected area of eligibility warrants that an evaluation for possible ESE services may be immediately necessary.

How does the district monitor implementation and fidelity of problem identification, problem analysis, intervention development and intervention effectiveness? Address the following in your response: (a) How problem-solving is documented (b) Procedures for monitoring fidelity

A Standard Treatment Protocol (STP) is when all students struggling with a similar area receive the same support plan. A Problem-Solving Protocol (PSP) is when a student receives an individual plan designed for their specific needs. Branching Minds (BrM) uses a combined approach (STP-PS) using Okeechobee MTSS Manual | PAGE 11 elements from both protocols to drive the decisions made in the MTSS system. This includes the four steps of the Problem-solving Process: 1. Problem Identification ("Who and what are we concerned about?"): The difference between what learning and/or behavior is expected and what actually occurs is clearly defined. 2. Problem Analysis ("Why do we think the problem is occurring?"): Multiple sources of data are used (e.g. formative and summative assessments, attendance data, the BrM Insight Surveys, etc.) to generate possible cause(s) of the problem. 3. Plan Implementation ("What can we do about it?"): Using the BrM platform, an intervention plan is developed collaboratively and implemented. The plan contains learning goals, support activities that are research-based strategies from the BrM library that maximize likelihood of success, and a plan for monitoring progress. 4. Plan Evaluation ("Was our support successful?"): Progress data are reviewed to determine if the plan was delivered with fidelity and the extent of impact in closing the gap toward expected performance. If positive impact is not evident, the problem-solving process begins again. It is critical to understand that MTSS is based on the premise: the earlier we can identify a problem, analyze it so we can best understand our learners' needs, implement a plan providing each student the level of support they need using research-based interventions matched to their specific challenges, and monitor frequently for fidelity and effectiveness, then we can help our students achieve success more easily, more quickly, and more commonly within the general education setting. MTSS is how we provide an equitable and successful education for ALL students.

Evaluating Effectiveness of Tier 2 and 3 Plans: The district recommends that grade level/content teams take responsibility for evaluating progress of students requiring support at Tier 2. Monthly fidelity checks will be completed by the assistant principal for all students receiving Tier 2 support. If a student is provided support at Tier 3, the assistant principal will be responsible for bi-weekly fidelity checks. The School Problem-Solving Team conducts bi-weekly data review and manages the student's Tier 3 plan for any stagnating Tier 3 students.

Was the intervention delivered with fidelity?

1. Review intervention delivery for sufficient dosage: Before determining if the intervention was effective, it is important to first check that it was delivered for the intended amount of time and by a qualified staff member. Additionally, the intervention must be a research-based activity that is directly applicable to the targeted skill. At Okeechobee County Schools, we verify the delivery of interventions by recording the sessions on Branching Minds. The Branching Minds platform then displays a status bar of how many minutes out of the intended amount of time the intervention was received. Any plans that were delivered below 80% of their intended dosage are considered not sufficiently administered.
2. Review intervention delivery for integrity: Integrity is defined as the extent to which the intervention was delivered as intended. Schools must ensure that the instructional plan was implemented with integrity before determining if a student requires more intensive support. At Okeechobee County Schools, the school principals and assistant principals verify the integrity of intervention delivery through direct observation and teacher self-report. When the delivery of intervention has been verified to be consistent with the intended delivery (outlined on the support description of Branching Minds), it can be documented in the notes section of the intervention session on Branching Minds. Monitoring integrity is not intended to be an evaluative process. Using data about integrity to evaluate a teacher's ability to do his or her job is a misuse of data. Instead, monitoring integrity is intended to be an evaluation of adherence to the instructional plan, and integrity data should be used to judge the extent to which the actual instruction matched the intended instruction. If the intervention is not delivered with sufficiency and/or integrity, then all other evaluation of Tier 2 and 3 stops and the school team works to improve integrity. It is neither ethical nor acceptable practice to judge a student's growth when the fidelity of the intervention is not adequate.

How are parents engaged in the problem-solving process? (Include the frequency and format for sharing student response to intervention data with parents.) Address the following in your response: (a) How information is disseminated explaining the school's multi-tiered system of supports (global awareness) (b) Procedures or policies for including parents in problem solving (c) Frequency and format for sharing data on the student response to intervention with parents (d) When and how parents are notified of their right to request an evaluation

a) When an SPS Team, or any other team, meets to discuss an individual student the parent(s) must be invited to participate and be full partners in determining the support needs for their child. Reasonable attempts should be made to allow the parent to participate fully in meetings in which their individual child is to be discussed. Throughout providing supports to students, parent should be informed of: the initiation of Tier 2 and 3 supports, what interventions are to be provided, when, how, and by who, what kind of data will be collected, when, and how, what revisions have been made to the child's intervention plans, and their child's progress. b) When and type of notification: - Initial placement into Tier 2 or 3 supports - MTSS Brochure is sent home or provided directly to the parent - Development of an intervention plan (which includes details of interventions and progress monitoring) - Copy of plan to the parent - Every 4½ weeks with progress reports and report cards - Printed graph from Branching Minds of the student's progress monitoring - Changes to intervention plan - Copy of Plan, Letter - Referred to SPS Team - Invitation to meeting, MTSS Brochure, Letter c) A referral for an ESE evaluation may be made when a parent requests an evaluation and there is documentation or evidence that the student may be a student with a disability and needs special education and related services.

7. Procedures for children who are below mandatory school age and who are not enrolled in kindergarten include the following:

- a. Review existing social, psychological, and medical data. Refer for a health screening when needed.
- b. Conduct vision and hearing screenings for the purpose of ruling out sensory deficits.
- c. Conduct additional screenings to assist in determining interventions as appropriate.

Section H.1: Initiating an Evaluation for Exceptional Student Education

☒ This section is not applicable for the district.

Statutory and Regulatory Citations

34 CFR §§300.300–300.305

Chapter 490, F.S.

Sections 1003.57 and 1003.575, F.S.

Rules 6A-1.044, 6A-1.0502, 6A-4.0311, 6A-6.0331, 6A-6.03311 and 6A-6.03411, F.A.C.

Definition

The school district must ensure that all students with disabilities or who are gifted and who are in need of exceptional student education (ESE) are identified, located, and evaluated, and FAPE is made available to them if it is determined that the student meets the eligibility criteria.

Procedures for Initiating an Evaluation

Each school district must conduct a full and individual initial evaluation before the initial provision of ESE services. Either a parent of a kindergarten through Grade 12 student, or child age three to kindergarten-entry age, or a school district may initiate a request for initial evaluation to determine if the student is a student with a disability. Either a parent of a kindergarten through Grade 12 student or a school district may initiate a request for initial evaluation to determine if a student is gifted. The request for an evaluation is documented on the district's Consent for Evaluation form.

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, or a child age three to kindergarten-entry age, is a student with a disability and needs special education and related services. Circumstances that would indicate that a kindergarten through Grade 12 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 a school-based team determines that the kindergarten through Grade 12 student's response to intervention data indicates that intensive interventions implemented 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;
2. When a school-based team determines that the kindergarten through Grade 12 student's response to interventions implemented indicates that the student does not make adequate growth given effective core instruction and intensive, evidence-based interventions; and
3. When a child age three to kindergarten entry age receives a developmental screening through the school district or the Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System and, based on the results of the screening, it is suspected that the child may be a child with a disability in need of special education and related services; or
4. When a parent requests an evaluation and there is documentation or evidence that the kindergarten through Grade 12 student or child age three to kindergarten-entry age who is enrolled in a school- district operated preschool program may be a student with a disability and needs special education and related services.

Within 30 days of a determination that a circumstance described in subsections 1., 2. or 3. above exists for a student in grades kindergarten through Grade 12 or a child age three to kindergarten entry age, the school district must request consent from the parent to conduct an evaluation, unless the parent and the school agree otherwise in writing.

If a parent requests that the school conduct an evaluation to determine whether their child is a child with a disability in need of special education and related services, the school district must within 30 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.

Prior to a school district request for an initial evaluation for students in Grade K through 12, school personnel must make one of the following determinations about general education procedures:

1. Whether the general education intervention procedures have been implemented as required under Rule 6A-6.0331, F.A.C., and that the data indicate that the student may be a student with a disability who needs special education and related services;
2. Whether the evaluation was initiated at the parent's request and the general education activities will be completed concurrently with the evaluation but prior to the determination of the student's eligibility for special education and related services; or
3. Whether the nature or severity of the student's areas of concern makes the general education intervention procedures inappropriate in addressing the immediate needs of the student.

Describe the district's procedure for obtaining parental consent for an evaluation when, through the FDLRS or school district child find process, it is suspected that a child ages three to kindergarten-entry age may be a child with a disability. In addition, describe how the district will ensure that the parent will be given the opportunity to provide consent within 30 days of the parent's request.

For a child ages three (3) to kindergarten-entry age, who, through the FDLRS or school district child find process, is suspected of being a student with a disability a referral for initial evaluation may be made by a parent/guardian or an outside agency with parental permission. This referral will be received by the FDLRS Child Find Secretary who will complete a referral intake sheet with parent input and enter the child's information into the CHRIS database. FDLRS schedules and completes the vision, hearing, and other screenings determined necessary based upon the referral concern. The completed screening file is returned to the Child Find Secretary and information is entered into the CHRIS database. If the screening(s) is not passed, parental permission for evaluation is obtained by FDLRS or Resource Specialist within 20 school days following notification of screening of the student repeatedly fails or refuses to produce the student for the evaluation. When the SBIT determines that a student needs an evaluation for ESE eligibility the team has thirty days to request consent for evaluation or decline to evaluate in writing. The SBIT chairperson completes the Request to Schedule SBIT Meeting for Individual Student form and gives it to the ESE/guidance clerk to schedule a meeting with the school psychologist and/or speech and language pathologist. The student's parents/guardians must also be invited. The request form is used to document and monitor compliance with the 30 day timeline. At that meeting the team will discuss the need for an ESE evaluation and, if warranted, develop an evaluation plan. This meeting is documented on the Discussion of Evaluation Request (O-MTSS-11). If an evaluation plan is developed, the following information should be gathered and turned in to the ESE department through the school's Resource Specialist: 1. MTSS documentation including the most up to date progress monitoring data (already in graphic form) 2. Documentation of parent conferences (a minimum of two prior to Tier 2 or Tier 3 interventions are required) and SBIT participation 3. Copies of observations - a minimum of two observations are required 4. Documentation of a sensory screening (O-EX-01) conducted within the past 121 calendar months 5. Emotional/behavioral concerns: documentation of at least 10 school-based counseling sessions or documentation of counseling sessions or documentation of counseling provided by an outside agency and Functional Behavior Assessment (O-MTSS-07) and Behavior Intervention Plan (O-MTSS-08) 6. Medical concerns: the release of information (O-EX-30) completed at the same time or prior to consent for evaluation 7. Social and Developmental History (O-EX-06): completed 8. Any other information as required by the Special Programs and Procedures manual for the area(s) of eligibility being considered 9. Consent for evaluation or re-evaluation (O-EX-04 or O-EX-24)

Describe the district's procedures for responding within 30 days to a parent who requests that an evaluation be conducted to determine the student's eligibility for special education and related services.

When a parent requests that their child needs an evaluation for ESE eligibility the team has thirty days to request consent for evaluation or decline to evaluate in writing. The SBIT chairperson completes the Request to Schedule SBIT Meeting for Individual Student and gives it to the ESE/guidance clerk to schedule a meeting with the school psychologist and/or speech and language pathologist. The student's parent(s)/guardian(s) must also be invited. The request form is used to document and monitor compliance with the 30 day timeline. When the SBIT meets to discuss the evaluation request, if all parties are in agreement an evaluation is not warranted the decision is documented on the Discussion of Evaluation Request (O-MTSS-11). Parents receive an explanation of the right to request an evaluation at any time and are given a copy of the Procedural Safeguards. In cases in which the parent is not in agreement and would like their child to be evaluated, the team can either agree to evaluate or defer the decision to a review committee. If the review committee determines an evaluation is not warranted, the parent is notified in writing with the Notice of Refusal to Take a Specific Action (O-EX-17) and, again, will receive a copy of the Procedural Safeguards.

Describe the district's procedures for requesting an initial evaluation for students enrolled in the school district who may have disabilities and students who may be gifted.

All students participate in the district's multi-tiered system of supports. Students receiving Tier 3 support and evidence-based interventions delivered with fidelity as designed, but show inadequate progress may be referred for Exceptional Student Education evaluation by the School Based Intervention Team. The team may also determine that the student is making adequate progress but that he/she can only do so with the implementation of sustained and substantial interventions. All documentation gathered/developed by the team will be presented and the school counselor will obtain parent consent for evaluation. Students may be suspected of being gifted by a parent, teacher, or administrator. The evaluator may request additional information by providing notice of screening to the student's parents, eliciting from them information about their student, and requesting screening of vision, hearing, and intellectual ability. The parent will sign a screening request giving permission to complete an initial screening. Once screening information is available and it is determined that further evaluation is needed the ESE Resource Specialist will contact the school to obtain parent consent for evaluation and to request completion of the teacher questionnaire. Classroom teacher and/or parent can make a referral to the Resource Specialist. The Resource Specialist gathers the referral, parental consent and vision and hearing screening and notifies the ESE Director. The ESE Director notifies the school psychologist who schedules an evaluation with a 90 day timeline.

Describe the district's procedures for requesting an initial evaluation for students who may have disabilities and students who may be gifted who are enrolled in nonpublic schools or agency programs.

If the parent of a student enrolled in nonpublic schools or agency programs requests a gifted evaluation, they are given the opportunity to sign Consent for Evaluation and the evaluation for gifted is conducted by the parent/guardian transporting the student to the district office at a mutually agreed upon date/time. The timeline for completion of the evaluation is within sixty days of the date Consent is signed. For students who may have disabilities enrolled in non-public schools, parents make an appointment to meet with the ESE director, ESE Resource Specialist assigned to home education and a member of the district psychologist team. The district team meets with the parent/guardian and student, if appropriate to determine the areas of concern. The team develops a plan to for implementing interventions and collecting data, as well as requesting additional evaluation assessments.

Describe the district's procedures for requesting an initial evaluation for students who may have disabilities and students who may be gifted who are not enrolled in any school.

For students not enrolled in any school who may be gifted, the parent requests the evaluation; the Referral is generated within twenty days and the Evaluation is completed within sixty days of the time that the parent makes the student available. The dates are logged and monitored in the district ESE office by the ESE Secretary and ESE Director. For students not enrolled in any school who may have disabilities, the ESE Resource Specialist assigned to this area meets with the parent/guardian and possibly the student to determine the reason for the request and develops a plan for collecting the data required for evaluation in the area of suspected disability. Consent for Evaluation is obtained or Refusal to Evaluate is provided. During the sixty days allotted for the evaluation, the staffing specialist arranges for data collection and psycho-educational evaluation to occur as needed. After completion of the evaluation, a feedback session is held with the parent(s)/guardian(s) and an FSP is generated if needed.

Section H.2: Conducting Student Evaluations and Reevaluations

Statutory and Regulatory Citations

34 CFR §§300.131 and 300.300–300.305

Chapter 490, F.S.

Sections 1003.57 and 1003.575, F.S.

Rules 6A-1.044, 6A-1.0502, 6A-6.03013, 6A-6.03014, 6A-6.03022, 6A-4.0311, 6A-6.0331, and 6A-6.03411, 6A-6.0361 and 6A-10.019, F.A.C.

Definitions

1. Evaluation means procedures used to determine whether a student has a disability or is gifted and in need of specially designed instruction and related services, and the nature and extent of the exceptional student education (ESE) that the student needs.
2. Reevaluation of a student with a disability is the process whereby existing evaluation data about the student is reviewed and additional data collected (if necessary) to determine whether the student continues to have a disability and be in need of specially designed instruction and related services, and the educational needs of the student.

Procedures for Evaluation

1. Responsibility for evaluation
 - a. The school district is responsible for conducting a full and individual initial evaluation necessary to determine if the student is eligible for ESE services and to determine the educational needs of the student.
 - b. Evaluations are conducted by qualified examiners (e.g., physicians, school psychologists, psychologists, speech language pathologists, teachers, audiologists, and social workers) as evidenced by a valid license or certificate to practice in Florida. In circumstances where the student's medical care is provided by a physician licensed in another state, at the discretion of the school district administrator for exceptional student education, a report of a physician licensed in another state may be accepted for the purpose of evaluation and consideration of eligibility as a student with a disability.
 - c. Tests of intellectual functioning are administered and interpreted by a professional person qualified in accordance with Rule 6A-4.0311, F.A.C., or licensed under Chapter 490, F.S.
 - d. Unless statutory restrictions apply, the responsibility for determining who is qualified to administer and interpret a particular assessment instrument lies with the local school district. In determining qualified evaluators, districts may consider the following:
 - State Board of Education rules and the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
 - Testing standards (e.g., *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing*)
 - User qualifications recommended by the publisher in the test manual
 - Level of training, supervision, experience, and certification of the individual administering or interpreting the instrument
2. Evaluation timelines
 - a. The school district shall ensure that initial evaluations of students and preschool-age children age three through kindergarten-entry age suspected of having a disability are completed within 60 calendar days after the school district's receipt of parent consent for evaluation. Rule 6A-6.0331(3)(g), F.A.C., states that the following calendar days shall not be counted toward the 60 calendar day requirement:
 - i. All school holidays and Thanksgiving, winter and spring breaks as adopted by the district school board as required by Rule 6A-10.019, F.A.C.;

- ii. The summer vacation period beginning the day after the last day of school for students and ending on the first day of school for students in accordance with the calendar adopted by the district school board as required by Rule 6A-10.019, F.A.C. However, the school district is not prohibited from conducting evaluations during the summer vacation period; and
 - iii. In the circumstance when a student is absent for more than eight school days in the 60 calendar day period, the student's absences shall not be counted toward the 60 calendar day requirement.
- b. The 60-day timeline for evaluation does not apply if:
- The parent repeatedly fails or refuses to produce the student for the evaluation
 - A student's school district of enrollment changes after the timeline has begun and prior to a determination by the student's previous school district as to whether the student has a disability

This exception only applies when the current school district is making sufficient progress to ensure a prompt completion of the evaluation and the parent agrees to a specific time when the evaluation will be completed.

Assessments of students who transfer within the same school year must be coordinated between schools to ensure prompt completion of evaluations.

- c. The school district will ensure that students suspected of being gifted are evaluated within a reasonable time as defined in the district's ESE Policies and Procedures document as required by Rule 6A-6.03411(2), F.A.C., but no more than 90 school days that the student is in attendance after the school district's receipt of parental consent for the evaluation.

Describe the district's timeframe to ensure completion of gifted evaluations.

Gifted evaluations are completed within 90 days of parent signed consent for evaluation.

3. Parent consent

- a. The school district will provide the parent written notice to the parent that describes any evaluation procedures the school district proposes to conduct. The school district will obtain written informed consent from the parent of a student to determine whether the student is a student with a disability or is gifted and needs ESE.

Parental consent is not required before reviewing existing data as part of an evaluation or administering a test or other evaluation that is administered to all students unless, before administration of that test or evaluation, consent is required of parents of all students.

Parental consent for evaluation is not construed as consent for initial provision of exceptional student education services.

- b. The school district must make reasonable efforts to obtain the informed consent from the parent for an initial evaluation to determine whether the student is a student with a disability or gifted. In the event that the parent fails to respond to the district's request to obtain informed written consent, the district must maintain documentation of attempts made to obtain consent.
- c. Based on 34 CFR §300.300(a) (2), the school district is not required to obtain informed consent from the parent for an initial evaluation if the child is a ward of the State and is not residing with the parent if:
- The school district cannot discover the whereabouts of the parent,
 - The rights of the parent have been terminated, or
 - The rights of the parent to make educational decisions have been subrogated by a judge and consent for initial evaluation has been given by an individual appointed by the judge to represent the student.

Based upon the definition of parent in Rule 6A-6.03411(1)(bb), F.A.C., "Parent means" **any** of the following:

- i. A biological or adoptive parent of a student
- ii. A foster parent

- iii. A guardian generally authorized to act as the student's parent, or authorized to make educational decisions for the student (but not the State if the student is a ward of the State)
 - iv. An individual acting in the place of a biological or adoptive parent (including a grandparent, stepparent, or other relative) with whom the student lives, or an individual who is legally responsible for the student's welfare
 - v. A surrogate parent who has been appointed in accordance with Rules 6A-6.03011 through 6A-6.0361, F.A.C.
- d. If the parent refuses consent for an evaluation to determine eligibility as a student with a disability, the school district may continue to pursue consent for the evaluation by using the mediation or due process procedures. A district is not required to pursue an initial evaluation when the parent refuses consent and does not violate its child find or evaluation obligations if it declines to do so.
- e. The school district may not use a parent's refusal to consent to initial evaluation to deny the parent or student any other service of the school district, except as provided by Rule 6A-6.0331, F.A.C.

4. Evaluation procedures

- a. As part of an initial evaluation, a team of qualified professionals and the parent, as appropriate, must take the following actions:
- i. Review existing evaluation data on the student, including:
 - Evaluations and information provided by the student's parents,
 - Current classroom-based, local, or State assessments and classroom-based observations, and
 - Observations by teachers and related services providers.
 - ii. Identify, on the basis of that review and input from the student's parents, what additional data, if any, are needed to determine the following:
 - Whether the student is a student with a disability
 - The educational needs of the student
 - iii. The group conducting this review may do so without a meeting.
 - iv. The school district shall administer tests and other evaluation measures as may be needed to produce the data that is to be reviewed under this section.
 - v. If the determination under this section is that no additional data are needed to determine whether the student continues to be a student with a disability and to determine the student's educational needs, the school district shall notify the student's parents of:
 - That determination and the reasons for the determination; and
 - The right of the parents to request an assessment to determine whether the student continues to be a student with a disability and to determine the student's educational needs. The school district is not required to conduct the assessment unless requested to do so by the student's parents.
 - vi. In conducting an evaluation, the school district:
 - Uses a variety of assessment tools and strategies to gather relevant functional, developmental, and academic information about the student within a data-based problem-solving process, including information about the student's response to evidence-based interventions as applicable, and information provided by the parent. This evaluation data may assist in determining whether the student is eligible for ESE and the content

of the student's IEP or EP. The evaluation should include information that enables a student with a disability to be involved and progress in the general curriculum (or for a preschool child, to participate in appropriate activities) or identifies the needs beyond the general curriculum of a student who is gifted.

- Does not use any single measure or assessment as the sole criterion for determining eligibility or educational programming.
- Uses technically sound instruments that assess the relative contribution of cognitive and behavioral factors, in addition to physical and developmental factors.

b. The school district ensures that assessments and other evaluation materials and procedures used to assess a student:

- Are selected and administered so as not to discriminate on a racial or cultural basis
- Are provided and administered in the student's native language, or other mode of communication, and in the form that most accurately measures what the student knows and can do
- Are used for purposes for which the measures are reliable and valid
- Are administered by trained and knowledgeable personnel in accordance with any instructions provided by the producer of the assessments

c. Assessments are selected and administered to best ensure that, if administered to a student with impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills, the assessment results accurately reflect the student's aptitude or achievement level, or whatever other factors the test purports to measure, rather than reflecting the student's sensory, manual, or speaking skills, unless those are the factors being measured.

d. Assessments and other evaluation materials and procedures include measures that assess specific areas of educational need rather than those merely designed to provide a single general intelligence quotient. The school district uses assessment tools and strategies that provide relevant information that directly assists in determining the educational needs of the student.

e. The student is assessed in all areas of the suspected disability, including, if appropriate, health; vision, hearing, social emotional status, general intelligence, academic performance, communicative status, and motor abilities. The evaluation is sufficiently comprehensive to identify all of the student's ESE needs, whether or not commonly linked to the suspected disability.

A [Web-based Evaluation Resource](http://sss.usf.edu/resources/topic/ese/ESE_Eval/General/General.html) developed to assist districts in selection of instruments for conducting diagnostic assessments, eligibility evaluations and for screening and progress monitoring is available at http://sss.usf.edu/resources/topic/ese/ESE_Eval/General/General.html.

5. If the parent obtains an independent educational evaluation at their own expense, the results shall be considered by the school district when making decisions regarding the student, if the evaluation meets school district criteria.

6. Following completion of the student's evaluation, the school district shall not unreasonably delay the determination of a student's eligibility for ESE services.

Describe the district's procedures for ensuring that a student's eligibility for ESE services is determined within a reasonable time following completion of the student's evaluation.

The meeting to make an eligibility determination following completion of a child's initial evaluation is convened within the 60 calendar days as determined from the date of Consent for Initial Evaluation. At the time of referral, a log is maintained with the projected 60th day of school recorded for monitoring by the evaluation team. The meeting date for eligibility is scheduled in advance to occur prior to the end of the 60 day evaluation period. The team will make an eligibility determination at that time, or, if the student is suspected of having a specific learning disability, the evaluation period may be extended beyond the 60-day evaluation period if the parent agrees with the team in writing to do so. The ESE Resource Specialist assigned to each school monitors the evaluation log maintained on a local secured network drive to ensure that a staffing to determine program eligibility is scheduled within a reasonable time following the evaluation. If the staffing team determines the student to be eligible for a program, an IEP is written at that time or another IEP meeting is scheduled within thirty days.

Procedures for Reevaluation

1. Reevaluation is required in the following circumstances.

- a. Reevaluations must occur at least every three years, unless the parent and the school district agree that reevaluation is not needed. Reevaluation for Deaf/Hard-of-Hearing, Dual Sensory Impaired and Visually Impaired are not able to have reevaluation procedures waived.
- b. Reevaluation is required whenever the educational or related services needs of the student warrant a reevaluation or if the student's parent or teacher requests it.
- c. Reevaluation is required prior to the determination that the student is no longer a student with a disability in need of specially designed instruction and related services.
- d. Reevaluation of the student may **not** occur more than once a year, unless the parent and the school district agree otherwise.
- e. Reevaluation is not required for a student before termination of eligibility due to graduation with a standard diploma or exiting upon reaching the student's 22nd birthday. However, the school district will provide the student with a summary of the student's academic achievement and functional performance, including recommendations to assist the student in meeting the student's postsecondary goals.
- f. Based on 34 CFR §§300.130 and 300.131, the district is responsible for reevaluation of students with disabilities attending:
 - Nonprofit private schools located within the district
 - For-profit private schools and are residents in the district
 - Home education

2. Reevaluation procedures

As part of any reevaluation, the IEP team and other qualified professionals, as appropriate, must take the following actions:

- a. Review existing evaluation data on the student, including evaluations and information provided by the parents of the student and the student; current classroom-based district or state assessments and classroom-based observations by teachers and related services providers.
- b. Identify, on the basis of the review and parent input, what additional data, if any, are needed to determine the following:
 - Whether the student continues to have a disability;
 - The educational needs of the student;
 - The present levels of academic achievement and related developmental needs of the student;

- Whether the student continues to need special education and related services; and
 - Whether any additions or modifications to the special education and related services are necessary to enable the student to meet the measurable annual goals set out in the student's IEP and to participate, as appropriate, in the general curriculum.
- c. The IEP team may conduct the review of existing evaluation data without a meeting.
- d. If the IEP team determines that no additional evaluation data are needed to determine whether the student continues to be a student with a disability, and to determine the student's educational needs, the reevaluation is complete and the school district shall notify the student's parent(s) of the following:
- The determination and the reasons for that determination and
 - The right of the parents to request an assessment to determine whether the student continues to be a student with a disability and determine the student's educational needs.

The school district is not required to conduct the assessment unless requested to do so by the student's parents.

- e. Reevaluation is not required for a student before termination of eligibility due to graduation with a standard diploma or exiting upon reaching the student's 22nd birthday. However, the school district will provide the student with a summary of the student's academic achievement and functional performance, including recommendations to assist the student in meeting the student's postsecondary goals.
- f. The following rules require the administration of specific assessments as a part of a student's reevaluation:
- Rule 6A-6.03013, F.A.C., Students Who Are Deaf or Hard-of Hearing
 - Rule 6A-6.03014, F.A.C., Students Who Are Visually Impaired
 - Rule 6A-6.03022, F.A.C., Students Who Are Dual-Sensory Impaired

For students determined eligible under these rules, the administration of formal assessments at reevaluation must be completed in accordance with the requirements of these rules.

3. Parental consent when additional data are needed

- a. The school district must obtain informed parental consent prior to conducting any reevaluation of a student with a disability.
- b. Informed parental consent for reevaluation need not be obtained if the district can demonstrate that it made reasonable efforts to obtain such consent and the student's parent failed to respond.

4. Reevaluation timelines

- a. The district must complete a reevaluation every three years unless the parent and the school district agree that a reevaluation is unnecessary.
- b. If the IEP team identifies the need for additional data, the additional data collection must be completed within a reasonable time and prior to reevaluation due date if a triennial evaluation.
- c. If an IEP team makes a recommendation for a student with a disability to receive an assistive technology assessment, that assessment must be completed within 60 school days after the team's recommendation.

Describe the district's procedures for ensuring that a reevaluation is conducted at least every three (3) years.

The school-based ESE Resource Specialist will be responsible for ensuring that a reevaluation is conducted at least every three years, including determination regarding whether the educational or related services needs of the student warrant additional assessment. On or before the fifteenth day of the students' school year the ESE Resource Specialist will provide a list of all students eligible and receiving ESE services at their designated school including the date of the last evaluation/reevaluation. The ESE Resource Specialist will identify those students who have not had a reevaluation review in the past 23 months and will schedule a reevaluation review meeting for the purpose of determining whether additional assessment is needed for the student's reevaluation. If additional assessment is needed the Resource Specialist will get parent consent and a re-evaluation will be completed within 60 days or before the 3 year date on the IEP.

Describe the district's procedures for ensuring that assessments and other data collection procedures are completed within a reasonable time following the review when the IEP team determines that additional data are needed.

Once a reevaluation review by the IEP team identifies the need for additional assessment the ESE Resource Specialist assigned to each school will be responsible for ensuring that all participants assigned to provide assessment information to the IEP Team are notified of their responsibilities and will, in consultation with the evaluators, establish the date by which their information should be submitted. Any requests for extension of time agreed upon by the IEP Team for the submission of assessment information must be made to the Staffing Specialist who will communicate with the members of the IEP Team. If the IEP Team determines that no additional data are needed, the district notifies the parent(s) of the determination and rationale, and informs the parents of their right to request an assessment to determine whether the student continues to be a student with a disability and to identify the student's educational needs through a prior written notice.

Note: When a parent requests a reevaluation, the school's IEP team may request a meeting with the parent for the purpose of reviewing existing data and to determine what additional data may be needed. The school may then, at that meeting, obtain parental consent for reevaluation, if appropriate. If the parent refuses to meet in a timely manner, the school must send the parent one of the following:

- A Prior Written Notice of Consent for Reevaluation form indicating what assessments will be administered based on the IEP team's review of data, or
- A Prior Written Notice of Refusal.

Describe the district's procedures in place when a parent requests a reevaluation.

Within twenty days following the initial receipt of the parent request for re-evaluation, the IEP Team should meet to review existing data and to determine what additional data may be needed to determine the following: (a) whether the student continues to have a disability; (b) the educational needs of the student; (c) the present levels of academic achievement and related developmental needs of the student; (d) whether the student continues to need special education and related services; and (e) whether any additions or modifications to the special education and related services are needed to enable the student to meet the measurable annual goals set out in the student's IEP and to participate, as appropriate, in the general curriculum. If the IEP Team determines that additional data is needed, the ESE Resource Specialist will request written consent for re-evaluation, detailing the specific areas of functioning are to be evaluated. If the parent is not present for the IEP meeting, the ESE Resource Specialist shall send home a Prior Written Notice of Consent for Reevaluation form for signature and contact the parent by phone or email to insure receipt of the form if the form is not returned with parental signature within one week of sending it home. If the IEP Team determines that no additional data are needed to determine (a) through (e) above, the ESE Resource Specialist will notify the Director of Exceptional Student Education who will review the data and upon concurrence send the parent written notice of refusal along with the procedural safeguards. Any additional assessment/testing/intervention should occur quickly with a plan to review data within 60 days that the student is in attendance at school following the receipt of the consent for re-evaluation.

Describe the district's procedures for ensuring that an assistive technology assessment is completed within 60 school days after an IEP team makes the recommendation.

Once a referral for an Assistive Technology evaluation is made, it is sent to the Assistive Technology team. The ESE Resource Specialist will be responsible for managing the timeline to ensure that the evaluation for assistive technology will be completed within 60 school days.

5. Determination of continued need for special education and related services

- a. A meeting of the individual educational plan team is convened to review all available information about the student, including reports from the additional evaluations, and to determine whether the student continues to be a student with a disability in need of special education and related services. If the student continues to be an eligible student, the student's individual educational plan is reviewed and revised, as appropriate, to incorporate the results of the reevaluation.
- b. If the reevaluation indicates that the student is no longer a student with a disability or that special education and related services are no longer needed, the parent must be provided prior written notice that these services will be discontinued.
- c. If the reevaluation indicates that the student's disability has changed (i.e., adding, deleting, or changing a disability category), the applicable eligibility staffing procedures are followed.

Section I: Independent Educational Evaluations

Statutory and Regulatory Citations

34 CFR §300.502

Rule 6A-6.03311, F.A.C.

Definition

An independent educational evaluation (IEE) is an evaluation conducted by a qualified evaluation specialist who is not employed by the school district responsible for the education of the student in question.

General

1. The parents of a student with a disability have the right to an IEE at public expense if the parent disagrees with an evaluation obtained by the school district.
2. The parent of a student with a disability is to be provided, upon request for an IEE, information about where an IEE may be obtained and the school district criteria applicable to IEEs.
3. Public expense means that the school district either pays for the full cost of the evaluation or ensures that the evaluation is otherwise provided at no cost to the parent.
4. Whenever an IEE is conducted, the criteria under which the evaluation is obtained, including the location of the evaluation and the qualifications of the evaluation specialist, shall be the same as the criteria used by the school district when it initiates an evaluation, to the extent that those criteria are consistent with the parent's right to an IEE.
5. The school district may not impose conditions or timelines for obtaining an IEE at public expense other than those criteria described in rule 6A-6.03311, F.A.C.
6. If a parent requests an IEE at public expense, the school district must, without unnecessary delay, **either** :
 - o Ensure that an IEE is provided at public expense.
 - o Initiate a due process hearing under Rule 6A-6.03311, F.A.C. to show that its evaluation is appropriate or that the evaluation obtained by the parent did not meet the school district's criteria. If the school district initiates a hearing and the final decision from the hearing is that the school district's evaluation is appropriate, then the parent still has a right to an IEE but not at public expense.
7. If a parent requests an IEE, the school district may ask for the parent to give a reason why he or she objects to the district's evaluation. However, the explanation by the parent may not be required, and the school district may not unreasonably delay either providing the IEE at public expense or initiating a due process hearing to defend the district's evaluation.
8. A parent is entitled to only one IEE at public expense each time the school district conducts an evaluation with which the parent disagrees.
9. If the parent obtains an IEE at public expense or shares with the school district an evaluation obtained at private expense:
 - o The school district shall consider the results of such evaluation in any decision regarding the provision of FAPE to the student, if it meets appropriate school district criteria described in Rule 6A- 6.03311, F.A.C.
 - o The results of such evaluation may be presented by any party as evidence at any due process hearing regarding that student.
10. If an administrative law judge requests an IEE as part of a due process hearing, the cost of the evaluation must be at public expense.

Describe the district's policies and procedures for responding to a parent's request for an IEE at public expense.

If the parents disagree with a school district evaluation and request an IEE at public expense, the school district must obtain the IEE and pay for it unless the school district requests a due process hearing and the hearing officer rules that the IEE is not needed. The parent of a student with a disability is to be provided, upon request for an IEE, information about where an IEE may be obtained and the school district criteria applicable to IEEs.

Describe the district's policies and procedures for consideration of the results of an IEE obtained at private expense.

When a parent presents an independent evaluation to the school district, the IEP team is to consider the evaluation. This does not mean that the school district must accept the findings or recommendations in the IEE. It does mean that the IEP team must review the IEE, and discuss it as appropriate in order to meet the educational needs of the student

Part II. Policies and Procedures for Students with Disabilities

Section A: Instructional Program

Statutory and Regulatory Citation

Rule 6A-6.03411, F.A.C.

The following applies to the instructional program for students with disabilities in general. In addition to the philosophical, curricular, and instructional support issues included here, there are disability-specific expectations or requirements for certain categories of disability. That information is provided in the relevant *Exceptional Student Education Eligibility* sections of this document.

Philosophy

1. Each student with a disability is entitled to receive FAPE in the least restrictive environment that will enable the student to progress in the general curriculum to the maximum extent possible.
2. Special education, which refers to specially designed instruction and related services, is provided to meet the unique needs of the student that result from the student's disability and to prepare the student for further education, employment, and independent living. Related services are defined in Rule 6A-6.03411(1)(dd), F.A.C.
3. Specially designed instruction means adapting, as appropriate, the content, methodology, or delivery of instruction.
4. Specially designed instruction may employ universal design for learning, assistive technology, accommodations, or modifications.

Curriculum

1. To maximize accessibility to the curriculum, students will access the state standards through appropriate programming, support from special education and regular education teachers, support in the use of assistive technology, and through the use of universal design principals.
2. For all students with disabilities, these supports provide progress toward a standard high school diploma.

Instructional Support

1. Students receive instructional support through specially designed instruction and related services as determined through the IEP process.
2. Teachers are trained in designing and implementing individualized programs to address the learning needs of each student.
3. Teachers are provided with administrative support to assure reasonable class size and workload, adequate funds for materials, and professional development.
4. Teachers instruct students in the unique skills necessary to access and benefit from the core curriculum. These skills may include, but are not limited to, curriculum and learning strategies, compensatory skills, independent functioning, social emotional behavior, use of assistive technology, and communication.
5. A range of service delivery options is available to meet the student's needs: consultation, itinerant instruction, resource room, special class, separate school, residential placement, homebound or hospitalized, and community-based or home-based services.
6. School districts may provide professional development for teachers in coordination with community agencies, the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind, discretionary projects funded by the Department of Education and other agencies of state and local government, including, but not limited to, the Division of Blind Services, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Department of Children and Families, and the Department of Health, Children's Medical Services, as appropriate.

Section B.1: Exceptional Student Education Eligibility for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder

Statutory and Regulatory Citations

34 CFR §300.8

Sections 1003.01 and 1003.57, F.S.

Rules 6A-6.03023, 6A-6.0331 and 6A-6.03411, F.A.C.

Definition

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a condition that reflects a wide range of symptoms and levels of impairment, which vary in severity from one individual to another. Autism spectrum disorder is characterized by an atypical developmental profile with a pattern of qualitative impairments in social interaction and social communication, and the presence of restricted or repetitive, patterns of behavior, interests, or activities, which occur across settings.

Eligibility Criteria

A student is eligible for specially designed instruction and related services as a student with ASD if evidence of **all** of the following criteria are met:

1. Impairment in social interaction as evidenced by delayed, absent, or atypical ability to relate to individuals or the environment;
2. Impairment in verbal or nonverbal language skills used for social communication
3. Restricted or repetitive patterns of behavior, interests, or activities;
4. The core features identified in 1, 2, and 3 occur across settings.
5. The student demonstrates a need for special education as defined in Rule 6A-6.03411(1)(kk), F.A.C.

Student Evaluation

In addition to the provisions in Rule 6A-6.0331(5), F.A.C., the district shall conduct a full and individual evaluation that addresses the core features of ASD to include deficits in social interaction, social communication, and restricted or repetitive patterns of behavior, interests, or activities. An evaluation for determining eligibility shall include the following components:

1. Behavioral observations conducted by members of the evaluation team targeting social interaction, social communication skills, and restricted or repetitive patterns of behavior, interests, or activities across settings;
2. A social developmental history based on an interview with the parents(s) or guardian(s);
3. A psychological evaluation that includes assessment of academic, intellectual, social-emotional, and behavioral functioning and must include at least one standardized instrument specific to ASD;
4. A language evaluation that includes assessment of the pragmatic (both verbal and nonverbal) and social interaction components of social communication (an observation of the student's social communication skills must be conducted by a speech language pathologist);
5. A standardized assessment of adaptive behavior; and
6. If behavioral concerns are present, a functional behavioral assessment is conducted to inform behavioral interventions on the student's individual educational plan.

Unique Philosophical, Curricular, or Instructional Considerations

1. While students with ASD share instructional needs with other students, there are characteristics that are specific to ASD, including the development and use of language and communication skills, the development of appropriate social skills, and the development of appropriate behavioral skills. The need to tailor instruction to the individual learning styles and needs of each student requires that teachers of students with ASD be knowledgeable in a variety of educational strategies.

2. Inherent in a program for students with ASD is the recognition that ASD is a developmental disability that adversely impacts the student's communication, social, and behavioral skills. It is important to take into consideration the student's strengths and needs in all three areas when tailoring educational services for the student.

The school district has the option to include additional information regarding evaluations, qualified evaluators, or unique philosophical, curricular, or instructional considerations for students with autism spectrum disorders.

- ☐ The school district has provided additional information for this section in Appendix B of this document.
- ☒ There is no additional information for this section.

Section B.2: Exceptional Student Education Eligibility for Students who are Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing

Statutory and Regulatory Citations

34 CFR §§300.8, 300.34, and 300.113

Sections 1003.01, 1003.55, and 1003.57, F.S.

Rules 6A-6.03013, 6A-2.0010, 6A-6.03028 and 6A-6.0331, F.A.C.

Definition

A student who is deaf or hard-of-hearing has a hearing loss, aided or unaided, that impacts the processing of linguistic information and which adversely affects performance in the educational environment. The degree of loss may range from mild to profound.

Eligibility Criteria

A student is eligible for specially designed instruction and related services as a student who is deaf or hard-of-hearing if the following criteria are met:

1. Medical: An audiological evaluation documents a permanent or fluctuating hearing threshold level that interferes with progress in any one of the following areas: developmental skills or academic performance, social-emotional development, or linguistic and communicative skills as evidenced by:
 - a. 25 decibel (dB) + or - 5 dB or greater based on pure tone average or average of 500, 1000, and 2000 Hz unaided in the better ear; or
 - b. A high frequency hearing threshold level of 25 dB + or - 5 dB or greater based on pure tone average of 1000, 2000, and 3000 Hz unaided in the better ear; or
 - c. A unilateral hearing threshold level of 50 dB + or - 5 dB or greater based on pure tone average of 500, 1000, and 2000 Hz unaided; or
 - d. Auditory Evoked Potential responses evidencing permanent hearing loss at multiple frequencies equivalent to or in excess of the decibel hearing loss threshold criteria for pure tone audiometric testing specified above,
2. The student demonstrates a need for special education.

Student Evaluation

In addition to the provisions in Rule 6A-6.0331, F.A.C., regarding general education intervention procedures, the minimum student evaluation shall include **all** of the following:

1. Audiological evaluation
2. Evaluation of developmental skills or academic achievement, including information on the student's academic strengths and weaknesses
3. Evaluation of social development
4. Evaluation of receptive and expressive communication
5. A comprehensive nonverbal assessment of intellectual functioning or developmental scales, if more appropriate, for children under age seven

Selection of assessment instruments shall take into consideration the student's functioning level, degree of hearing loss, and method of communication.

Student Reevaluation

A reevaluation will occur at least every three years and will include at a minimum an audiological evaluation and, if appropriate, any other formal evaluations addressed in the initial evaluation in accordance with the Student Evaluation section above.

Qualified Evaluators

All evaluators must hold a valid license or certificate in the state of Florida, in accordance with Rule 6A-6.0331, F.A.C. The following are qualified evaluators for specialized evaluations:

1. An audiologist for an audiological evaluation
2. A teacher of the deaf or hard-of-hearing
3. A speech and language pathologist
4. A school psychologist

Unique Philosophical, Curricular, or Instructional Considerations

1. All students who are identified as deaf or hard-of-hearing will be screened for Usher syndrome at least one time between grades 6 and 12. Qualified evaluators include: teachers of the deaf or hard-of-hearing, speech language pathologists, audiologists, teachers of the blind or visually impaired, and school health personnel who have been trained in Usher's screening procedures.
2. Students shall have access to instruction using the method of communication most readily understood by the student. Each student who is deaf or hard-of-hearing shall have the opportunity to develop expressive and receptive language skills using any or all of the following:
 - a. Residual hearing
 - b. Speech reading
 - c. Manual communication systems
 - d. Speech
 - e. Appropriate amplification
3. Rule 6A-6.03028(3)(g), F.A.C., requires the use of the Communication Plan form adopted by the State Board of Education during the development of the IEP for students who are deaf, hard of hearing or dual sensory impaired. Use of this plan will ensure that IEP teams are considering the instructional needs of these students in a more comprehensive manner. The school district shall consider the communication and language needs of students who are deaf or hard-of-hearing, including opportunities for direct communication with peers and professional personnel in the student's language and communication mode, academic level, and full range of needs, and opportunities for direct instruction in the student's language and communication mode.
4. Routine checking of hearing aids worn in school by students with hearing loss and the external components of surgically implanted medical devices (i.e., cochlear implants) is required to ensure that these devices are functioning properly.
5. Assistive technology and related services do not include a medical device that is surgically implanted, or the replacement of such device. Although cochlear implants are not considered assistive technology, children with cochlear implants maintain the right to receive related services that are determined by the IEP team to be necessary for the student. School districts are responsible for providing appropriate services for the students. However, appropriate services do not include maintaining, optimizing (i.e., mapping), or replacing cochlear implants.
6. Interpreting services includes the following, when used with respect to children who are deaf or hard-of-hearing: oral transliteration services; cued language transliteration services; sign language transliteration and interpreting services, and transcription services, such as communication access real-time translation (CART), C-Print; and TypeWell; and special interpreting services for children who are deaf-blind.
7. Each learning environment shall have appropriate acoustic treatment, lighting, and auditory amplification equipment to meet the individual needs of each student. Auditory equipment shall be made available through the school district (e.g., Personal or Soundfield FM systems, infrared systems, induction loop systems, and other assistive listening devices). Auditory equipment will be calibrated annually, maintained, and considered for replacement on a five (5)-year cycle. Visual alarm devices shall be provided in

all areas where students who are deaf or hard-of-hearing may be separated from persons with normal hearing—group bathrooms, corridors, specific areas designated for the deaf, etc., in accordance with Rule 6A-2.0010, F.A.C.

8. The school district will provide information describing the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind and all other programs and methods of instruction available to the parent of a student with sensory impairments. This information will be provided annually.

The school district has the option to include additional information regarding evaluations, qualified evaluators, or unique philosophical, curricular, or instructional considerations for students who are deaf or hard-of-hearing.

- ☐ The school district has provided additional information for this section in Appendix B of this document.
- ☒ There is no additional information for this section.

Section B.3: Exceptional Student Education Eligibility for Prekindergarten Children who are Developmentally Delayed

Statutory and Regulatory Citations

34 CFR §§300.8 and 303.21

Sections 1003.01, 1003.21, and 1003.57, F.S.

Rules 6A-6.03026, 6A-6.03027 6A-6.03028, 6A-6.03029, 6A-6.03031, 6A-6.0331 and 6A-6.03411, F.A.C.

Definitions

1. For an infant or toddler from birth through two years of age, developmental delay is defined as delay in one or more of the following developmental domains: adaptive development; cognitive development; communication development; social or emotional development; or physical development.
2. For a child three through five years of age, developmental delay is defined as a delay in one or more of the following areas: adaptive or self-help development; cognitive development; communication development; social or emotional development; or physical development, including fine, gross, or perceptual motor.

Eligibility Criteria

1. For a child three through five years of age

A child is eligible for specially designed instruction and related services as a student with developmental delay when the following criteria are met:

- a. The child is three through five years of age.
- b. There is documentation of **one** of the following:
 - A score of two standard deviations (SD) below the mean or a 25 percent delay on measures yielding scores in months in at least one area of development
 - A score of 1.5 SD below the mean or a 20 percent delay on measures yielding scores in months in at least two areas of development
 - Based on informed clinical opinion, the eligibility staffing committee makes a recommendation that a developmental delay exists and exceptional student education services are needed
- c. The eligibility staffing committee or multidisciplinary team, which includes the invited parent(s), makes a determination concerning the effects of the environment, cultural differences, or economic disadvantage.

2. For a child birth through two years of age (below 36 months)

An infant or toddler is eligible for exceptional student education when a team of qualified professionals and the parent or guardian, in accordance with Rule 6A-6.0331(6), F.A.C., determine that **all** the following criteria are met:

- a. The child is below the age of 36 months;
- b. There is documentation of **one** of the following:
 - i. A score of 1.5 standard deviations below the mean in two or more developmental domains as measured by at least one appropriate diagnostic instrument and procedures, and informed clinical opinion; or
 - ii. A score of 2.0 standard deviations below the mean in one developmental domain as measured by at least one appropriate diagnostic instrument and procedures, and informed clinical opinion; or
 - iii. Based on informed clinical opinion a determination has been made that a developmental delay exists.

- c. The requirements of Rule 6A-6.0331(2), F.A.C., have been met;
- d. There is written evidence that the Department of Health, Children's Medical Services, Part C Local Early Steps has determined that the infant or toddler has a developmental delay as defined in section (2)(b) of this rule; and,
- e. The infant or toddler needs early intervention services as defined in Rule 6A-6.03411(1)(i), F.A.C.

Child Evaluation

In addition to the provisions in Rule 6A-6.0331(2), F.A.C., regarding procedures prior to initial evaluation for prekindergarten children, the evaluation for determination of eligibility shall include the following:

Procedures for evaluation for children three through five years:

1. The school district must seek consent from the parent or guardian to conduct an evaluation within 30 days, unless the parent and the school district agree otherwise in writing, whenever:
 - a. The Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resource Center's or the district's developmental screening results indicate that the child, three years to kindergarten-entry age, is a child with a disability and needs special education and related services.
 - b. A parent requests an evaluation and there is documentation or evidence that the child may be a student with a disability in need of special education.
2. Developmental delay is documented by a multidisciplinary team using multiple measures of assessment, which include the following:
 - o Standardized instruments, judgement-based assessments, criterion-referenced instruments, systematic observation, functional skills assessments, or other procedures selected in consultation with the parent(s); or
 - o Informed clinical opinion using qualitative and quantitative information to determine the need for early intervention services; and
 - o Parent report, which can confirm or modify information obtained and describe behavior in environments that the district may not be able to access.
3. When a developmental delay cannot be verified by the use of standardized instruments, the delay(s) may be established through observation of atypical functioning in any one or more of the developmental areas. A report shall be written documenting the evaluation procedures used, the results obtained, the reasons for overriding those results from standardized instruments, and the basis for recommending eligibility.

Continued Eligibility for ESE Services

1. For a child three through five years of age, continued eligibility as a student with a disability under another category will be determined before the child is six years old.
2. For a child birth through two years of age (below 36 months), continued eligibility as a child with a disability will be determined before the child's third birthday.

Unique Philosophical, Curricular, or Instructional Considerations

1. For a child three through five years of age
 - a. As appropriate, the individualized family support plan (IFSP) or individual educational plan (IEP) shall be developed through interagency collaboration with the family and other providers of services to the child and family and in accordance with Rules 6A-6.03026, 6A-6.03028, and 6A-6.03029, F.A.C.
 - b. Because of the rapid development of young children, on-going observations and assessments shall be conducted as needed to plan for IFSP or IEP modifications.
2. For a child birth through two years of age (below 36 months)

- a. The IFSP shall be developed in collaboration with the family and other providers of service to the child and family and in accordance with Rules 6A-6.03026, 6A-6.03029, and 6A-6.0331, F.A.C.
- b. Because of the rapid development of young children and the changing needs of families, ongoing observations or assessments shall be conducted at least every six months for the purpose of completing the periodic review of the IFSP.

The school district has the option to include additional information regarding evaluations, qualified evaluators, or unique philosophical, curricular, or instructional considerations for prekindergarten children with developmental delays.

- ☐ The school district has provided additional information for this section in Appendix B of this document.
- ☒ There is no additional information for this section.

Section B.4: Exceptional Student Education Eligibility for Students who are Dual-Sensory Impaired

Statutory and Regulatory Citations

34 CFR §§300.8, 300.34, 300.113, and 300.172 and 300.324

Chapters 458 and 463, F.S.

Sections 1003.55, 1003.57, and 1003.575, F.S.

Rules 6A-2.0010, 6A-6.03014, 6A-6.03022 and 6A-6.0331, F.A.C.

Definition

Dual-sensory impairment is defined to mean concomitant hearing and visual impairments, or etiology or diagnosed medical condition that indicates a potential dual sensory loss, the combination of which impacts communication, independence, and other developmental and educational needs.

Eligibility Criteria

A student is eligible for specially designed instruction and related services as a student with a dual-sensory impairment if the following criteria are met:

1. One or more of the following visual impairments:

- a. A visual acuity of 20/70 or less in the better eye after best correction;
- b. A peripheral field so constricted that it affects the student's ability to function in an educational setting;
- c. A diagnosis of visual impairment after best correction;
- d. A progressive loss of vision that may affect the student's ability to function in an educational setting; as stated in Rule 6A-6.03014(3)(a), F.A.C.; **or**
- e. Functional blindness;

and

2. One or more of the following hearing impairments:

- a. 25 decibel (dB) + or - 5 dB or greater based on pure tone average or average of 500, 1000, and 2000 Hz unaided in the better ear;
- b. A high frequency hearing threshold level of 25 dB + or - 5 dB or greater based on pure tone average of 1000, 2000, and 3000 Hz unaided in the better ear;
- c. A unilateral hearing threshold level of 50 dB + or - 5 dB or greater based on pure tone average of 500, 1000, and 2000 Hz unaided;
- d. Auditory evoked potential responses evidencing permanent hearing loss at multiple frequencies equivalent to or in excess of the decibel hearing loss threshold criteria for pure tone audiometric testing specified above; **or**
- e. Functional hearing loss;

and

3. The student demonstrates a need for special education.

OR

4. The student has a medical report from a physician licensed in Florida in accordance with Chapter 458 or Chapter 463, F.S., unless a report of medical examination from a physician licensed in another state is permitted in accordance with Rule 6A-6.0331(3)(e), F.A.C., confirming the existence of such a medical condition having the potential for dual sensory loss to include the diagnosis, its prognosis, and the potential for dual sensory loss; and

5. The student demonstrates a need for special education.

Student Evaluation

In addition, to the procedures defined in Rule 6A-6.0331(5), F.A.C., the minimum student evaluations include:

1. A medical eye exam by an ophthalmologist or optometrist licensed in Florida in accordance with Chapter 458 or Chapter 463, F.S., unless a report of medical examination from a physician licensed in another state is permitted in accordance with Rule 6A-6.0331(3)(e), F.A.C., describing etiology, diagnosis, treatment regimen, prognosis, near and distance vision, corrected and uncorrected acuity measures for left eye, right eye, and both eyes, measure of field of vision, and recommendations for lighting levels, physical activity, aids, or use of glasses, as appropriate;
2. An audiological evaluation;
3. A functional vision evaluation;
4. A functional hearing assessment;
5. An assessment of social development;
6. An evaluation of receptive and expressive communication by a speech and language pathologist;
7. A learning media assessment;
8. If appropriate, an orientation and mobility assessment and sign language assessment; and
9. If available, a medical report from a physician licensed in Florida in accordance with Chapter 458 or Chapter 463, F.S., unless a report of a medical examination from a physician licensed in another state is permitted in accordance with Rule 6A-6.0331(3)(e), F.A.C., describing the etiology or diagnosis of the student's medical condition that does, or has the potential to, result in dual sensory loss.

Student Reevaluation

1. A reevaluation shall occur at least every three years and shall include, at a minimum, the following:
 - a. A functional vision evaluation;
 - b. A functional hearing assessment;
 - c. An assessment of social development;
 - d. An evaluation of receptive and expressive communication by a speech and language pathologist;
 - e. A learning media assessment;
 - f. If appropriate, an orientation and mobility assessment and a sign language assessment; and
 - g. Any other evaluations specified by an evaluation specialist and an exceptional student teacher after examination of available information in all areas addressed in the initial evaluation or in subsequent reevaluations of the student in accordance with Rule 6A-6.0331, F.A.C.

Qualified Evaluators

All evaluators must hold a valid license or certificate in the state of Florida, in accordance with Rule 6A-6.0331, F.A.C.

The following are qualified evaluators for specialized evaluations:

1. An optometrist or ophthalmologist for a medical eye exam
2. A teacher of the visually impaired, orientation and mobility specialist, or low vision specialist for a functional vision assessment
3. An audiologist for an audiological evaluation

4. A teacher of the deaf or hard-of-hearing, speech and language pathologist, or audiologist for a functional hearing assessment.

Unique Philosophical, Curricular, or Instructional Considerations

1. All students with visual impairments, including students with dual-sensory impairment, are registered for services from the Florida Instructional Materials Center for the Visually Impaired. Additionally, information regarding all students who are dual-sensory impaired shall be submitted to the state's annual census report for the national child count of students and youth who are both deaf and blind.
2. In accordance with 34 CFR §300.324, students will be provided with instruction in braille unless otherwise determined by the IEP team. This determination is based upon the student's present reading and writing skills, functional vision assessment, and learning media assessment, as well as documentation indicating the need for instruction or use of braille in the future.
3. Orientation and mobility is a related service provided to blind or visually impaired students if determined necessary by the IEP team that enables those students to attain systematic orientation to and safe movement within their environments in school, home, and community. Orientation and mobility instruction encompasses skill and conceptual awareness that includes, but is not limited to: spatial awareness, use of sensory information to maintain orientation, the use of mobility devices (i.e., long cane, distance low vision aids, assistive technology), and other skills and techniques used to travel safely and efficiently across a variety of settings.
4. Rule 6A-6.03028(3)(g), F.A.C., requires the use of the Model Communication Plan adopted by the State Board of Education during the development of the IEP for students who are deaf, hard of hearing or dual sensory impaired. Use of this plan will ensure that IEP teams are considering the instructional needs of these students in a more comprehensive manner. School districts shall consider the communication and language needs of students who are deaf or hard-of-hearing, including opportunities for direct communication with peers and professional personnel in the student's language and communication mode, academic level, and full range of needs, including opportunities for direct instruction in the student's language and communication mode in accordance with 34 CFR §300.324.
5. Students shall have access to instruction using the method of communication most readily understood by the student. Each student who is deaf or hard-of-hearing shall have the opportunity to develop expressive and receptive language skills using any or all of the following:
 - a. Residual hearing
 - b. Speech reading
 - c. Manual communication systems
 - d. Speech
 - e. Appropriate amplification
6. Routine checking of hearing aids worn in school by students with hearing loss and the external components of surgically implanted medical devices (i.e., cochlear implants) is required to ensure that these devices are functioning properly.
7. Assistive technology and related services do not include a medical device that is surgically implanted, or the replacement of such device. Although cochlear implants are not considered assistive technology, children with cochlear implants maintain the right to receive related services that are determined by the IEP team to be necessary for the student. School districts are responsible for providing appropriate services for the students. However, appropriate services do not include maintaining, optimizing (i.e., mapping), or replacing cochlear implants.
8. Interpreting services include the following, when used with respect to children who are deaf or hard-of-hearing: oral transliteration services; cued language transliteration services; sign language transliteration and interpreting services; transcription services, such as CART, C-Print, and TypeWell; and special interpreting services, such as an intervener, for children who are deaf-blind.
9. Each learning environment shall have appropriate acoustic treatment, lighting, and auditory amplification equipment to meet the individual needs of each student. Auditory equipment shall be made available through the school district (e.g., personal or Soundfield FM systems, infrared systems, induction loop systems, and other assistive listening devices). Auditory equipment will be calibrated annually, maintained, and considered for replacement on a five-year cycle. Visual alarm devices shall be provided in all

areas where students who are deaf or hard-of-hearing may be separated from persons with normal hearing, such as group bathrooms, corridors, specific areas designated for the deaf, etc., in accordance with Rule 6A-2.0010, F.A.C.

10. The school district will provide information describing the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind and all other programs and methods of instruction available to the parent of a student with sensory impairments. This information will be provided annually. Additionally, in accordance with Rule 6A-6.03014, F.A.C., cooperative planning with the Division of Blind Services (DBS) may occur for students eligible for DBS services, with parent participation and agreement.

The school district has the option to include additional information regarding evaluations, qualified evaluators, or unique philosophical, curricular, or instructional considerations for students with dual-sensory impairment.

- ☐ The school district has provided additional information for this section in Appendix B of this document.
- ☒ There is no additional information for this section.

Section B.5: Exceptional Student Education Eligibility for Students with Emotional or Behavioral Disabilities

Statutory and Regulatory Citations

34 CFR §300.8

Sections 1003.01 and 1003.57, F.S.

Rules 6A-6.03016 and 6A-6.0331, F.A.C.

Definition

A student with an emotional or behavioral disability (EBD) 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.

Evidence-Based Interventions in General Education

Prior to an evaluation, the district must meet the general education requirements in Rule 6A-6.0331(1), F.A.C., including the responsibility to implement evidence-based interventions for students requiring additional academic and emotional or behavioral support in the general education environment. General education activities and interventions conducted prior to an evaluation in accordance with Rule 6A-6.0331(1) F.A.C., may be used to satisfy the requirements of Rule 6A-6.03016, F.A.C.

Eligibility Criteria

A student is eligible for specially designed instruction and related services as a student with emotional or behavioral disabilities if the following criteria are met:

1. A student with an emotional or behavioral disability demonstrates 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 one or more of the following characteristics:
 - a. Internal factors characterized by:
 - Feelings of sadness, or frequent crying, or restlessness, or loss of interest in friends or school work, or mood swings, or erratic behavior; or
 - The presence of symptoms such as fears, phobias, or excessive worrying and anxiety regarding personal or school problems; or
 - Behaviors that result from thoughts and feelings that are inconsistent with actual events or circumstances, or difficulty maintaining normal thought processes, or excessive levels of withdrawal from persons or events; or
 - b. External factors characterized by:
 - An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers, teachers, and other adults in the school setting; or
 - Behaviors that are chronic and disruptive such as noncompliance, verbal or physical aggression, or poorly developed social skills that are manifestations of feelings, symptoms, or behaviors as specified in section 1.a) above.
2. The characteristics described above are present for a minimum of six months duration and in two or more settings, including but not limited to, school, educational environment, transition to or from school, or home and community settings. At least one setting must include school.
3. The student demonstrates a need for special education.
4. In extraordinary circumstances, the general education requirements in Rule 6A-6.0331, F.A.C., and the criteria for eligibility relating to duration and setting described in 2. Above may be waived when immediate intervention is required to address an acute onset of an internal characteristic listed above in 1. a) of the Eligibility Criteria section.

5. The characteristics described below are not indicative of a student with an emotional or behavioral disability:

- a. Normal, temporary (fewer than six months) reactions to life event(s) or crisis, or
- b. Emotional or behavioral difficulties that improve significantly from the presence of evidence-based implemented interventions, or
- c. Social maladjustment unless also found to meet the criteria for an emotional or behavioral disability

Student Evaluation

In addition to the provisions in Rule 6A-6.0331, F.A.C., regarding general education intervention procedures, the minimum student evaluation shall include **all** of the following:

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. 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 nonpresence of emotional or behavioral responses beyond the school environment.
4. 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 or 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.
5. A review of educational data that includes information on the student's academic levels of performance, and the relationship between the student's academic performance and the emotional or behavioral disability; additional academic evaluation may be completed if needed.
6. A medical evaluation must be conducted when it is determined by the administrator of the exceptional student program or the designee that the emotional or behavioral responses may be precipitated by a physical problem.

Unique Philosophical, Curricular, or Instructional Considerations

1. When making a distinction between students with internalized or externalized characteristics, the IEP team will consider these presenting manifestations as they determine the needs of the students when recommending: goals and short-term objectives or benchmarks, if appropriate; specially designed instruction and related services; and the location of such services.
2. Services for students with EBD provide an integrated curriculum of academic, affective, and behavioral interventions. These services are designed to support the improvement of academic and social functioning through academic (e.g., differentiated instruction, mastery learning), affective (e.g., individual or group counseling, parent education and support), and behavioral (e.g., behavior support; consultation from mental health, medical, or other professionals) interventions. Student improvement is measured through continuous progress monitoring of responses to intervention. A critical component of effective EBD services is parent involvement and on-going communication about implementation and outcomes of interventions.

The school district has the option to include additional information regarding evaluations, qualified evaluators, or unique philosophical, curricular, or instructional considerations for students with emotional or behavioral disabilities.

- ☐ The school district has provided additional information for this section in Appendix B of this document.
- ☒ There is no additional information for this section.

Section B.6: Exceptional Student Education Eligibility for Infants or Toddlers Birth through Two Years Old who have Established Conditions

- ☒ This section is not applicable for the district.

Statutory and Regulatory Citations

34 CFR §§303.21 and 303.300

Sections 1003.01, 1003.21, and 1003.57, F.S.

Rules 6A-6.03030, 6A-6.0331 and 6A-6.03411, F.A.C.

Definition

An infant or toddler with an established condition is defined as a child from birth through two years of age with a diagnosed physical or mental condition known to have a high probability of resulting in developmental delay. Such conditions shall include genetic and metabolic disorders, neurological disorders, a severe attachment disorder, an autism spectrum disorder, a sensory impairment (vision or hearing), or the infant's birth weight was less than 1,200 grams.

Eligibility Criteria

An infant or toddler is eligible for exceptional student education when a team of qualified professionals and the parent or guardian in accordance with Rule 6A-6.0331(6), F.A.C., determine that **all** the following criteria are met:

1. The infant or toddler is below the age of 36 months;
2. The requirements of Rule 6A-6.0331(2), F.A.C., have been met;
3. There is written evidence that the Department of Health, Children's Medical Services, Part C Local Early Steps has determined that the infant or toddler has an established condition as defined in section (1) of Rule 6A-6.03030, F.A.C.; and,
4. The infant or toddler needs early intervention services as defined in Rule 6A-6.03411(1)(i), F.A.C.

Continued Eligibility

Continued eligibility for exceptional student education programs will be determined before the child's third birthday.

Unique Philosophical, Curricular, or Instructional Considerations

The individualized family support plan (IFSP) shall be developed with the Local Early Steps, the family, and other providers of service to the child and family, and shall include services to provide the parent, guardian, or primary caregiver the opportunity to acquire specific skills and knowledge that will enable them to enhance the child's cognitive, physical, social, communication, and adaptive behavior. In the provision of an appropriate educational program for eligible children with disabilities ages birth through two years, home instruction may include direct instruction of the parent, guardian, or primary caregiver.

The school district has the option to include additional information regarding evaluations, qualified evaluators, or unique philosophical, curricular, or instructional considerations for children birth through two years old with established conditions.

- ☐ The school district has provided additional information for this section in Appendix B of this document.
- ☒ There is no additional information for this section.

Section B.7: Exceptional Student Education Eligibility for Students who are Homebound or Hospitalized

Statutory and Regulatory Citations

34 CFR §300.115

Chapters 458 and 459, F.S.

Sections 1003.01 and 1003.57, F.S.

Rules 6A-6.03011, 6A-6.03012, 6A-6.03013, 6A-6.03014, 6A-6.030151, 6A-6.030152, 6A-6.030153, 6A-6.03016, 6A-6.03018, 6A-6.03020, 6A-6.03022, 6A-6.03023, 6A-6.03027 and 6A-6.03028, F.A.C.

Definitions

1. A homebound or hospitalized student is a student who has a medically diagnosed physical or psychiatric condition that is acute or catastrophic in nature, a chronic illness or a repeated intermittent illness due to a persisting medical problem, which confines the student to home or hospital and restricts activities for an extended period of time.

Eligibility Criteria

A student is eligible for educational instruction through homebound or hospitalized services if the following criteria are met:

1. A physician licensed in Florida in accordance with Chapter 458 or 459, F.S., unless a report of medical examination from a physician licensed in another state is permitted in accordance with Rule 6A-6.0331(3)(e), F.A.C., must certify:
 - a. That the student is expected to be absent from school due to a physical or psychiatric condition for at least 15 consecutive school days (or the equivalent on a block schedule), or due to a chronic condition for at least 15 school days (or the equivalent on a block schedule), which need not run consecutively; and
 - b. That the student is confined to home or hospital; and
 - c. That the student will be able to participate in and benefit from an instructional program; and
 - d. That the student is under medical care for illness or injury that is acute, catastrophic, or chronic in nature; and
 - e. That the student can receive instructional services without endangering the health and safety of the instructor or other students with whom the instructor may come in contact.
2. The student is in kindergarten through twelfth grade and is enrolled in public school, unless the student meets criteria for eligibility under Rules 6A-6.03011, 6A-6.03012, 6A-6.030121, 6A-6.03013, 6A-6.03014, 6A-6.030151, 6A-6.030152, 6A-6.030153, 6A-6.03016, 6A-6.03018, 6A-6.03022, 6A-6.03023, or 6A-6.03027, F.A.C.
3. A child is three (3) through (5) years of age and has been determined eligible as a student with a disability in accordance with s. 1003.571, F.S., and Rule 6A-6.03011, 6A-6.03012, 6A-6.030121, 6A-6.03013, 6A-6.03014, 6A-6.030151, 6A-6.030152, 6A-6.030153, 6A-6.03016, 6A-6.03018, 6A-6.03022, 6A-6.03023, 6A-6.03026, 6A-6.03027, or 6A-6.03411, F.A.C.
4. A parent, guardian, or primary caregiver signs a parental agreement concerning homebound or hospitalized policies and parental cooperation.

Student Evaluation

In addition to the provisions of Rule 6A-6.0331(5), F.A.C., the minimum evaluation for determining eligibility shall include the following:

1. A current medical report from a licensed physician, as defined above, describing the following:
 - a. A disabling condition or diagnosis with any medical implications for instruction;
 - b. A statement that the student is unable to attend school;
 - c. The plan of treatment;
 - d. Recommendations regarding school re-entry and other school-related activities; and

- e. An estimated duration of condition or prognosis.
2. The team determining eligibility may require additional evaluation data. This additional evaluation data must be obtained at no cost to the parent.
3. A physical reexamination and a medical report by a licensed physician or physicians, which may be requested by the administrator of exceptional student education or the administrator's designee on a more frequent basis than annually, may be required if the student is scheduled to attend school part of a day during a recuperative period of readjustment to a full school schedule. This physical examination and medical report shall be obtained at no cost to the parent.

Procedures for Providing an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) or Individualized Family Support Plan (IFSP)

1. The IEP or IFSP shall be developed or revised following determination of eligibility in accordance with this rule.
2. A student may be assigned to both a homebound or hospitalized program and to a school-based program due to an acute, chronic or intermittent condition as certified by a licensed physician.
3. This decision shall be made by the IEP or IFSP team in accordance with the requirements of Rule 6A-6.03028 or 6A-6.03029, F.A.C.

Instructional Services

The following settings and instructional modes, or a combination thereof, are appropriate methods for providing instruction to students determined eligible for these services:

1. Instruction in a home. The parent, guardian or primary caregiver shall provide a quiet, clean, and well-ventilated setting where the teacher and student will work; ensure that a responsible adult is present; and establish a schedule for student study between teacher visits that takes into account the student's medical condition and the requirements of the student's coursework.
2. Instruction in a hospital. The hospital administrator or designee shall provide appropriate space for the teacher and student to work and allow for the establishment of a schedule for student study between teacher visits.
3. Instruction through telecommunications or electronic devices. When the IEP or IFSP team determines that instruction is by telecommunications or electronic devices, an open, uninterrupted telecommunication link shall be provided, at no additional cost to the parent, during the instructional period. The parent shall ensure that the student is prepared to actively participate in learning.
4. Instruction in other specified settings. The IEP or IFSP team may determine that instruction would be best delivered in a mutually agreed upon alternate setting other than the home, or hospital or through telecommunications or electronic devices.
5. Instruction in a school setting on a part-time basis may be appropriate as the student transitions back to the student's regular class schedule, if the IEP or IFSP team determines this meets the student's needs.
6. Services for students in specialty hospitals. In accordance with the requirements of s 1003.57, F.S., eligible students receiving treatment in a children's specialty hospital licensed in accordance with Chapter 395, Part I, F.S., must be provided educational instruction from the school district in which the hospital is located until the school district in which the hospital is located enters into an agreement with the school district in which the student resides. The agreement must ensure the timely provision of seamless educational instruction to students who transition between school districts while receiving treatment in the children's specialty hospital.
7. Notification Agreement. A school district in which a children's specialty hospital is located must enter into an agreement with the hospital that establishes a process by which the hospital must notify the school district of students who may be eligible for educational instruction through homebound or hospitalized services pursuant to s. 1003.57, F.S.

Students Receiving Treatment in a Children's Specialty Hospital

Eligible students receiving treatment in a children's specialty hospital licensed under Chapter 395, Part I, F.S., must be provided educational instruction from the school district in which the hospital is located until the school district in which the hospital is located enters into an agreement with the school district in which the student resides.

The district must enter into an agreement with children's specialty hospitals in the district. This agreement establishes a process by which the hospital must notify the school district of students who may be eligible for instruction consistent with the eligibility for homebound and hospitalized services.

The district has entered into an agreement with a children's specialty hospital.

- ☐ Yes
☒ No
☐ N/A

If yes, identify the children's specialty hospitals licensed under Chapter 395, Part I, F.S., which are located in your district.

The school district has the option to include additional information regarding evaluations, qualified evaluators, or unique philosophical, curricular, or instructional considerations for students who are hospitalized or homebound.

- ☐ The school district has provided additional information for this section in Appendix B of this document.
☒ There is no additional information for this section.

Section B.8: Exceptional Student Education Eligibility for Students with Intellectual Disabilities

Statutory and Regulatory Citations

34 CFR §300.8

Chapter 490, F.S.

Sections 1003.01 and 1003.57, F.S.

Rules 6A-4.0311, 6A-6.03011 and 6A-6.0331, F.A.C.

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 18 years of age.

Eligibility Criteria

A student is eligible for specially designed instruction and related services as a student with an intellectual disability if the following criteria are met:

1. The measured level of intellectual functioning is more than two standard deviations below the mean on an individually measured, standardized test of intellectual functioning.
2. The level of adaptive functioning is more than two standard deviations below the mean on the adaptive behavior composite or on two out of three 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.
5. The student demonstrates a need for special education.

Student Evaluation

1. In addition to the procedures identified in Rule 6A-6.0331, F.A.C., the minimum evaluation for determining eligibility shall include all of the following:
 - a. A standardized individual test of intellectual functioning individually administered by a professional person qualified in accordance with Rule 6A-4.0311, F.A.C., or licensed under Chapter 490, F.S.
 - b. A standardized assessment of adaptive behavior to include parental or guardian input.
 - c. An individually administered standardized test of academic or pre-academic achievement. A standardized developmental scale shall be used when a student's level of functioning cannot be measured by an academic or pre-academic test.
 - d. A social developmental history that has been compiled directly from the parent, guardian, or primary caregiver.
2. Eligibility is determined by a group of qualified professionals and the parent or guardian in accordance with Rule 6A-6.0331, F.A.C. The documentation of the determination of eligibility must include a written summary of the group's analysis of the data that incorporates the following information:
 - a. The basis for making the determination, including an assurance that the determination has been made in accordance with Rule 6A-6.0331, F.A.C.
 - b. Noted behavior during the observation of the student and the relationship of that behavior to the student's academic and intellectual functioning.

- c. The educationally relevant medical findings, if any.
- d. The determination of the group concerning the effects on the student's achievement level of a visual, hearing, motor, or emotional or behavioral disability; cultural factors; environmental or economic factors; an irregular pattern of attendance or high mobility rate; classroom behavior; or limited English proficiency.
- e. The signature of each group member certifying that the documentation of determination of eligibility reflects the member's conclusion. If it does not reflect the member's conclusion, the group member must submit a separate statement presenting the member's conclusion.

The school district has the option to include additional information regarding evaluations, qualified evaluators, or unique philosophical, curricular, or instructional considerations for students with intellectual disabilities.

- ☐ The school district has provided additional information for this section in Appendix B of this document.
- ☒ There is no additional information for this section.

Section B.9: Exceptional Student Education Eligibility for Students with Orthopedic Impairment

Statutory and Regulatory Citations

34 CFR §300.8

Chapters 458 and 459, F.S.

Sections 1003.01 and 1003.57, F.S.

Rules 6A-6.030151 and 6A-6.0331, F.A.C.

Definition

Orthopedic impairment means a severe skeletal, muscular, or neuromuscular impairment. The term includes impairments resulting from congenital anomalies (e.g., including, but not limited to, skeletal deformity or spina bifida) and impairments resulting from other causes (e.g., including, but not limited to, cerebral palsy or amputations).

Eligibility Criteria

A student is eligible for specially designed instruction and related services as a student with an orthopedic impairment if the following criteria are met:

1. There is evidence of an orthopedic impairment that adversely affects the student's performance in the educational environment in any of the following: ambulation, hand movement, coordination, or daily living skills.
2. The student demonstrates a need for special education.

Student Evaluation

In addition to the provisions in Rule 6A-6.0331, F.A.C., regarding general education intervention procedures, the minimum student evaluation shall include all of the following:

1. A report of a medical examination, within the previous 12-month period, from a physician(s) licensed in Florida in accordance with Chapter 458 or Chapter 459, F.S., unless a report of medical examination from a physician licensed in another state is determined by the district to be permitted in accordance with Rule 6A-6.0331(3)(c), F.A.C. The physician's report must provide a description of the impairment and any medical implications for instruction.
2. An educational evaluation that identifies educational and environmental needs of the student.

The school district has the option to include additional information regarding evaluations, qualified evaluators, or unique philosophical, curricular, or instructional considerations for students with an orthopedic impairment.

- ☐ The school district has provided additional information for this section in Appendix B of this document.
- ☒ There is no additional information for this section.

Section B.10: Exceptional Student Education Eligibility for Students with Other Health Impairment

Statutory and Regulatory Citations

34 CFR §300.8

Chapters 458 and 459, F.S.

Sections 1003.01 and 1003.57, F.S.

Rules 6A-6.030152 and 6A-6.0331, F.A.C.

Definition

Other health impairment means having limited strength, vitality, or alertness, including a heightened alertness to environmental stimuli, that results in limited alertness with respect to the educational environment, that is due to chronic or acute health problems. This includes, but is not limited to, asthma, attention deficit disorder or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, Tourette syndrome, diabetes, epilepsy, a heart condition, hemophilia, lead poisoning, leukemia, nephritis, rheumatic fever, sickle cell anemia, and acquired brain injury.

Eligibility Criteria

A student is eligible for specially designed instruction and related services as a student with an other health impairment if the following criteria are met:

1. There is evidence of a health impairment that results in reduced efficiency in schoolwork and adversely affects the student's performance in the educational environment.
2. The student demonstrates a need for special education.

Student Evaluation

In addition to the provisions in Rule 6A-6.0331, F.A.C., regarding general education intervention procedures, the minimum student evaluations shall include all of the following:

1. A report of a medical examination, within the previous 12-month period, from a physician(s) licensed in Florida in accordance with Chapter 458 or Chapter 459, F.S., unless a report of medical examination from a physician licensed in another state is determined by the district to be permitted in accordance with Rule 6A-6.0331(3)(c), F.A.C. The physician's report must provide a description of the impairment and any medical implications for instruction.
2. An educational evaluation that identifies educational and environmental needs of the student.

The school district has the option to include additional information regarding evaluations, qualified evaluators, or unique philosophical, curricular, or instructional considerations for students with other health impairment.

- ☐ The school district has provided additional information for this section in Appendix B of this document.
- ☒ There is no additional information for this section.

Section B.11: Exceptional Student Education Eligibility for Students with Traumatic Brain Injury

Statutory and Regulatory Citations

34 CFR §300.8

Chapters 458 and 459, F.S.

Sections 1003.01 and 1003.57, F.S.

Rules 6A-6.030153 and 6A-6.0331, F.A.C.

Definition

A traumatic brain injury means an acquired injury to the brain caused by an external physical force resulting in total or partial functional disability or psychosocial impairment, or both, that adversely affects educational performance. The term applies to mild, moderate, or severe open or closed head injuries resulting in impairments in one or more areas, such as cognition; language; memory; attention; reasoning; abstract thinking; judgment; problem solving; sensory, perceptual and motor abilities; psychosocial behavior; physical functions; information processing; or speech. The term includes anoxia due to trauma. The term does not include brain injuries that are congenital, degenerative, or induced by birth trauma.

Eligibility Criteria

A student is eligible for specially designed instruction and related services as a student with a traumatic brain injury if the following criteria are met:

1. There is evidence of a traumatic brain injury that impacts one or more of the areas identified in the definition.
2. The student demonstrates a need for special education.

Student Evaluation

1. In addition to the provisions in Rule 6A-6.0331, F.A.C., regarding general education intervention procedures, the minimum student evaluations shall include all of the following:
 - a. A report of a medical examination, within the previous 12-month period, from a physician(s) licensed in Florida in accordance with Chapter 458 or Chapter 459, F.S., unless a report of medical examination from a physician licensed in another state is determined by the district to be permitted in accordance with Rule 6A-6.0331(3)(c), F.A.C. The physician's report must provide a description of the traumatic brain injury and any medical implications for instruction.
 - b. Documented evidence by more than one person, including the parent, guardian, or primary caregiver, in more than one situation. The documentation shall include evidence of a marked contrast of pre- and post-injury capabilities in one or more of the following areas: cognition; language; memory; attention; reasoning; abstract thinking; judgment; problem solving; sensory, perceptual, and motor abilities; psychosocial behavior; physical functions; information processing or speech.
 - c. An educational evaluation that identifies educational and environmental needs of the student.
2. The evaluation may also include a neuropsychological evaluation when requested by the exceptional student education administrator or designee.

The school district has the option to include additional information regarding evaluations, qualified evaluators, or unique philosophical, curricular, or instructional considerations for students with traumatic brain injury.

- ☐ The school district has provided additional information for this section in Appendix B of this document.
- ☒ There is no additional information for this section.

Section B.12: Exceptional Education Eligibility for Students with Specific Learning Disabilities

Statutory and Regulatory Citations

34 CFR §300.8

Section 1003.57, F.S.

Rules 6A-1.09401, 6A-6.03018, 6A-6.0331 and 6A-6.03411, F.A.C.

Definition

A specific learning disability is defined as a disorder in one or more of the basic learning processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest in significant difficulties affecting the ability to listen, speak, read, write, spell, or do mathematics. Associated conditions may include, but are not limited to, dyslexia, dyscalculia, dysgraphia, or developmental aphasia. A specific learning disability does not include learning problems that are primarily the result of a visual, hearing, motor, intellectual, or emotional or behavioral disability, limited English proficiency, or environmental, cultural, or economic factors.

Eligibility Criteria

A student is eligible for specially designed instruction and related services as a student with a specific learning disability if all of the following criteria are met:

1. 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:

a. When provided with learning experiences and instruction appropriate for the student's chronological age or grade-level standards, in accordance with 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 that may include group or individual criterion or norm-referenced measures, including individual diagnostic procedures:

- Oral expression
- Listening comprehension
- Written expression
- Basic reading skills
- Reading fluency skills
- Reading comprehension
- Mathematics calculation
- Mathematics problem solving

The school district has the option of requiring that an individually-administered, standardized test of achievement be administered by a qualified evaluator in accordance with Rule 6A-6.03018(4)(b)2., F.A.C., as one of the evaluation procedures used to address the requirements of Rule 6A-6.03018(4)(a)1., F.A.C.

- ☐ The district requires that an individually administered, standardized test of achievement (that addresses the relevant areas of concern as identified by the team) be given by a qualified evaluator after obtaining parental consent for an evaluation.
- ☒ The district does not require that an individually administered, standardized test of achievement be given by a qualified evaluator after obtaining parental consent for an evaluation. The team responsible for the evaluation may determine the need for an individually administered, standardized test of achievement on an individual basis.

b. 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 section 1.a) (above) as determined through:

- A process based on the student's response to scientific, research-based intervention, consistent with the comprehensive evaluation procedures in Rule 6A-6.0331 F.A.C.
- c. The group determines that its findings under paragraph a) of this subsection are not primarily the result of one or more of the following:
- A visual, hearing, or motor disability
 - Intellectual disability
 - Emotional or behavioral disability
 - Cultural factors
 - Irregular pattern of attendance or high mobility rate
 - Classroom behavior
 - Environmental or economic factors
 - Limited English proficiency
2. The student demonstrates a need for special education.

Student Evaluation

The evaluation procedures shall include the following:

1. The school district must promptly request parental or guardian consent to conduct an evaluation to determine if the student needs specially designed instruction in the following circumstances:

- a. The student does not make adequate progress when:

- Prior to a referral, the student has not made adequate progress after an appropriate period of time when provided appropriate instruction and intense, individualized interventions; or
- Prior to referral, 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;

and

- b. Whenever a referral is made to conduct an evaluation to determine the student's need for specially designed instruction and the existence of a disability.

2. 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 do the following:

- a. 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
- b. 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.

3. In addition to the procedures identified in Rule 6A-6.0331, F.A.C., the evaluation must also include the district's procedures as specified in the SP&P as required by Rule 6A-6.03411, F.A.C. The evaluation must adhere to the timeframe required by Rule 6A-6.0331, F.A.C., unless extended by mutual written agreement of the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) and a group of qualified professionals.

Procedures

1. General education intervention procedures and activities

a. In order to ensure that lack of academic progress is not due to lack of appropriate instruction, a group of qualified personnel must consider the following:

- Data that demonstrate that the student was provided well-delivered scientific, research-based instruction and interventions addressing the identified area(s) of concern and delivered by qualified personnel in general education settings; and
- Data-based documentation, which was provided to the student's parent(s) or guardian(s), of repeated measures of achievement at reasonable intervals, graphically reflecting the student's response to intervention during instruction.

b. General education activities and interventions conducted prior to referral in accordance with Rule 6A-6.0331(1), F.A.C., may be used to satisfy the requirements of this rule.

2. Members of the group determining eligibility

The determination of whether a student suspected of having a specific learning disability is a student who demonstrates a need for specially designed instruction and related services and meets the eligibility criteria must be made by the student's parents or guardians and a group of qualified professionals, which must include, but is not limited to, all of the following:

- a. The student's general education teacher; if the student does not have a general education teacher, a general education teacher qualified to teach a student of his or her chronological age;
- b. At least one person qualified to conduct and interpret individual diagnostic examinations of students, including, but not limited to, a school psychologist, speech-language pathologist, or reading specialist; and
- c. The district administrator of exceptional student education or designee.

3. Documentation of determination of eligibility

For a student suspected of having a specific learning disability, the documentation of the determination of eligibility must include a written summary of the group's analysis of the data that incorporates the following information:

- a. The basis for making the determination, including an assurance that the determination has been made in accordance with Rule 6A-6.0331, F.A.C.
- b. Noted behavior during the observation of the student and the relationship of that behavior to the student's academic functioning
- c. The educationally relevant medical findings, if any
- d. Whether the student has a specific learning disability as evidenced by response to intervention data confirming each of the following:
 - Performance discrepancy
The student's academic performance is significantly discrepant for the chronological age or grade level in which the student is enrolled, based on multiple sources of data when compared to multiple groups, which include the peer subgroup, classroom, school, district, and state level comparison groups
 - Rate of progress
When provided with well-delivered scientific, research-based general education instruction and interventions of reasonable intensity and duration with evidence of implementation fidelity, the student's rate of progress is insufficient or requires sustained and substantial effort to close the achievement gap with typical peers or academic expectations for the chronological age or grade level in which the student is currently enrolled; and

- Educational need
The student continues to need evidence-based interventions that significantly differ in intensity and duration from what can be provided solely through general education resources to make or maintain sufficient progress.
- e. The determination of the group concerning the effects on the student's achievement level of a visual, hearing, motor, intellectual, or emotional or behavioral disability; cultural factors; environmental or economic factors; an irregular pattern of attendance or high mobility rate; classroom behavior; or limited English proficiency
- f. Documentation based on data derived from a process that assesses the student's response to well-delivered scientific, research-based instruction and interventions, including the following:
 - Documentation of the specific instructional interventions used, the support provided to the individual(s) implementing interventions, adherence to the critical elements of the intervention design and delivery methods, the duration and frequency of intervention implementation (e.g., number of weeks, minutes per week, sessions per week), and the student-centered data collected
 - Documentation that the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) were notified about the state's policies regarding the amount and nature of student performance data that would be collected and the general education services that would be provided; interventions for increasing the student's rate of progress; and the parental or guardian right to request an evaluation
- g. The signature of each group member certifying that the documentation of determination of eligibility reflects the member's conclusion; if it does not reflect the member's conclusion, the group member must submit a separate statement presenting the member's conclusions

Describe how the district documents a student's response to intervention data to determine eligibility as a student with a specific learning disability, including the progress-monitoring tools used to measure the student's response to intervention and how the team determines the adequacy of the student's response to intervention.

The school maintains records of the problem-solving process for each student receiving Tier II and Tier III interventions. These records include the gap analysis with peer groups, specific interventions implemented, progress monitoring tools to be used that are appropriate for measuring the academic skill identified for intervention, conference notes from the problem-solving team meetings, observations, sensory screening, progress monitoring results data, monitoring of fidelity of intervention implementation, and documentation of parent notifications and involvement in the problem solving process. Records will indicate the frequency and duration of interventions, frequency of progress monitoring, and persons responsible. The data is shared with the parent at an agreed upon amount of time based on the intervention plan. The school problem solving team which includes the parent reviews the data and determines whether the interventions have been appropriate and implemented with fidelity and how the student is responding. There are five major components of student achievement data reviewed to determine eligibility as a student with a specific learning disability.

1. Baseline data comparing the student's initial level of functioning to performance standards and used to determine an expected rate of progress. Baseline data is typically obtained through the initial administration of the curriculum-based measure chosen to monitor progress.
2. Gap analysis data comparing the student's initial and current levels of functioning to the performance of peers. This comparison can occur at multiple levels such as intervention group, classroom, and grade level. Available data for gap analysis includes universal screening scores and progress monitoring results from the intervention group.
3. Progress monitoring data provided through curriculum-based measures show a student's growth toward meeting the performance standard and actual rate of progress (graphs with trendlines).
4. Any available diagnostic information provided by routine assessments used by the school or standardized achievement tests performed during the evaluation.
5. Grades are a source of information for helping to determine if the skills learned through intervention are generalizing across the student's work and inform problem solving. Past grades also provide information regarding the onset and pattern of academic difficulties.

Sources of the five major components of student achievement data:

1. Universal Screening Data - All students are assessed using the district approved universal screening tool at least three times annually. The universal screening provides a source of gap analysis data. Although not comparable to the curriculum-based measures used for progress monitoring, progression toward the grade level goal between the Fall, Winter, and Spring administrations are also a source of information for determining the student's progression toward the grade level expectations. Although subject to change, as of the 2021 school year the primary tools for universal screening in academics are iReady diagnostic tests (elementary level) and NWEA (secondary level).
2. Curriculum-Based Measurement - The school problem-solving team is responsible for choosing appropriate curriculum-based monitoring tools for the identified academic concerns to use for progress monitoring. Progress monitoring is an ongoing, systematic method of brief probes designed to gauge progress toward grade level goals and direct instructional changes as needed. The frequency of progress monitoring is determined by the school problem-solving team based on the research-based norms of growth for the academic skill identified for intervention. As of the 2021 school year, sources of curriculum-based measures include, but are not limited to, EasyCBM, the CBM Warehouse link on interventioncentral.org, DIBELS, and CBMs provided with supplemental instruction materials.
3. School-based routine assessments – Some supplemental curriculum programs provide schools with diagnostic evaluation tools, for example the PAST provided with Literacy First.
4. Standardized academic achievement tests – When planning to do an evaluation for SLD, the evaluation planning team may determine a standardized achievement test is needed to provide additional information to inform eligibility determination and intervention. In Okeechobee, the school psychologist administers standardized achievement tests.
5. Grades – Student grades on homework, classwork, quizzes, and tests are maintained in the gradebook of the student data system, Skyward. Upon completion of the evaluation for SLD eligibility, the school psychologist begins the summary of all data collected. This summary is completed by the team in the eligibility determination meeting. Any supporting data is attached. Examples of supporting data include, but is not limited to, charts with comparison data from the universal screening tool, graphs of progress monitoring results, summary of intervention reports produced by electronic methods of tracking problem-solving and interventions (e.g., Skyward and Branching Minds), and any information provided by the parent through the social and developmental history. The eligibility determination team uses gap analysis data and any available additional diagnostic information from routine school-based assessments and/or standardized achievement tests to determine if the student's academic performance is significantly discrepant for the chronological age or grade level. Baseline and progress monitoring data is used to determine the sufficiency of the student's rate of progress toward closing the achievement gap through comparison of expected and actual level of growth to meet performance standards. The use of the data informs the eligibility determination team in determining if the achievement gap is not closing after an appropriate period of time when provided appropriate instruction and intensive, individualized intervention or the achievement gap is closing with intensive, individualized intervention but require sustained and substantial effort that may include the provision of specially designed instruction and related services. The team's decisions as to whether data supports the eligibility criteria for SLD are documented on the written summary of the group's analysis for SLD eligibility.

Describe how parents are engaged as team members in the problem-solving process (include the frequency and graphic format for sharing student progress data with parents).

Parents are a vital part of the intervention process; therefore, it is district policy to invite parents to attend and fully participate in school problem solving team meetings when discussing individual students. It is not required that parents be invited to attend meetings in which groups of students are to be discussed; however, parents must be kept informed. Parents receive a copy of the Parent Notification of Intervention Activities, an MTSS brochure from DOE, and a copy of their child's intervention plan. Each parent contact must be documented. Graphs of the student's progress monitoring data are shared with parents on a nine week basis.

Describe the types of data used to make comparisons to other students and how teams determine the findings are not primarily due to the exclusionary factors outlined in Rule 6A-6.03018, F.A.C., lack of instruction in reading or math or limited English proficiency.

Upon completion of the evaluation for SLD eligibility, the school psychologist begins the summary of all data collected. This summary is completed by the team in the eligibility determination meeting. Any supporting data is attached. Included in the summary is the data that has been collected to inform the team in determining the findings are not primarily due to exclusionary factors. Sources of information to rule out exclusionary factors may include but are not limited to: 1. Vision, Hearing, or Motor Disability: Vision and hearing are screened early in the intervention process, with follow-up for vision or hearing problems being a priority in the intervention strategies. Sources of information to rule out motor disabilities include the student's school physicals or requested medical records, observations, and occupational and/or physical therapy evaluations. 2. Intellectual Disability: The primary sources of information to rule out an intellectual disability is the student's performance in the classroom and academic skills in the areas not indicated as concerns. Information regarding language development can be useful and gained by reviewing speech and language screenings that may have been performed as part of the problem-solving process or language evaluations previously conducted. The team may also review intellectual or adaptive functioning testing if a previous evaluation exists. If the evaluation planning team determines there is not adequate information to rule out an intellectual disability, an adaptive behavior assessment or brief test of intellectual functioning will be conducted as part of the evaluation to provide information. 3. Emotional/Behavioral Disability: Sources of information to determine the need for further information regarding the existence of or the impact of Emotional/behavioral disability can be a review of the universal screening for social-emotional concerns, disciplinary records, observations, or emotional/behavioral screenings. 4. Ethnicity or Cultural Factors, Environmental or Economic Disadvantage, Limited English Proficiency: A component of the problem-solving process is the collection of comparison data from the academic universal screening tool. After the Fall, Winter, and Spring screenings the results of the universal data is downloaded into a spreadsheet. The data is disaggregated into comparison groups based on gender, race, socio-economic status, limited English proficiency, and current eligibility in an ESE program. The average scores are calculated for each grade level by district, school, and for each of the disaggregated groups. This data is available for use in the gap analysis during the problem solving process. In an evaluation of a student for SLD, the eligibility team reviews the data in comparison to the student's performance to determine if the student's academic performance is significantly discrepant for the chronological age or grade level. The disaggregated data allows for the comparison to peer groups as part of the information considered to rule out ethnic or cultural factors, environmental or economic disadvantage, and limited English proficiency. Other sources of information include a social and developmental history completed with the parent and examining other situational factors that may exist that are student specific. The District Plan for Services to English Language Learners outlines the criteria for determining the level of English language proficiency and the need for ELL services. However, a student may be determined to be no longer eligible for ELL, but may not have mastered the nuances of the level of language proficiency required for academic instruction. Therefore, even when an ELL student has reached a competent level of spoken English proficiency it does not automatically equal proficiency in written English. These factors are why it is important when comparing an ELL student's performance with their grade level or classroom peers they are also compared with other ELL students with similar exposure to English. By making comparisons between ELL students rate of academic progress the team can better determine that a student's academic difficulties are not solely or primarily an issue of English language acquisition. An additional source of data for making comparison to ELL peers is the ELL assessment, WIDA. 5. Irregular pattern of attendance and/or high mobility rate: Attendance and enrollment history is reviewed and addressed with the parent early in the intervention process. Progress approaching peer levels cannot be evaluated adequately unless attendance is regular. Interventions address supports for improved attendance first, before adequate instructional interventions can be determined. Sources of information include a review of attendance records for a significant number of days absent and/or tardy, late check-in and early check-out records enrollment records including previous enrollment in in-state or out-of-state schools, and migrant status and pattern of attendance. 6. Classroom Behavior: Sources of information for the impact of classroom behavior include disciplinary records and structured and/or unstructured classroom observations. 7. Lack of instruction in reading or math: Sources of information to determine if there has been a lack of instruction in reading or math include, but are not limited to, attendance and enrollment information, records from private or out-of-district schools, and home school records when available. A primary source of information will be the documentation of curriculum and intervention implementation fidelity. Fidelity of implementation is monitored by district designated personnel at each school. Any concerns regarding fidelity should be addressed and corrected by the problem-solving team prior to referral to ESE. At the eligibility determination staffing, these exclusionary factors are considered in detail by the multi-disciplinary team and documented on the written summary of the group's analysis for SLD eligibility.

The school district has the option to include additional information regarding evaluations, qualified evaluators, or unique philosophical, curricular, or instructional considerations for students with specific learning disabilities.

- ☐ The school district has provided additional information for this section in Appendix B of this document.
- ☒ There is no additional information for this section.

Section B.13: Exceptional Student Education Eligibility for Students with Speech Impairments

Statutory and Regulatory Citations

34 CFR §§300.8, 300.306 and 300.34

Sections 1003.01, 1003.57, 1012.44 and 1011.62, F.S.

Chapters 456, 458, 459, and 468, Part I, F.S. Rules 6A-4.0176, 6A-4.01761, 6A-6.03012, 6A-6.03028, 6A-6.0331, 6A-6.03411, and 64B20-2.001, F.A.C.

Definitions

1. Speech impairments are disorders of speech sounds, fluency, or voice that interfere with communication, adversely affect performance or functioning in the educational environment, and result in the need for exceptional student education.
 - a. Speech sound disorder. A speech sound disorder is a phonological or articulation disorder that is evidenced by the atypical production of speech sounds characterized by substitutions, distortions, additions, or omissions that interfere with intelligibility. A speech sound disorder is not primarily the result of factors related to chronological age, gender, culture, ethnicity, or limited English proficiency.
 - Phonological disorder. A phonological disorder is an impairment in the system of phonemes and phoneme patterns within the context of spoken language.
 - Articulation disorder. An articulation disorder is characterized by difficulty in the articulation of speech sounds that may be due to a motoric or structural problem.
 - b. Fluency disorder. A fluency disorder is characterized by deviations in continuity, smoothness, rhythm, or effort in spoken communication. It may be accompanied by excessive tension and secondary behaviors, such as struggle and avoidance. A fluency disorder is not primarily the result of factors related to chronological age, gender, culture, ethnicity, or limited English proficiency.
 - c. Voice disorder. A voice disorder is characterized by the atypical production or absence of vocal quality, pitch, loudness, resonance, or duration of phonation that is not primarily the result of factors related to chronological age, gender, culture, ethnicity, or limited English proficiency.

Eligibility Criteria

A student is eligible for exceptional student education as a student with a speech impairment if the student meets the following criteria for one or more of the following disorders as determined by the procedures prescribed in Rules 6A-6.03012 and 6A-6.0331(6), F.A.C.

1. Speech sound disorder

A student with a speech sound disorder is eligible for exceptional student education if there is evidence, based on evaluation results, of a significant phonological or articulation disorder that is characterized by the atypical production of speech sound(s). The atypical production of speech sound(s) may be characterized by substitutions, distortions, additions, or omissions. Evaluation results must reveal all of the following:

- a. The speech sound disorder must have a significant impact on the student's intelligibility, although the student may be intelligible to familiar listeners or within known contexts
- b. The student's phonetic or phonological inventory must be significantly below that expected for his or her chronological age or developmental level based on normative data
- c. The speech sound disorder must have an adverse effect on the student's ability to perform or function in the student's typical learning environment, thereby demonstrating the need for exceptional student education
- d. The speech sound disorder is not primarily the result of factors related to chronological age, gender, culture, ethnicity, or limited English proficiency

2. Fluency disorder

A student with a fluency disorder is eligible for exceptional student education if there is evidence, based on evaluation results, of

significant and persistent interruptions in the rhythm or rate of speech. Evaluation results must reveal all of the following:

- a. The student must exhibit significant and persistent dysfluent speech behaviors. The dysfluency may include repetition of phrases, whole words, syllables, and phonemes; prolongations; blocks; and circumlocutions. Additionally, secondary behaviors, such as struggle and avoidance, may be present.
- b. The fluency disorder must have an adverse effect on the student's ability to perform or function in the educational environment, thereby demonstrating the need for exceptional student education.
- c. The dysfluency is not primarily the result of factors related to chronological age, gender, culture, ethnicity, or limited English proficiency.

3. Voice disorder

A student with a voice disorder is eligible for exceptional student education if there is evidence, based on evaluation results, of significant and persistent atypical voice characteristics. Evaluation results must reveal all of the following:

- a. The student must exhibit significant and persistent atypical production of quality, pitch, loudness, resonance, or duration of phonation. The atypical voice characteristics may include inappropriate range, inflection, loudness, excessive nasality, breathiness, hoarseness, or harshness.
- b. The voice disorder does not refer to vocal disorders that are found to be the direct result or symptom of a medical condition unless the disorder adversely affects the student's ability to perform or function in the educational environment and is amenable to improvement with therapeutic intervention.
- c. The voice disorder must have an adverse effect on the student's ability to perform or function in the educational environment, thereby demonstrating the need for exceptional student education.
- d. The atypical voice characteristics are not primarily the result of factors related to chronological age, gender, culture, ethnicity, or limited English proficiency.

4. The student demonstrates a need for special education.

Student Evaluation

In addition to Rule 6A-6.03012, F.A.C., the provisions in Rule 6A-6.0331, F.A.C., regarding general education intervention procedures for students in kindergarten through Grade 12, who are suspected of having a disability and enrolled in public school must be implemented. The provisions in Rule 6A-6.0331(2), F.A.C., regarding procedures prior to initial evaluation for prekindergarten children who are below mandatory school attendance ages and not enrolled in kindergarten must be met. In addition, the following must be included for each disorder:

1. For a speech sound disorder, the evaluation must include all of the following:

- a. Information gathered from the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) and teacher(s), and, when appropriate, the student, regarding the concerns and description of speech characteristics. This may be completed through a variety of methods, including interviews, checklists, or questionnaires.
- b. Documented and dated observation(s) of the student's speech characteristics conducted by a speech-language pathologist to examine the student's speech characteristics during connected speech or conversation. Observation(s) conducted prior to obtaining consent for evaluation may be used to meet this criterion.
- c. An examination of the oral mechanism structure and function.
- d. One or more standardized, norm-referenced instruments designed to measure speech sound production administered to determine the type and severity of the speech sound errors and whether the errors are articulation (phonetic) or phonological (phonemic) in nature.

2. For a fluency disorder, the evaluation must include all of the following:

- a. Information gathered from the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) and teacher(s), and, when appropriate, the student, to address the following areas regarding the speech behaviors: motor aspects, student's attitude, social impact, and educational impact. This may be completed through a variety of methods, including interviews, checklists, or questionnaires.
- b. A minimum of two documented and dated observations of the student's speech and secondary behaviors conducted by a speech-language pathologist in more than one setting, including the typical learning environment. For prekindergarten children, the observations may occur in an environment or situation appropriate for a child of that chronological age. Observations conducted prior to obtaining consent for evaluation may be used to meet this criterion, if the activities address the areas identified in subsection d) below.
- c. An examination of the oral mechanism structure and function.
- d. An assessment of all of the following areas:
 - Motor aspects of the speech behaviors
 - Student's attitude regarding the speech behaviors
 - Social impact of the speech behaviors
 - Educational impact of the speech behaviors
- e. A speech sample of a minimum of 300–500 words collected and analyzed to determine frequency, duration, and type of dysfluent speech behaviors. If the speech-language pathologist is unable to obtain a speech sample of a minimum of 300–500 words, a smaller sample may be collected and analyzed. The evaluation report must document the rationale for collection and analysis of a smaller sample, the results obtained, and the basis for recommendations.

3. For a voice disorder, the evaluation must include all of the following:

- a. Information gathered from the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) and teacher(s), and, when appropriate, the student, regarding the concerns and description of voice characteristics. This may be completed through a variety of methods, including interviews, checklists, or questionnaires.
- b. Documented and dated observation(s) of the student's voice characteristics conducted by a speech-language pathologist in one or more setting(s), which must include the typical learning environment. For prekindergarten children, the observation(s) may occur in an environment or situation appropriate for a child of that chronological age. Observation(s) conducted prior to obtaining consent for evaluation may be used to meet this criterion.
- c. An examination of the oral mechanism structure and function.
- d. A report of a medical examination of laryngeal structure and function conducted by a physician licensed in Florida in accordance with Chapter 458 or Chapter 459, F.S., unless a report of medical examination from a physician licensed in another state is permitted in accordance with Rule 6A-6.0331(3)(e), F.A.C. The physician's report must provide a description of the state of the vocal mechanism and any medical implications for therapeutic intervention.

Unique Philosophical, Curricular, or Instructional Considerations

1. Speech services

- a. A group of qualified professionals determining eligibility under requirements of Rules 6A-6.03012 and 6A-6.0331(6), F.A.C., must include a speech-language pathologist.
- b. A speech-language pathologist shall be involved in the development of the individual educational plan for students eligible for speech services, whether as special education or as a related service for an otherwise eligible student with a disability as specified in Rule 6A-6.03012, F.A.C.
- c. Speech therapy services shall be provided by a certified speech-language pathologist pursuant to Rule 6A-4.0176, F.A.C., or a licensed speech-language pathologist pursuant to Chapter 468, F.S., or a speech-language associate pursuant to Rule 6A-4.01761, F.A.C., or a speech-language pathology assistant pursuant to Chapter 468, F.S.

- d. Students determined eligible as a student with a speech impairment have access to any supports and services needed as determined by the individual educational plan team. A student should be identified as a student with a disability using the most appropriate category, but this does not mean that the team must identify every possible category under which the student may be eligible. In addition, there is no requirement that a student be eligible under a given category in order to receive specific services. For example, students determined eligible as a student with a speech impairment may have counseling as a related service, a functional behavioral assessment, or academic support for reading or writing, even though the student has not been determined to be a student with an emotional or behavioral disability or a specific learning disability.

2. Speech-language associate (SLA)

Speech therapy services provided by an SLA as specified in Rule 6A-4.01761, F.A.C., will be under the direction of a certified or licensed speech-language pathologist with a master's degree or higher in speech-language pathology. Services can be provided for a period of three years as described in Section 1012.44, F.S., in districts that qualify for the sparsity supplement as described in Section 1011.62(7), F.S. For more information on the responsibilities and duties of an SLA, go to:

<http://info.fldoe.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-4662/TAP2007-137.pdf>.

The district shall submit a plan to the Department of Education for approval before implementation of Rule 6A-4.01761, F.A.C. The components of the plan found in Rule 6A-6.03012(7), F.A.C., will include a description of:

- o The model, specifying the type and amount of direction, including direct observation, support, training, and instruction
- o The rationale for using this model
- o The manner in which the associate will be required to demonstrate competency
- o The process for monitoring the quality of services
- o The process for measuring student progress
- o The manner in which the speech-language associate will meet the requirements of the annual district professional development plan for instructional personnel

The school district has the option to include additional information regarding evaluations, qualified evaluators, or unique philosophical, curricular, or instructional considerations for students with speech impairments.

- ☐ The school district has provided additional information for this section in Appendix B of this document.
- ☒ There is no additional information for this section.

Section B.14: Exceptional Student Education Eligibility for Students with Language Impairments

Statutory and Regulatory Citations

34 CFR §§300.8, 300.306 and 300.34

Chapters 456 and 468, Part I, F.S.

Sections 1003.01, 1003.57, 1011.62 and 1012.44, F.S.

Rules 6A-1.09401, 6A-4.0176, 6A-4.01761, 6A-6.0331, 6A-6.030121, 6A-6.03028, 6A-6.03411, and 64B20-2.001, F.A.C.

Definitions

Language impairments are disorders of language that interfere with communication, adversely affect performance or functioning in the student's typical learning environment, and result in the need for exceptional student education. A language impairment is defined as a disorder in one or more of the basic learning processes involved in understanding or in using spoken or written language. These include:

1. Phonology. Phonology is defined as the sound systems of a language and the linguistic conventions of a language that guide the sound selection and sound combinations used to convey meaning.
2. Morphology. Morphology is defined as the system that governs the internal structure of words and the construction of word forms.
3. Syntax. Syntax is defined as the system governing the order and combination of words to form sentences, and the relationships among the elements within a sentence.
4. Semantics. Semantics is defined as the system that governs the meanings of words and sentences.
5. Pragmatics. Pragmatics is defined as the system that combines language components in functional and socially appropriate communication.

The language impairment may manifest in significant difficulties affecting listening comprehension, oral expression, social interaction, reading, writing, or spelling. A language impairment is not primarily the result of factors related to chronological age, gender, culture, ethnicity, or limited English proficiency.

Eligibility Criteria

1. For prekindergarten children

A prekindergarten child is eligible as a student with a language impairment in need of exceptional student education if all of the following criteria are met:

- a. There is evidence, based on evaluation results, of significant deficits in language. The impairment may manifest in significant difficulties affecting one or more of the following areas:
 - i. Listening comprehension
 - ii. Oral expression
 - iii. Social interaction
 - iv. Emergent literacy skills (e.g., vocabulary development, phonological awareness, narrative concepts)
- b. One or more documented and dated behavioral observation(s) reveals significant language deficits that interfere with performance or functioning in the typical learning environment.
- c. Results of standardized norm-referenced instrument(s) indicate a significant language deficit in one or more of the areas listed in 1.–5. of the Definitions section as evidenced by standard score(s) significantly below the mean. If the evaluator is unable to administer a norm-referenced instrument and an alternative scientific, research-based instrument is administered, the instrument must reveal a significant language deficit in one or more areas listed in 1.–5. of the Definitions section. Significance of the deficit(s) must be determined and based on specifications in the manual of the instrument(s) utilized for evaluation purposes.

- d. Information gathered from the child's parent(s) or guardian(s), teacher(s), service providers, or caregivers must support the results of the standardized instruments and observations conducted.
- e. The language impairment must have an adverse effect on the child's ability to perform or function in the typical learning environment, thereby demonstrating the need for exceptional student education.
- f. The language impairment is not primarily the result of factors related to chronological age, gender, culture, ethnicity, or limited English proficiency.

2. For students in kindergarten through Grade 12

A student meets the eligibility criteria as a student with a language impairment in need of exceptional student education if all of the following criteria are met:

- a. Due to deficits in the student's language skills, the student does not perform or function adequately for the student's chronological age or to meet grade-level standards as adopted in Rule 6A-1.09401, F.A.C., in one or more of the following areas, when provided with learning experiences and instruction appropriate for the student's chronological age or grade:
 - i. Oral expression
 - ii. Listening comprehension
 - iii. Social interaction
 - iv. Written expression
 - v. Phonological processing
 - vi. Reading comprehension
- b. Due to deficits in the student's language skills, the student does not make sufficient progress to meet chronological age or state-approved grade-level standards pursuant to Rule 6A-1.09401, F.A.C., in one or more of the areas identified in 1. a. of this section when using a process based on the student's response to scientific, research-based intervention.
- c. Evidence of a language impairment is documented based on a comprehensive language evaluation, including all evaluation procedures as specified for students in kindergarten through Grade 12, included under the **Conducting Student Evaluations and Reevaluations** section of this document. There must be documentation of all of the following:
 - i. Documented and dated observations show evidence of significant language deficits that interfere with the student's performance or functioning in the educational environment.
 - ii. Results of standardized norm-referenced instrument(s) indicate a significant language deficit in one or more of the areas listed in 1.–5. of the Definitions section as evidenced by standard score(s) significantly below the mean. If the evaluator is unable to administer a norm-referenced instrument and an alternative scientific, research-based instrument is administered, the instrument must reveal a significant language deficit in one or more areas listed in 1.–5. of the Definitions section. Significance of the deficit(s) must be determined and based on specifications in the manual of the instrument(s) utilized for evaluation purposes.
 - iii. Information gathered from the student's parent(s) or guardian(s), teacher(s), and, when appropriate, the student, must support the results of the standardized instruments and observations conducted.
 - iv. At least one additional observation conducted by the speech-language pathologist when the language impairment is due to a deficit in pragmatic language and cannot be verified by the use of standardized instrument(s). The language impairment may be established through the results of the evaluation procedures as specified in the evaluation procedures for students in kindergarten through Grade 12, included under the **Conducting Student Evaluations and Reevaluations** section of this document, and the additional observation(s) conducted subsequent to obtaining consent for evaluation as part of a comprehensive language evaluation. The evaluation report must document the evaluation procedures used, including the group's rationale for overriding results from standardized instruments, the results obtained, and the basis for recommendations. The information gathered from the student's parent(s) or legal

guardian(s), teacher(s), and, when appropriate, the student, must support the results of the observation(s) conducted.

- d. The group determines that its findings under 2.a of this section are not primarily the result of factors related to chronological age, gender, culture, ethnicity, or limited English proficiency.

Documentation of Determination of Eligibility

For a student suspected of having a language impairment, the documentation of the determination of eligibility must include a written summary of the group's analysis of the data that incorporates all of the following information:

1. The basis for making the determination, including an assurance that the determination has been made in accordance with subsection 6A-6.0331(6), F.A.C.
2. Noted behavior during the observation of the student and the relationship of that behavior to the student's academic functioning.
3. The educationally relevant medical findings, if any.
4. Whether the student has a language impairment as evidenced by response to intervention data confirming all of the following:
 - a. Performance or functioning discrepancies. The student displays significant discrepancies, for the chronological age or grade level in which the student is enrolled, based on multiple sources of data when compared to multiple groups, including to the extent practicable the peer subgroup, classroom, school, district, and state level comparison groups.
 - b. Rate of progress. When provided with effective implementation of appropriate research-based instruction and interventions of reasonable intensity and duration with evidence of implementation fidelity, the student's rate of progress is insufficient or requires sustained and substantial effort to close the gap with typical peers or expectations for the chronological age or grade level in which the student is currently enrolled.
 - c. Educational need. The student continues to demonstrate the need for interventions that significantly differ in intensity and duration from what can be provided solely through educational resources and services currently in place, thereby demonstrating a need for exceptional student education due to the adverse effect of the language impairment on the student's ability to perform or function in the educational environment.
5. The determination of the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) and group of qualified professionals concerning the effects of chronological age, culture, gender, ethnicity, patterns of irregular attendance, or limited English proficiency on the student's performance or functioning.
6. Documentation based on data derived from a process that assesses the student's response to well-delivered scientific, research-based instruction and interventions, including:
 - a. Documentation of the specific instructional interventions used, the intervention support provided to the individuals implementing interventions, adherence to the critical elements of the intervention design and delivery methods, the duration of intervention implementation (e.g., number of weeks, minutes per week, sessions per week), and the student-centered data collected
 - b. Documentation that the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) were notified about the state's policies regarding the amount and nature of student performance or functioning data that would be collected and the educational resources and services that would be provided; interventions for increasing the student's rate of progress; and the parental or guardian right to request an evaluation.

Student Evaluation

1. Children in prekindergarten

In addition to the procedures identified in subsection 6A-6.0331(5), F.A.C., the minimum evaluation for a prekindergarten child shall include all of the following:

- a. Information gathered from the child's parent(s) or guardian(s) and others, as appropriate, such as teacher(s), service providers, and caregivers, regarding the concerns and description of language skills. This may be completed through a variety of methods, including interviews, checklists, or questionnaires.
- b. One or more documented and dated observation(s) of the child's language skills conducted by the speech-language pathologist in one or more setting(s), which must include the child's typical learning environment or an environment or situation appropriate for a child of that chronological age.
- c. One or more standardized norm-referenced instruments designed to measure language skills. The instrument must be administered and interpreted by a speech-language pathologist to determine the nature and severity of the language deficits. If the speech-language pathologist is unable to administer a norm-referenced instrument, a scientific, research-based alternative instrument may be used. The evaluation report must document the evaluation procedures used, including the rationale for use of an alternative instrument, the results obtained, and the basis for recommendations.

2. Students in kindergarten through Grade 12

The provisions in Rule 6A-6.0331(1), F.A.C., regarding general education intervention procedures for students in kindergarten through Grade 12, who are suspected of having a disability and enrolled in public school must be implemented, as well as procedures identified in Rule 6A-6.0331(5), F.A.C., and must include all of the following:

- a. In order to ensure that the decreased performance or functioning of a student suspected of having a language impairment is not due to lack of appropriate instruction, the minimum evaluation procedures must include all of the following:
 - i. Review of data that demonstrate the student was provided well-delivered scientific, research-based instruction and interventions addressing the identified area(s) of concern and delivered by qualified personnel in general or exceptional education settings.
 - ii. Data-based documentation, which was provided to the student's parent(s) or guardian(s), of repeated measures of performance or functioning at reasonable intervals, communicated in an understandable format, reflecting the student's response to intervention during instruction.
 - iii. Information gathered from the student's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) and teacher(s), and, when appropriate, the student, regarding the concerns and a description of language skills. This may be completed through a variety of methods including interviews, checklists, or questionnaires.
 - iv. Documented and dated observation(s) of the student's language skills conducted by the speech-language pathologist in one or more setting(s).
 - v. One or more standardized norm-referenced instrument(s) designed to measure language skills. The instrument(s) must be administered and interpreted by a speech-language pathologist to determine the nature and severity of the language deficits. If the speech-language pathologist is unable to administer a norm-referenced instrument, a scientific, research-based alternative instrument may be used. The evaluation report must document the evaluation procedures used, including the rationale for use of an alternative instrument, the results obtained, and the basis for recommendations.
- b. With the exception of one additional observation conducted by the speech-language pathologist when the language impairment is due to a deficient in pragmatic language that cannot be verified by a standardized assessment, general education activities and interventions conducted prior to initial evaluation in accordance with Rule 6A-6.0331(1), F.A.C., may be used to satisfy the requirements of this rule.

Unique Philosophical, Curricular, or Instructional Considerations

Language services

1. A group of qualified professionals determining eligibility under requirements of Rule 6A-6.030121, F.A.C. and Rule 6A-6.0331(6), F.A.C., will include a speech-language pathologist.
2. A speech-language pathologist will be involved in the development of the individual educational plan for programs for students with a language impairment, whether as special education or as a related service for an otherwise eligible student with a disability.

3. Language therapy services will be provided by a certified speech-language pathologist pursuant to Rule 6A-4.0176, F.A.C., or a licensed speech-language pathologist pursuant to Chapter 468, F.S., and Rule 64B20-2.001, F.A.C., or a speech-language associate pursuant to Rule 6A-4.01761, F.A.C., or a speech-language pathology assistant pursuant to Chapter 468, F.S.
4. Students determined eligible as a student with a language impairment have access to any supports and services needed as determined by the individual educational plan team. A student should be identified as a student with a disability using the most appropriate category, but this does not mean that the team must identify every possible category under which the student may be eligible. In addition, there is no requirement that a student be eligible under a given category in order to receive specific services. For example, students determined eligible as a student with a language impairment may have counseling as a related service, a functional behavioral assessment (FBA), or academic support for reading or writing even though the student has not been determined to be a student with an emotional or behavioral disability (EBD) or a specific learning disability.
5. Speech-language associate
 - a. Language therapy services provided by a speech-language associate as specified in Rule 6A-4.01761, F.A.C., will be under the direction of a certified or licensed speech-language pathologist with a master's degree or higher in speech-language pathology. Services under this subsection can be provided for a period of three years as described in Section 1012.44, F.S., in districts that qualify for the sparsity supplement as described in Section 1011.62(7), F.S.
 - b. The district will submit a plan to the Department of Education for approval before implementation of Rule 6A-4.01761, F.A.C. The components of the plan must include a description of:
 - The model, specifying the type and amount of direction including, but not limited to, direct observation, support, training, and instruction
 - The rationale for using this model
 - The manner in which the associate will be required to demonstrate competency
 - The process for monitoring the quality of services
 - The process for measuring student progress
 - The manner in which the speech-language associate will meet the requirements of the annual district professional development plan for instructional personnel

The school district has the option to include additional information regarding evaluations, qualified evaluators, or unique philosophical, curricular, or instructional considerations for students with language impairments.

- ☐ The school district has provided additional information for this section in Appendix B of this document.
- ☒ There is no additional information for this section.

Section B.15: Exceptional Student Education Eligibility for Students who are Visually Impaired

Statutory and Regulatory Citations

34 CFR §§300.8, 300.34, 300.172, and 300.324

Sections 1003.55, 1003.57, and 1003.575, F.S.

Rules 6A-6.03014 and 6A-6.0331, F.A.C.

Definition

1. Students who are visually impaired include the following:
 - a. A student who is blind, has no vision, or has little potential for using vision.
 - b. A student who has low vision.
 - c. A student who has a visual impairment after best correction that adversely affects the student's educational performance and
 - d. A student who has been diagnosed with a progressive condition that will most likely result in a visual impairment or no vision after best correction.

Eligibility Criteria

A student is eligible for special education and related services if the following medical and educational criteria are met:

1. A licensed ophthalmologist or optometrist has documented an eye condition that causes an impairment as manifested by at least one of the following:
 - a. A visual acuity of 20/70 or less in the better eye after best possible correction;
 - b. A peripheral field so constricted that it affects the student's ability to function in an educational setting;
 - c. A diagnosis of visual impairment after best correction, or
 - d. A progressive loss of vision that may affect the student's ability to function in an educational setting.
2. The student demonstrates a need for special education.

Student Evaluation

The minimum procedures necessary for determining eligibility shall include:

1. A medical eye examination describing: etiology; diagnosis; treatment regimen; prognosis; near and distance; corrected and uncorrected acuity measures for left eye, right eye and both eyes; measure of field of vision; and recommendations for lighting levels, physical activity, aids, prescribed low-vision aids, or use of glasses or contact lenses, as appropriate.
2. For children birth to five years of age or students who are otherwise unable to be assessed, a medical assessment describing visual functioning shall be documented when standard visual acuities and measure of field of vision are unattainable.
3. A comprehensive assessment of skills known to be impacted by visual impairment, which shall include, but is not limited to:
 - a. A functional vision evaluation that includes an assessment of skills known to be impacted by vision impairment that are aligned with the special skills references in Rule 6A-1.09401, F.A.C., and include assistive technology, compensatory skills, career education, recreation and leisure, sensory efficiency, self-determination, social skills, and independent living;
 - b. A learning media assessment; and
 - c. An orientation and mobility screening.

Reevaluation

1. Reevaluation shall occur at least every three years and shall include a minimum of a medical eye examination within the last calendar year, a comprehensive assessment of skills known to be impacted by visual impairment as required for determining initial eligibility; and, if appropriate, any other formal evaluations addressed in the initial evaluation in accordance with Rule 6A-6.0331, F.A.C.
2. The medical aspect of a reevaluation for students with bilateral anophthalmia may be waived by a written recommendation of a physician.

Specialized Evaluations: Qualified Evaluators

The following specialized evaluations are required to be administered by the individuals listed. All evaluators must hold a valid license or certificate in the state of Florida, in accordance with Rule 6A-6.0331, F.A.C., or a report form is provided from a physician licensed in another state as permitted in accordance with Rule 6A-6.0331(3)(e), F.A.C.

1. Medical eye exam: ophthalmologist or optometrist
2. Functional vision assessment: teacher of the visually impaired, orientation and mobility specialist, or low vision specialist
3. Learning Media Assessment: teacher of the visually impaired
4. Orientation and mobility (as appropriate): orientation and mobility specialist

Unique Philosophical, Curricular, or Instructional Considerations

1. All students with visual impairments are registered for services from the Florida Instructional Materials Center for the Visually Impaired. Students will be provided with instruction in braille unless otherwise determined by the IEP team. This determination is based upon the student's present reading and writing skills, functional vision assessment, and learning media assessment, as well as documentation indicating the need for instruction or use of braille in the future.
2. Orientation and mobility is a related service, provided to blind or visually impaired students by qualified personnel if the IEP team determines that it is necessary in order for the student to benefit from specially designed instruction, that enables the student to attain systematic orientation to and safe movement within their environments in school, home, and community. Orientation and mobility instruction encompasses skill and conceptual awareness that includes, but is not limited to: spatial awareness, use of sensory information to maintain orientation, the use of mobility devices (i.e., long cane, distance low vision aids, assistive technology), and other skills and techniques used to travel safely and efficiently across a variety of settings.
3. The school district will provide information describing the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind and all other programs and methods of instruction available to the parent of a student with sensory impairments. This information will be provided annually. Additionally, in accordance with Rule 6A-6.03014, F.A.C., cooperative planning with the Division of Blind Services (DBS) may occur for students eligible for DBS services, with parent participation and agreement.

The school district has the option to include additional information regarding evaluations, qualified evaluators or unique philosophical, curricular, or instructional considerations for students with visual impairments.

- ☐ The school district has provided additional information for this section in Appendix B of this document.
- ☒ There is no additional information for this section.

Section B.16: Provision of Occupational Therapy to Exceptional Students as a Related Service

Statutory and Regulatory Citations

34 CFR §300.34

Chapters 456 and 468, Part III, F.S.

Sections 1003.01 and 1003.57, F.S.

Rules 6A-6.030191, 6A-6.03024, 6A-6.03028, 6A-6.03411 and Chapter 64B-11, F.A.C.

Definitions

1. Occupational therapy means services provided by a licensed occupational therapist and includes improving, developing, or restoring functions impaired or lost through illness, injury, or deprivation; improving ability to perform tasks for independent functioning if functions are impaired or lost; and preventing, through early intervention, initial or further impairment or loss of function.
2. Related service provider means the licensed occupational therapist responsible for the assessment and provision of school-based occupational therapy as a related service.

Assessments

As defined in S.468.203, F.S., prior to the provision of occupational therapy, assessments shall be conducted by the related service provider as defined in the Occupational Therapy Practice Act, s. 468.203, F.S. Rule 6A-6.03024(1)(c), F.A.C., defines a related service provider as the licensed occupational therapist responsible for the assessment and provision of school-based occupational therapy as a related service as defined in s. 1003.01(3)(b), F.S., and Rule 6A-6.03411(1)(dd)3.f., F.A.C.

Determination of Need for Occupational Therapy

To determine need for occupational therapy as a related service the individual educational plan (IEP), the educational plan (EP), or the individualized family support plan (IFSP) team shall do the following:

1. Review assessments conducted by the related service provider and all other relevant data.
2. Determine if occupational therapy services are needed to assist a student to benefit from specially designed instruction.
3. Include input from the occupational therapist to assist the IEP, EP, or IFSP team when the educational need for occupational therapy as a related service is being determined

Unique Philosophical, Curricular, or Instructional Considerations

1. The licensed therapist or licensed assistant shall provide input to assist the IEP, EP, or IFSP team when:
 - a. The educational need for occupational therapy as a related service is being determined, and
 - b. A student who is receiving occupational therapy as a related service is being reviewed by the IEP, EP, or IFSP team.
2. Once the educational need for occupational therapy has been determined in accordance with the provisions of this rule, a plan of treatment as referenced in s.468.203, F.S., shall be developed. The plan of treatment may be included as a part of the IEP, EP, or IFSP.
3. Pursuant to s. 468.203, F.S., occupational therapy:
 - a. May be provided by either a licensed occupational therapist or a licensed occupational therapy assistant.
 - b. The occupational therapy assistant is supervised by the licensed occupational therapist.
 - c. The licensed occupational therapist provides both initial direction in developing a plan of treatment and periodic inspection of the actual implementation of the plan. Such plan of treatment shall not be altered by the supervised individual without prior consultation with, and the approval of, the supervising occupational therapist.

- d. The supervising occupational therapist need not always be physically present or on the premises when the assistant is performing services. However, except in cases of emergency, supervision shall require the availability of the supervising occupational therapist for consultation with and direction of the supervised individual.

The school district has the option to include additional information regarding evaluations, qualified evaluators, or unique philosophical, curricular, or instructional considerations for students who need occupational therapy.

- ☐ The school district has provided additional information for this section in Appendix B of this document.
- ☒ There is no additional information for this section.

Section B.17: Provision of Physical Therapy to Exceptional Students as a Related Service

Statutory and Regulatory Citations

34 CFR §300.34

Chapters 456, 458, 459, 461, 466 and 486, F.S.

Sections 1003.01 and 1003.57, F.S.

Rules 6A-6.030191, 6A-6.03024, 6A-6.03028, 6A-6.03411 and 64B17-6.001, F.A.C.

Definitions

1. Physical therapy means services provided by a licensed physical therapist.
2. Related service provider means the licensed physical therapist responsible for the assessment and provision of school-based physical therapy as a related service.

Assessments

As defined in s. 486.021, F.S., prior to the provision of physical therapy, assessments shall be conducted by the related service provider as defined in the Physical Therapy Practice Act, Chapter 486, s. 486.021, F.S. Rule 6A-6.03024(1)(c), F.A.C., defines a related service provider as the licensed physical therapist responsible for the assessment and provision of school-based physical therapy as a related service as defined in s. 1003.01(3)(b), F.S., and Rule 6A-6.03411(1)(dd)3.i., F.A.C.

Determination of Need for Physical Therapy

To determine need for physical therapy as a related service the individual educational plan (IEP), the educational plan (EP), or the individualized family support plan (IFSP) team shall do the following:

1. Review assessments conducted by the related service provider and all other relevant data.
2. Determine if physical therapy services are needed to assist a student to benefit from specially designed instruction.
3. Include input from the physical therapist to assist the IEP, EP, or the IFSP team when the educational need for physical therapy as a related service is being determined.

Unique Philosophical, Curricular, or Instructional Considerations

1. The licensed therapist or licensed assistant shall provide input to assist the IEP, EP, or IFSP team when:
 - a. The educational need for physical therapy as a related service is being determined, and
 - b. A student who is receiving physical therapy as a related service is being reviewed by the IEP, EP, or IFSP team.
2. Once the educational need for physical therapy has been determined in accordance with the provisions of this rule, a plan of treatment as referenced in s. 468.203, F.S., shall be developed. The plan of treatment may be included as a part of the IEP, EP, or IFSP.
3. Pursuant to s. 486.021, F.S., physical therapy may be provided by either a licensed physical therapist or a licensed physical therapist assistant, who is under the general supervision of a physical therapist. The supervision of a physical therapist assistant shall not require on-site supervision by the physical therapist.
4. Pursuant to Rule 64B17-6.001, F.A.C., the supervising physical therapist shall be:
 - a. Accessible at all times by two-way communication, which enables the physical therapist to respond to an inquiry when made and to be readily available for consultation during the delivery of care.
 - b. Within the same geographic location as the assistant.
 - c. Provided both initial direction in developing a plan of treatment and ensuring the plan is appropriately implemented on a consistent basis. The supervised individual cannot change the plan of treatment without prior consultation with, and the approval of, the supervising physical therapist.

- d. Readily available to the physical therapist assistant with emphasis placed on directing the assistant through frequent reporting, both verbal and written and frequent observations of the care rendered.

The school district has the option to include additional information regarding evaluations, qualified evaluators, or unique philosophical, curricular, or instructional considerations for students who need physical therapy.

- ☐ The school district has provided additional information for this section in Appendix B of this document.
- ☒ There is no additional information for this section.

Section C: Individual Educational Plan

Statutory and Regulatory Citations

34 CFR §§300.29, 300.106, 300.110, 300.320 through 300.328, and 300.503

Sections 1001.02, 1002.20, 1002.3105, 1003.01, 1003.4203, 1003.4282, 1003.4285, 1003.57, 1003.5715, 1003.5716, 1003.572, 1008.22 and 1008.212, F.S.

Rules 6A-1.0943, 6A-1.09441, 6A-1.0996, 6A-1.09963, 6A-6.03028, 6A-6.0311 through 6A-6.0361, and 6A-6.03311, F.A.C.

Definition

An IEP is a written statement for a student with a disability that is developed, reviewed, and revised in accordance with Rule 6A-6.03028, F.A.C. Parents are partners with schools and district personnel in developing, reviewing, and revising the IEP. The procedures for the development of IEPs for students with disabilities are as follows:

Note: Since an EP is defined in Rule 6A-6.030191, F.A.C., as being developed for students identified solely as gifted, an IEP rather than an EP is developed for students who are gifted and have also been identified as having a disability.

Procedures

1. Role of parents

The role of the parents in developing IEPs includes, but is not limited to:

- a. Providing critical information regarding the strengths of their student;
- b. Expressing their concerns for enhancing the education of their student so that their student can receive FAPE;
- c. Participating in discussions about the student's need for special education and related services;
- d. Participating in deciding how the student will be involved and progress in the general curriculum, including participation in state and district assessments;
- e. Participating in the determination of what services the district will provide to their student and in what setting; and
- f. Participating in the determination of which course of study leading to a standard diploma the student will pursue, consistent with s. 1003.4282, F.S., to include a course of study leading to a Scholar or Merit designation in accordance with s. 1003.4285, F.S.

2. Parent participation in IEP team meetings

The district shall establish procedures that provide for parents, guardians, surrogate parents, or persons acting in loco parentis to participate in decisions concerning the individual educational plan. Parents of each student with a disability must be members of any group that makes decisions on the educational placement of their child.

- a. In order to ensure that parents are present at each meeting, or are afforded the opportunity to participate at each meeting:
 - Parents are notified of the meeting early enough to ensure that they have an opportunity to attend;
 - The meeting is scheduled at a mutually agreed upon time and place
- b. A written notice to the parent indicates the purpose; time; location of the meeting; who, by title or position, will be in attendance; and includes a statement informing the parents that they have the right to invite individuals with special knowledge or expertise about their child. Parents may also be accompanied by an adult of their choice at a meeting with school district personnel.
 - Parents may also request that a Part C service coordinator or other representative of the Part C system be invited to attend the initial IEP team meeting for a child previously receiving early intervention services under Part C of IDEA.

- Decisions as to which particular teacher(s) or special education provider(s) are members of the IEP team are made by the district, based on the needs of the student.
 - The written notice to the parent clearly indicates which persons invited to the IEP team meeting are required members of the team and, thus, would require excusal as described in subsection 4 below.
Any time an IEP team meeting is convened for the purpose of reviewing or changing a student's IEP as it relates to administration of the Florida Standards Alternate Assessment and the provision of instruction in the state standards access points curriculum, or placement of the student in an exceptional student education center, the school must provide the notice to the parent at least 10 days prior to the meeting.
- c. No later than the first IEP to be in effect when the student attains the age of 14 (or younger, if determined appropriate by the IEP team), the notice must also indicate that a purpose of the meeting will be to identify transition services needs of the student and that the district will invite the student.
- d. Not later than the first IEP to be in effect when the student turns 16 (or younger, if determined appropriate by the IEP team), the notice must also indicate that a purpose of the meeting will be consideration of the postsecondary and career goals and transition services for the student, that the district will invite the student and will identify any other agency that will be invited to send a representative to the meeting.
- e. If neither parent can attend, the district uses other methods to ensure parent participation, including individual or conference telephone calls or video conferencing.
- f. A meeting may be conducted without a parent in attendance if the district is unable to obtain the attendance of the parent. In this case, the district maintains a record of its attempts to arrange a mutually agreed upon time and place. These records include such items as:
- Detailed records of telephone calls made or attempted, and the results of those calls
 - Copies of correspondence sent to the parents and any responses received
 - Detailed records of visits made to the parents' home or place of employment, and the results of those visits
- g. The district takes whatever action is necessary to ensure that the parents, and the student when the student is the age of 14 or more, understand the proceedings at a meeting, including arranging for an interpreter for parents and students who are deaf or whose native language is other than English.
- h. A meeting does not include informal or unscheduled conversations involving school district personnel and conversations on issues such as teaching methodology, lesson plans, or coordination of service provision. A meeting also does not include preparatory activities that school district personnel engage in to develop a proposal or response to a parent proposal that will be discussed at a later meeting.
- i. The district provides the parent with a copy of the IEP at no cost to the parent.

3. IEP team participants

The IEP team, with a reasonable number of participants, shall include:

- a. The parents of the student
- b. At least one regular education teacher of the student, if the student is or may be participating in the regular education environment. The regular education teacher of a student with a disability participates, to the extent appropriate, in the development, review, and revision of the student's IEP, including assisting in the determination of:
 - Appropriate positive behavioral interventions and supports and other strategies for the student
 - Supplementary aids and services, classroom accommodations, modifications, or supports for school personnel to be provided for the student
- c. At least one special education teacher of the student, or, where appropriate, one special education provider of the student

- d. A representative of the school district who is qualified to provide or supervise the provision of specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of students with disabilities, knowledgeable about the general curriculum, and is knowledgeable about the availability of resources of the district. At the discretion of the district, the student's special education teacher may be designated to also serve as the representative of the district if the teacher meets these requirements
- e. An individual who can interpret the instructional implications of evaluation results. This role may be fulfilled by another member of the IEP team
- f. At the discretion of the parent or the school district, other individuals who have knowledge or special expertise regarding the student, including related services personnel. The determination of the knowledge or special expertise shall be made by the party who invited the individual to participate in the IEP team meeting
- g. The student, if appropriate, and in all cases where a purpose of the meeting will be the identification of the student's transition services needs or consideration of postsecondary and career goals for the student and the transition services needed to assist the student in reaching those goals. If the student does not attend the IEP team meeting to identify transition services needs or consider postsecondary and career goals and transition services, the district takes other steps to ensure that the student's preferences and interests are considered
- h. Agency representatives— To the extent appropriate and with the consent of the parents or a student who has reached the age of majority, the school district will invite a representative of any participating agency that may be responsible for providing or paying for transition services. Parental consent or the consent of the student who has reached the age of majority must also be obtained before personally identifiable information is released to officials of participating agencies providing or paying for transition services
- i. In the case of a student who was previously served and received early intervention services under Part C of the IDEA, the Part C service coordinator or other representatives of the Part C system must be invited to the initial IEP team meeting, at the request of the parent, to assist with the smooth transition of services
- j. The district will determine the specific personnel to fill the roles

4. IEP team member excusal

- a. A member of the IEP team is not required to attend an IEP team meeting, in whole or in part, if the parent of a student with a disability and the school district agree, in writing, that the attendance of the member is not necessary because the member's area of curriculum or related services is not being modified or discussed in the meeting.
- b. A member of the IEP team also may be excused from attending an IEP team meeting, in whole or in part, when the meeting involves a modification to or discussion of the member's area of the curriculum or related services, if the parent, in writing, and the school district consent to the excusal and the member submits, in writing to the parent and the IEP team, input into the development of the IEP prior to the meeting.
- c. The district has designated the following individual(s), by name or position, as having the authority to make the agreement with the parent, or provide consent on behalf of the district, to excuse an IEP team member from attending an IEP team meeting.

Identify the individual(s), by name or position, who have been granted this authority.

The person designated to serve as the Local Education Agency (LEA) at each school site has this authority.

- d. If a required IEP team member is unable to attend the meeting as scheduled, the parent can agree to continue with the meeting and request an additional meeting if more information is needed, or request that the meeting be rescheduled.

5. Transition of children with disabilities from the infants and toddlers early intervention program

- a. An IEP or an IFSP must be developed and implemented by the third birthday of a child who has been participating in the early intervention program for infants and toddlers with disabilities.
- b. Each school district shall participate in transition planning conferences arranged by the state lead agency for the infants and toddlers with disabilities early intervention program.

- c. If the child's third birthday occurs during the summer, the child's IEP team shall determine the date when services under the IEP or IFSP will begin.

6. IEP timelines

Timelines for IEPs include the following:

- a. An IEP that has been reviewed, and, if appropriate, revised periodically, but not less than annually, must be in effect at the beginning of each school year for each eligible student with a disability within the district's jurisdiction.
- b. An IEP must be developed within 30 calendar days following the determination of a student's eligibility for special education and related services and be in effect prior to the provision of these services.
- c. A meeting shall be held at least annually to review, and revise, as appropriate, each IEP.

7. Considerations in IEP development, review, and revision

The IEP team considers the following factors in the development, review, and revision of the IEP:

- a. Strengths of the student and concerns of the parents for enhancing the education of their child
- b. Results of the initial or most recent evaluation or reevaluation
- c. As appropriate, results of the student's performance on state or districtwide assessments
- d. Academic, developmental, and functional needs of the student
- e. In the case of a student whose behavior impedes the student's learning or the learning of others, strategies, including the use of positive behavioral interventions, supports, and other strategies to address that behavior
- f. In the case of a student with limited English proficiency, the language needs of the student as related to the IEP
- g. In the case of a student who is blind or visually impaired, provision of instruction in Braille and the use of Braille unless the IEP team determines, after an evaluation of the student's reading and writing skills, needs, including future needs and appropriate reading and writing media (including an evaluation of the student's future need for instruction in Braille or the use of Braille), that instruction in Braille or the use of Braille is not appropriate for the student
- h. The communication needs of the student
 - i. In the case of a student who is deaf or hard-of-hearing, the student's language and communication needs, opportunities for direct communications with peers and professional personnel in the student's language and communication mode, academic level, and full range of needs, including opportunities for direct instruction in the student's language and communication mode. Rule 6A-6.03028(3)(g), F.A.C., requires the use of the Communication Plan form (available at <https://www.flrules.org/gateway/reference.asp?No=Ref-04776>) adopted by the State Board of Education during the development of the IEP for students who are deaf, hard of hearing or dual sensory impaired. Use of this plan will ensure that IEP teams are considering the instructional needs of these students in a more comprehensive manner.
 - j. Whether the student requires assistive technology devices or services. On a case-by-case basis, the use of school-purchased assistive technology devices in a student's home or other settings is required if the IEP team determines that the student needs access to those devices in order to receive FAPE
 - k. At least annually, whether extended school year (ESY) services are necessary for the provision of FAPE to the student if the IEP team determines, on an individual basis, that the services are necessary. School districts may not limit ESY to particular categories of a disability or unilaterally limit the type, amount, or duration of those services.
 - Pursuant to 34 CFR §300.106, ESY services must be considered by the IEP or individualized family support plan (IFSP) team as part of the provision of FAPE for students with disabilities. ESY is special education and related services that are provided to a student with a disability beyond the normal school year of the public agency, in accordance with the child's IEP or IFSP and at no cost to the parent of the child and meets the standards of the state educational agency (SEA).

- ESY is not intended to provide education beyond that which has been determined necessary by the IEP or IFSP team to ensure FAPE. In many cases, not all of the services specified in an individual student's IEP or IFSP for the school year need to be provided as part of ESY services.
- Parental requests for ESY services must be considered; however, if ESY services are requested by the parent and the IEP or IFSP team does not determine the provision of the requested ESY services as necessary for the provision of FAPE, then a written informed notice of refusal must be provided.

Describe the district's procedures for determining the need for ESY services for individual students.

Florida's guidelines (see <http://www.fldoe.org/academics/exceptional-student-edu/beess-resources/presentations-pubs/#e>) specifically refer to extenuating circumstances related to the student's current situation. Due to COVID-19 school closures could result in extenuating circumstances that may, for some students, negatively impact the ability to fully participate alongside peers without disabilities through the provision of FAPE. ESY is not limited to summer, but can and should, where appropriate, happen throughout the school year. It's possible that this unique ESY plan due to COVID-19 be documented in a separate form and determined through an IEP amendment process. ESY services per recent IEP's are being provided in a blended format to accommodate the needs of the students. The district plans will be reviewed and revised to ensure that there is a clear plan of communication regarding this process. The district is planning on providing the Governor's mandated summer camp for grades K-5, all students who show a need for additional instruction based on progress monitoring completed prior to COVID-19 will be provided. Students with disabilities will be included and accommodations will be implemented. For grades 6-12 students are attending summer school. Students with disabilities will be included and the students accommodations will be implemented. As soon as students with disabilities return to school, progress monitoring and summer camp data will be reviewed to determine individual needs. Once the need(s) have been identified, a plan will be developed through the IEP process. Services will be determined and provided to the extent that meets the need(s) of the student(s) throughout the school year. At each annual review IEP meeting, the IEP team addresses the need for ESY services, or more frequently if a member of the team feels that ESY is necessary to insure FAPE for the student. In August and March of each school year, ESE Resource Specialists meet with ESE teachers at each of their assigned schools. During these meetings, they remind teachers of the guiding questions for ESY. If parents, adult students or agencies request ESY, the IEP team convenes and reviews the guiding questions. If the IEP team agrees that ESY is needed, the IEP is amended with ESY goals; if the IEP team is not in agreement and the parent/guardian still requests ESY, a Notice of Refusal and Procedural Safeguards are provided. If the IEP team determines that ESY is necessary, the team determines the location, duration and provision of ESY services.

Describe the district's procedures for informing staff that varying amounts, types and durations of ESY services are possible based on the individual needs of a student. (Any predetermination or set policy on the amount of time ESY will be provided is contrary to the regulations.)

Annual training is held in August for all ESE teachers and school-based ESE Resource Specialists who are responsible for the oversight of ESE policy/procedures. A protocol for determining amount, type, and duration of ESY services is included in the annual training and will continue to be provided in future years during pre-school staff development. In addition, ESE Resource Specialists and ESE teachers and therapists look at students who might need ESY services based on progress monitoring data through out the year. The teachers and therapists use their student data to determine possible services required, the best location for service delivery, the length of service and the most effective means of service delivery. The IEP team determines the need for ESY and if necessary, writes an IEP with ESY goals and designates services to be provided, including the frequency, amount, location and duration. The appropriate provision and level of service provided in the IEP is monitored by the district ESE staff.

- I. If, after considering all the factors mentioned above, the IEP team determines that a student needs a particular device or service, including an intervention, accommodation, or other modification, in order to receive FAPE, the IEP includes a statement to that effect.

8. Prior Written Notice

Written notice must be given to the parents of a child with a disability within a reasonable time before the district:

- a. Proposes to initiate or change the identification, evaluation or educational placement of the child or the provision of FAPE; or
- b. Refuses to initiate or change the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of the child or the provision of FAPE to the child.

The content of the notice must be written in language understandable to the general public and provided in the native language or other mode of communication used by the parents unless it is not feasible to do so. If it is not feasible, the district must take steps to ensure that there is evidence that the notice is translated orally or by other means to the parents in the native language or other mode of communication used by the parents and must include the following:

- A description of the action proposed or refused by the district;
- An explanation of why the district proposes or refuses to take the action;
- A description of each evaluation procedure, assessment, record, or report the district used as a basis for the proposed or refused action;
- A statement that the parents of a child with a disability have protection under the procedural safeguards if the notice is not an initial referral for evaluation and the means by which a copy of a description of the procedural safeguards can be obtained;
- Sources for the parents to contact to obtain assistance in understanding the notice;
- A description of other options that the IEP Team considered and the reasons why those options were rejected; and
- A description of other factors that are relevant to the district's proposal or refusal.

9. Content of the IEP

Each IEP must include the following:

- a. A statement of the student's present levels of academic achievement and functional performance, including how the student's disability affects the student's involvement and progress in the general curriculum, or for prekindergarten children, as appropriate, how the disability affects the student's participation in appropriate activities.
- b. A statement of measurable annual goals, including academic and functional goals designed to meet the student's needs that result from the student's disability to enable the student to be involved in and make progress in the general curriculum or for preschool children, as appropriate, to participate in appropriate activities and meeting each of the student's other educational needs that result from the student's disability.
- c. A description of benchmarks or short-term objectives for students with disabilities who take alternate assessments aligned to alternate achievement standards, or any other student with a disability, at the discretion of the IEP team.
- d. A statement of the special education and related services, and supplementary aids and services, based on peer-reviewed research to the extent practicable, to be provided to the student, or on behalf of the student.
- e. A statement of the classroom accommodations, modifications, or supports for school personnel that will be provided for the student to advance appropriately toward attaining the annual goals; be involved and progress in the general curriculum; to participate in extracurricular and other nonacademic activities; and to be educated and participate with other students with disabilities and nondisabled students in compliance with state and federal law. (A parent must provide signed consent for a student to receive instructional accommodations that would not be permitted on the statewide assessments and must acknowledge in writing that he or she understands the implications of such accommodations.)
- f. An explanation of the extent, if any, to which the student will not participate with nondisabled students in the regular class or in the activities described above.
- g. A statement addressing any individual appropriate accommodations necessary to measure the academic achievement and functional performance of the student on the statewide, standardized assessments or district assessments. Accommodations that negate the validity of a statewide assessment are not allowable in accordance with s. 1008.22, F.S. If the IEP team determines that the student will take the Florida Standards Alternate Assessment instead of other statewide, standardized assessments or an alternate district assessment of student achievement, the IEP must include a statement of why the student cannot participate in other statewide, standardized assessments or district assessments and, if applicable why the particular district alternate assessment selected is appropriate for the student. If a student does not participate in the statewide, standardized assessment program as a result of being granted an extraordinary exemption in accordance with s. 1008.212, F.S., or an exemption due to medical complexity in accordance with s. 1008.22(11), F.S., the district must notify

the student's parent and provide the parent with information regarding the implications of such nonparticipation in accordance with s. 1008.22(3), F.S.

- h. The projected date for the beginning of the special education, services, accommodations, and modifications described and the anticipated frequency, location, and duration of those services.
- i. A statement of how the student's progress toward meeting the annual goals will be measured and when periodic reports on the progress the student is making toward meeting the annual goals (such as through the use of quarterly or other periodic reports, concurrent with the issuance of report cards) will be provided.
- j. A statement to identify any Career and Professional Education (CAPE) Digital Tools certificates and CAPE industry certifications the student seeks to attain before high school graduation.

10. Transitional needs addressed within IEP

- a. Before a student attaining the age of 14 years, in order to ensure quality transition planning and services, IEP teams shall begin the process of identifying transition services needs of students with disabilities, to include the following:
 - A statement of intent to pursue a standard high school diploma pursuant to s. 1003.4282(1)-(9), (11), F.S., and a Scholar or Merit designation in accordance with s. 1003.4285, F.S., as determined by the parent;
 - The preparation needed for the student to graduate from high school with a standard diploma and a Scholar or Merit diploma designation as determined by the parent; and
 - Consideration of the student's need for instruction or the provision of information in the area of self-determination and self-advocacy to assist the student to be able to actively and effectively participate in IEP meetings, so that needed postsecondary and career goals may be identified and in place by age 16.
- b. Beginning not later than the first IEP to be in effect when the student attains the age of 16, or younger if determined appropriate by the parent and the IEP team, the IEP must include the following statements that must be updated annually:
 - A statement of intent to receive a standard high school diploma before the student attains the age of 22 and a description of how the student will fully meet the requirements in s. 1003.4282, F.S. This requirement does not apply if the student entered Grade 9 prior to the 2014-2015 school year and is pursuing a special diploma in accordance with the student's IEP.
 - A statement of the outcomes and the additional benefits expected by the parent and the IEP team at the time of the student's graduation.
 - A statement of appropriate measurable long-term postsecondary education and career goals based upon age-appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment, and, if appropriate, independent living skills and the transition services, including courses of study needed to assist the student in reaching those goals.
 - If a participating agency responsible for transition services, other than the school district, fails to provide the transition services described in the IEP, the school district shall reconvene the IEP team to identify alternative strategies to meet the transition objectives for the student set out in the IEP. However, this does not relieve any participating agency, including the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VR), of the responsibility to provide or pay for any transition service that the agency would otherwise provide to students with disabilities who meet the eligibility criteria of that agency.
- c. Any change in the IEP for the goals specified in section b (above) must be approved by the parent and is subject to verification for appropriateness by an independent reviewer selected by the parent as provided in s. 1003.572.
- d. Beginning at least one year before the student's eighteenth birthday, a statement that the student has been informed of his or her rights that will transfer from the parent to the student on reaching the age of majority, which is 18 years of age.
- e. Beginning with the 2015-2016 school year, a statement identifying Career and Professional Education (CAPE) digital tool certificates and the CAPE industry certifications that the student seeks to attain before high school graduation, if any, pursuant to s. 1003.4203, F.S.

- f. For students whose eligibility terminates due to graduation from secondary school with a regular diploma or due to exceeding the age eligibility for FAPE under State law, a public agency must provide the child with a summary of the child's academic achievement and functional performance, which should include recommendations on how to assist the student in meeting the postsecondary and career goals.

11. Requirements for a Standard Diploma are found in s. 1003.4282, F.S., and Rule 6A-6.03028, F.A.C.

12. High School Graduation Requirements for Students with Disabilities

a. General requirements.

Beginning in the 2014-2015 school year, students with disabilities entering Grade 9 may attain a standard diploma and earn standard diploma designations by meeting the requirements in ss. 1003.4282(1)-(9) or 1002.3105(5), or 1003.4282(110) and 1003.4285, F.S. Nothing contained in Rule 6A-1.09963, F.A.C., shall be construed to limit or restrict the right of a student with a disability solely to the options described in Rule 6A-1.09963, F.A.C. A certificate of completion will be awarded to students who earn the required 18 or 24 credits required for graduation, but who do not achieve the required grade point average or who do not pass required assessments unless a waiver of the results has been granted in accordance with s. 1008.22(3)(c) 2., F.S., or participation in a statewide assessment has been exempted in accordance with s. 1008.212, F.S., or s. 1008.22(11), F.S. Students who entered Grade 9 before the 2014-2015 school year and whose individual educational plan (IEP), as of June 20, 2014, contained a statement of intent to receive a special diploma may continue to work toward a special diploma or a special certificate of completion.

b. Definitions from Rule 6A-1.09963, F.A.C.

- i. Access courses. Access courses are approved by the State Board of Education and are described in the Course Code Directory and Instructional Personnel Assignments, in accordance with Rule 6A-1.09441, F.A.C. Access courses are based on the access points. Access points are academic expectations intended only for students with significant cognitive disabilities and are designed to provide these students with access to the general curriculum.
- ii. Alternate Assessment. In accordance with s. 1008.22(3)(c), F.S., an alternate assessment is a statewide standardized assessment designed for students with significant cognitive disabilities in order to measure performance on the access points.
- iii. Employment transition plan. A plan that meets the requirements found in s. 1003.4282(10)(b)2.d., F.S. This plan is separate from the IEP.
- iv. Eligible Career and Technical Education (CTE) course. Eligible CTE courses include any exceptional student education (ESE) or general education CTE course that contains content related to the course for which it is substituting. Modifications to the expectations or outcomes of the curriculum, known as modified occupational completion points (MOCPs), are allowable and may be necessary for a student who takes access courses and participates in the alternate assessment. Modifications may include modified course requirements. Modifications to curriculum outcomes should be considered only after all appropriate accommodations are in place. MOCPs must be developed for students in conjunction with their IEP and must be documented on the IEP. Course outcomes may be modified through the IEP process for secondary students with disabilities who are enrolled in a postsecondary program if the student is earning secondary (high school) credit for the program.

c. Requirements for a standard diploma for students with disabilities for whom the IEP team has determined that participation in the Florida Alternate Assessment is the most appropriate measure of the student's skills, in accordance with Rule 6A-1.0943(5), F.A.C., and instruction in the access points is the most appropriate means of providing the student access to the general curriculum. Students must meet the graduation requirements specified in s. 1003.4282(1)-(9), F.S., or s. 1002.3105(5), F.S., through the access course specified for each required core course, through more rigorous ESE courses in the same content area, or through core academic courses. Eligible access courses are described in the Course Code Directory and Instructional Personnel Assignments, in accordance with Rule 6A-1.09441, F.A.C.

- i. Eligible CTE courses, as defined in Rule 6A-1.09963(2)(d), F.A.C., may substitute for Access English IV; one mathematics credit, with the exception of Access Algebra 1A and Access Algebra 1B and Access Geometry; one science credit, with the exception of Access Biology; and one social studies credit, with the exception of Access

United States History. Eligible courses are described in the Course Code Directory and Instructional Personnel Assignments, in accordance with Rule 6A-1.09441, F.A.C.

- ii. Participation in the Florida Standards Alternate Assessment in reading, mathematics, and science is required until replaced by Florida Alternate Assessments in English Language Arts I, II, and III, Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, Biology I, and United States History.
 - iii. A score of at least 4 on the Florida Standards Alternate Assessment in reading and math must be attained, until replaced by the Grade 10 English Language Arts alternate assessment and the End-of-Course (EOC) assessment for Access Algebra I, unless assessment results are waived in accordance with s. 1008.22(3)(c), F.S. A waiver of the results of the statewide, standardized assessment requirements by the IEP team, pursuant to s. 1008.22(3)(c), F.S., must be approved by the parents and is subject to verification for appropriateness by an independent reviewer selected by the parents as provided for in s. 1003.572, F.S.
 - iv. For those students whose performance on standardized assessments is waived by the IEP team as approved by the parent, the development of a graduation portfolio of quantifiable evidence of achievement is required. The portfolio must include a listing of courses the student has taken, grades received, student work samples, and other materials that demonstrate growth, improvement, and mastery of required course standards. Multi-media portfolios that contain electronic evidence of progress, including videos and audio recordings, are permissible. Community-based instruction, MOCs, work experience, internships, community service, and postsecondary credit, if any, must be documented in the portfolio.
- d. Requirements for a standard diploma for students with disabilities for whom the IEP team has determined that mastery of both academic and employment competencies is the most appropriate way for the student to demonstrate his or her skills. A student must meet all of the graduation requirements specified in s. 1003.4282(1)-(9), F.S., or s. 1002.3105(5), F.S. Eligible courses are described in the Course Code Directory and Instructional Personnel Assignments, in accordance with Rule 6A-1.09441, F.A.C.
- i. Eligible CTE courses, as defined in Rule 6A-1.09963(2)(d), F.A.C., may substitute for English IV; one mathematics credit, with the exception of Algebra and Geometry; one science credit, with the exception of Biology; and one social studies credit, with the exception of United States History. Eligible courses are described in the Course Code Directory and Instructional Personnel Assignments, in accordance with Rule 6A-1.09441, F.A.C.
 - ii. Students must earn a minimum of one-half credit in a course that includes employment. Such employment must be at a minimum wage or above in compliance with the requirements of the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act, for the number of hours a week specified in the student's completed and signed employment transition plan, as specified in s. 1003.4282(10)(b)2.d., F.S., for the equivalent of at least one semester. Additional credits in employment-based courses are permitted as electives.
 - iii. Documented achievement of all components defined in s. 1003.4282(10)(b)2.b., F.S., on the student's employment transition plan.
- e. A waiver of the results of the statewide, standardized assessment requirements by the IEP team, pursuant to s. 1008.22(3)(c), F.S., must be approved by the parents and is subject to verification for appropriateness by an independent reviewer selected by the parents as provided for in s. 1003.572, F.S.
- f. Deferral of receipt of a standard diploma. A student with a disability who meets the standard high school diploma requirements may defer the receipt of the diploma and continue to receive services if the student meets the requirements found at s. 1003.4282(10)(c), F.S.
- i. The decision to accept or defer the standard high school diploma must be made during the school year in which the student is expected to meet all requirements for a standard high school diploma. The decision must be noted on the IEP and the parent, or the student over the age of 18 for whom rights have transferred in accordance with Rule 6A-6.03311(8), F.A.C., must sign a separate document stating the decision.
1. The IEP team must review the benefits of deferring the standard high school diploma, including continuation of educational and related services, and describe to the parent and the student all services and program options available to students who defer. This description must be done in writing.

2. School districts must inform the parent and the student, in writing, by January 30 of the year in which the student is expected to meet graduation requirements, that failure to defer receipt of a standard high school diploma after all requirements are met releases the school district from the obligation to provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE). This communication must state that the deadline for acceptance or deferral of the diploma is May 15 of the year in which the student is expected to meet graduation requirements, and that failure to attend a graduation ceremony does not constitute a deferral.
3. The school district must ensure that the names of students deferring their diploma be submitted to appropriate district staff for entry in the district's management information system. Improper coding in the district database will not constitute failure to defer.

ii. A student with a disability who receives a certificate of completion may continue to receive FAPE until their 22nd birthday, or, at the discretion of the school district, until the end of the school semester or year in which the student turns 22. The repeal of s. 1003.438, F.S., effective July 15, 2015, does not apply to a student with a disability as defined in s. 1003.438, F.S., whose individual educational plan, as of June 20, 2014, contains a statement of intent to receive a special diploma. Such student shall be awarded a special diploma in a form prescribed by the Commissioner of Education if the student meets the requirements specified in s. 1003.438, F.S., and in effect as of June 20, 2014. Any such student who meets all special requirements of the district school board in effect as of June 20, 2014, but who is unable to meet the appropriate special state minimum requirements in effect as of June 20, 2014, shall be awarded a special certificate of completion in a form prescribed by the Commissioner of Education.

13. Separate parental consent for specific actions included in an IEP

In accordance with s. 1003.5715, F.S., effective July 1, 2013, separate parental consent for the following actions in a student's IEP is required:

- a. Administration of an alternate assessment pursuant to s. 1008.22, F.S., and instruction in the state standards access points curriculum.
- b. Placement of the student in an ESE center school.

The district must use the following forms adopted by FDOE for obtaining consent.

- o Parental Consent Form: [Instruction in the State Standards Access Points Curriculum and Florida Alternate Assessment Administration](#)
- o Parental Consent Form: [Student Placement in an Exceptional Education Center](#)

In accordance with 34 CFR §300.503, each consent form must be provided in the parent's native language as defined in 34 CFR §300.29. Consent forms can be accessed at the following link: flrules.org/gateway/reference.asp?no=ref-03384. A district may not proceed with the actions described above unless the district documents reasonable efforts to obtain the parent's consent and the student's parent has failed to respond or the district obtains approval through a due process hearing.

Except for a disciplinary change in placement as described in s. 1003.57(1)(h), F.S., if a district determines that there is a need to change a student's IEP related to administration of the alternate assessment, instruction in the access points curriculum, or ESE center school placement, the school must hold an IEP team meeting that includes the parent to discuss the reason for the change. The school shall provide written notice to the parent at least 10 days before the meeting, indicating the purpose, time, and location of the meeting and who, by title or position, will attend the meeting. The IEP team meeting requirement may be waived by informed consent of the parent after the parent receives the written notice.

For a change in a student's IEP related to administration of the alternate assessment, instruction in access points curriculum, or ESE center school placement, the district may not implement the change without parental consent unless the district documents reasonable efforts to obtain the parent's consent and the student's parent has failed to respond or the district obtains approval through a due process hearing and resolution of appeals.

14. Least restrictive environment (LRE) and placement determinations

- o To the maximum extent appropriate, students with disabilities, including those in public or private institutions or other facilities, are educated with students who are not disabled. A school district shall use the term "inclusion" to mean that a student is receiving education in a general education regular class setting, reflecting natural proportions and age-appropriate heterogeneous groups in core academic and elective or special areas within the school community; a student with a disability is a valued member of the classroom and school community; the teachers and administrators support universal education and have knowledge and support available to enable them to effectively teach all children; and a student is provided access to technical assistance in best practices, instructional methods, and supports tailored to the student's needs based on current research.

Section 1003.57(1)(f), F.S., requires that, once every three years, each school district and school must complete a Best Practices in Inclusive Education (BPIE) assessment. The BPIE is an internal assessment process designed to facilitate the analysis, implementation and improvement of inclusive educational practices. The results of this process, including all planned short- and long-term improvement efforts, must be included in the school district's ESE policies and procedures.

The district completed the BPIE.

Date completed. (Please upload the district's BPIE services plan that must include all short- and long-term improvement efforts, in Appendix F).

September 6, 2019

The anticipated date for the triennial BPIE assessment, if known.

September 2022

- o Special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of students with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only if the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily; and
- o A continuum of alternative placements must be available to meet the needs of students with disabilities for special education and related services, including instruction in regular classes, special classes, special schools, home instruction, and instruction in hospitals and institutions. A school district must make provision for supplementary services (such as resource room or itinerant instruction) to be provided in conjunction with regular class placement.

Describe the district's continuum of alternative placements (e.g., instruction in regular classes, special classes, special schools, home instruction and instruction in hospitals and institutions). If your district contracts with another district to provide a placement option, please indicate this as well.

A full continuum of alternative placements is available for students with disabilities including teacher-to-teacher consultation for instruction in general education classes, support facilitation in general education classes, co-teach instruction, resource room pull out, full time ESE placement in a self-contained class, and hospital-homebound instruction. In addition, the school district provides home-based instruction to students with disabilities who have been assigned out-of-school suspension or expulsion.

Describe the district's procedures regarding provision for supplementary services to be provided in conjunction with regular class placement.

The School District of Okeechobee County utilizes an on-going team-based process for provision of supplementary services with a Student, Environment, Task, and Tool (SETT) framework. Data collection including observations of the student in the classroom and school environment is critical to gaining information regarding how the student accesses the general education curriculum. This data is used to identify and incorporate necessary supplementary services within the IEP for implementation across settings including the general education setting. Teachers and staff to provide supplementary services for students who are deaf/hard of hearing, visually impaired, mental health counseling, behavioral supports, or who require occupational or physical therapy are employed or contracted based on student need.

- o In determining the educational placement of a student with a disability, including a preschool child with a disability, each school district must ensure that:

- The placement decision is made by a group of persons, including the parents, and other persons knowledgeable about the student, the meaning of the evaluation data, and the placement options.
 - The placement decision is made in accordance with the LRE provisions listed above.
 - The student's placement is determined at least annually, is based on the student's IEP, and is as close as possible to the student's home.
 - Unless the IEP of a student with a disability requires some other arrangement, the student is educated in the school that he or she would attend if nondisabled.
 - In selecting the LRE, consideration is given to any potential harmful effect on the student or on the quality of services that he or she needs.
 - A student with a disability is not removed from education in age-appropriate regular classrooms solely because of needed modifications in the general education curriculum.
- In providing or arranging for the provision of nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities (including meals, recess periods, counseling services, athletics, transportation, health services, recreational activities, special interest groups or clubs sponsored by the school district, referrals to agencies that provide assistance to individuals with disabilities, and employment of students, including both employment by the school district and assistance in making outside employment available), each school district must ensure that each student with a disability participates with students who are not disabled to the maximum extent appropriate to the needs of the student. The school district must ensure that each student with a disability has the supplementary aids and services determined by the student's IEP team to be appropriate and necessary for the student to participate in nonacademic settings.

15. Review and revision of the IEP

The district ensures that the IEP team:

- a. Reviews the IEP periodically, but not less than annually, to determine whether the annual goals for the student are being achieved
- b. Revises the IEP as appropriate to address:
 - Any lack of expected progress toward the annual goals and in the general curriculum, if appropriate
 - Results of any reevaluation conducted
 - Information about the student provided to or by the parents
 - The student's anticipated needs or other matters
 - Consideration of the factors described earlier in subsection 7.
- c. Responds to a parent's right to ask for revision of the student's IEP
- d. Encourages the consolidation of reevaluation meetings for the student and other IEP team meetings for the student, to the extent possible

16. Changes to the IEP

Generally, changes to the IEP must be made by the entire IEP team at an IEP team meeting and may be made by amending the IEP rather than by redrafting the entire IEP. However, in making changes to the IEP after the annual IEP team meeting for a school year, the parent and school district may agree not to convene an IEP team meeting for purposes of making those changes, and instead may develop a written document to amend or modify the student's current IEP. If changes are made to the student's IEP without a meeting, the district must ensure that the student's IEP team is informed of those changes. Upon request, a parent will be provided a revised copy of the IEP with the amendments incorporated. In addition, the following changes to the IEP and decisions made by the IEP team must be approved by the parent or the adult student, if rights have transferred, in accordance with Rule 6A-6.03311(8), F.A.C. Such changes are subject to an independent reviewer selected by the parent as provided in s. 1003.572, F.S., and include:

a. Changes to the postsecondary or career goals; and,

b. Beginning with students entering Grade 9 in the 2014-2015 school year, changes in the selected graduation option specified in the student's IEP and any waiver of statewide standardized assessment results made by the IEP team in accordance with the provisions of s. 1008.22(3)(c), F.S.

17. Students with disabilities in adult prisons

The requirements relating to participation in general assessments do not apply to students with disabilities who are convicted as adults under state law and incarcerated in adult prisons. In addition, the requirements relating to transition planning and services do not apply with respect to those students whose eligibility for services under Part B of IDEA will end because of their age before they will be eligible to be released from prison based on consideration of their sentence and eligibility for early release. The IEP team may modify the student's IEP or placement if the state has demonstrated a bona fide security or compelling penological interest that cannot otherwise be accommodated. The requirements relating to the IEP content and LRE do not apply with respect to such modifications.

18. IEP implementation and accountability

The school district is responsible for providing special education to students with disabilities in accordance with the students' IEPs. However, it is not required that the school district, teacher, or other person be held accountable if a student does not achieve the growth projected in the annual goals and benchmarks or objectives. An IEP must be in effect before special education and related services are provided to an eligible student and will be implemented as soon as possible following the IEP team meeting. In addition, the IEP will be accessible to each regular education teacher, special education teacher, related service provider, and other service provider who is responsible for its implementation. All teachers and providers will be informed of their specific responsibilities related to the implementation of the IEP and the specific accommodations, modifications, and supports that must be provided for the student in accordance with the IEP. The district must make a good faith effort to assist the student in achieving the goals and objectives or benchmarks listed on the IEP.

19. IEPs and meetings for students with disabilities placed in private schools or community facilities by the school district

If a student with a disability is placed in a private school by the school district, in consultation with the student's parents, the school district will ensure that the student has the same rights as a student with a disability served by the school district. Before placing the student, the school district initiates and conducts a meeting to develop an IEP or IFSP for the student. The district will ensure the attendance of a representative of the private school at the meeting. If the representative cannot attend, the district will use other methods to ensure participation by the private school, including individual or conference telephone calls. After a student with a disability enters a private school or facility, any meetings to review and revise the student's IEP may be initiated and conducted by the private school or facility at the discretion of the school district. However, the school district must ensure that the parents and a school district representative are involved in decisions about the IEP and agree to proposed changes in the IEP before those changes are implemented by the private school. Even if a private school or facility implements a student's IEP, responsibility for compliance with state board rules remains with the school district. These requirements apply only to students who are or have been placed in or referred to a private school or facility by a school district as a means of providing FAPE. If placement in a public or private residential program is necessary to provide special education to a student with a disability, the program, including non-medical care and room and board, must be at no cost to the parents of the student.

20. Access to instructional materials

The school district will take all reasonable steps to provide instructional materials in accessible formats to students with disabilities who need those instructional materials at the same time as other students receive instructional materials.

21. Physical education

Physical education services, specially designed if necessary, must be made available to every student with a disability receiving FAPE, unless the school district does not provide physical education to students without disabilities in the same grades. Each student with a disability will be afforded the opportunity to participate in the regular physical education program available to nondisabled students unless the student is enrolled full-time in a separate facility or the student needs specially designed physical education, as prescribed in the student's IEP. If specially designed physical education is prescribed in a student's IEP, the school district will provide the services directly or make arrangements for those services to be provided through other public or private programs. The school district responsible for the education of a student with a disability who is enrolled in a separate facility must ensure that the student receives appropriate physical education services in compliance with state and federal law.

22. Treatment of charter school students

Students with disabilities who attend public charter schools, and their parents, retain all rights under Rules 6A-6.03011 through 6A-6.0361, F.A.C. The school district will serve students with disabilities attending those charter schools in the same manner as the district serves students with disabilities in its other schools. This includes the following:

- a. Providing supplementary and related services on site at the charter school to the same extent to which the school district has a policy or practice of providing such services on site to its other public schools
- b. Providing funds under Part B of the IDEA to those charter schools on the same basis as the school district provides funds to the school district's other public schools:
 - i. Including proportional distribution based on relative enrollment of students with disabilities
 - ii. At the same time as the school distributes other federal funds to its other public schools

23. Program options

The school district must take steps to ensure that students with disabilities have available to them the variety of educational programs and services available to nondisabled students in the area served by the school district, including art, music, industrial arts, consumer and homemaking education, and career and technical education.

The school district has the option to include additional information regarding the development and implementation of IEPs.

- ☐ The school district has provided additional information for this section in Appendix B of this document.
- ☒ There is no additional information for this section.

Section D: Discipline

Statutory and Regulatory Citations

34 CFR §§300.530–300.537

Sections 893.02, 893.03, 1002.20, 1002.22, 1003.01, 1003.31, 1003.57, and 1006.09, F.S.

Rules 6A-1.0955, 6A-6.03011 through 6A-6.0361 and 6A-6.03312, F.A.C.

Definitions

1. Change of placement because of disciplinary removals

For the purpose of removing a student with a disability from the student's current educational placement as specified in the student's IEP under Rule 6A-6.03312, F.A.C., a change of placement occurs with **either** of the following:

a. The removal is for more than 10 consecutive school days.

b. The student has been subjected to a series of removals that constitutes a pattern that is a change of placement because the removals cumulate to more than 10 school days in a school year, because the student's behavior is substantially similar to the student's behavior in previous incidents that resulted in the series of removals, and because of additional factors, such as the length of each removal, the total amount of time the student has been removed, and the proximity of the removals to one another. A school district determines on a case-by-case basis whether a pattern of removals constitutes a change of placement, and this determination is subject to review through due process and judicial proceedings.

2. Controlled substance

A controlled substance is any substance named or described in Schedules I–V of s. 893.03, F.S.

3. Illegal drug

An illegal drug means a controlled substance but does not include a substance that is legally possessed or used under the supervision of a licensed health care professional or that is legally possessed or used under any other authority under the Controlled Substances Act, 21 U.S.C. 812(c), or under any other provision of federal law.

4. Serious bodily injury

Serious bodily injury means bodily injury that involves a substantial risk of death; extreme physical pain; protracted and obvious disfigurement; or protracted loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ, or mental faculty.

5. Weapon

Weapon means a weapon, device, instrument, material, or substance, animate or inanimate, that is used for, or is readily capable of, causing death or serious bodily injury, except that such term does not include a pocket knife with a blade that is less than two and a half inches in length.

6. Manifestation determination

A manifestation determination is a process by which the relationship between the student's disability and a specific behavior that may result in disciplinary action is examined.

7. Interim alternative educational setting (IAES)

An interim alternative educational setting is a different location where educational services are provided for a specific time period due to disciplinary reasons and that meets the requirements of Rule 6A-6.03312, F.A.C.

Procedures

1. For students with disabilities whose behavior impedes their learning or the learning of others, strategies, including positive behavioral interventions and supports to address that behavior, will be considered in the development of their IEPs. School personnel may consider any unique circumstances on a case-by-case basis when determining whether a change in placement, consistent with the requirements and procedures in Rule 6A-6.03312, F.A.C., is appropriate for a student with a disability who violates the Code of Student Conduct.

Describe the district's procedures for providing information and training regarding positive behavioral interventions and supports.

Okeechobee County has all 10 schools enrolled as Positive Behavior Support schools. Each school has a designated coach and maintains a team of teachers, administrators, school counselors, and other staff. Team meets monthly to continue school wide PBIS and to review and address the behavioral needs of small groups and individual students. Teams are trained on the fundamentals of behavior, problem solving process, and data based decision making. MTSS District Leadership Team reviews district level discipline data on bi-monthly basis. Monthly, coaches receive training on research based methods for student identification and supplemental and intensive interventions to address students' needs; and engage in data based decision making based on review of current discipline data, attendance and student achievement. On-line training is provided by the state project through monthly webinars, live chats with schools across the state, and training modules addressing each phase of PBIS implementation. Updated information is continuously disseminated to school coaches by the district coordinator. Okeechobee County is a part of SEDNET through St. Lucie County and information is received by the Director of ESE and Director of Mental Health regarding regional training(s) on positive behavior programs. This information is then sent via county e-mail to the principals of all schools to be posted. Additionally, it is posted on the county's website training calendar through professional development. Annually, the ESE department reviews and monitors the rate of suspension by grade, race, and offense and reports the information to the Superintendent and school level administrators. The Director of Mental Health supervises the use of the BIS charts average offenses per day, per month, per school, breakdown of offense type, action type, location, and the percent of change in out-of-school suspensions from year to year.

Describe how the district addresses behavior in the development of the IEP for students with disabilities whose behavior impedes their learning or the learning of others.

The district addresses the behavior in the development of the IEP by reviewing the student discipline data along with parent, student and staff input. A Functional Behavior Assessment is completed with the team and a Behavior Intervention Plan is developed and monitored for progress. The IEP also includes goals and objectives addressing the social and emotional factors affecting the student.

2. Authority of school personnel

Consistent with the school district's Code of Student Conduct and to the extent that removal would be applied to nondisabled students, school personnel:

- a. May remove a student with a disability, who violates a code of student conduct, from the student's current placement for not more than 10 consecutive school days
- b. May remove a student with a disability, for not more than 10 consecutive school days in that same school year, for separate incidents of misconduct, as long as those removals do not constitute a change in placement, as defined in Rule 6A-6.03312, F.A.C.

Describe the district's procedures for monitoring out-of-school suspensions, to include the review of suspension and expulsion data.

Okeechobee County requests daily faxes from each school to be sent to the district office. The secretary then looks up each student to determine if a student is an eligible student with a disability. If the student is a student with a disability, she/he highlights the name, offense and suspension days and gives the form to the ESE Resource specialist from that school. The ESE Director keeps a running log of all OSS to share and discuss monthly with school based administration.

Describe the district's procedures for determining whether a pattern of removals constitutes a change of placement (See Definitions 1 a-b).

It is the district's policy that students with disabilities are not removed for more than ten cumulative school days within the same calendar school year so there will be no pattern of removal that constitutes a change of placement. If an incident occurs in which the child is removed for more than ten cumulative days, the IEP team will determine if the student's behavior was substantially similar to the student's behavior in previous incidents that resulted in the series of removals, and because of additional factors, such as the length of each removal, the total amount of time the student has been removed, and the proximity of the removals to one another to determine if the pattern of removal equals a change of placement on a case-by-case basis.

3. Manifestation determination

A manifestation determination, consistent with the following requirements, will be made within 10 school days of any decision to change the placement of a student with a disability because of a violation of a Code of Student Conduct.

- a. In conducting the review, the school district, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP team (as determined by the parent and the school district):
 - Will review all relevant information in the student's file, including any information supplied by the parents of the student, any teacher observations of the student, and the student's current IEP
 - Will determine whether the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the student's disability or whether the conduct in question was the direct result of the school district's failure to implement the IEP
- b. If the school district, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP team determine that the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the student's disability or that the conduct in question was the direct result of the school district's failure to implement the IEP, the conduct will be determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability and the school district will take immediate steps to remedy those deficiencies.
- c. If the school district, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP team determine that the conduct was a manifestation of the student's disability, the IEP team will either:
 - Conduct a functional behavioral assessment (FBA), unless the school district had conducted an FBA before the behavior that resulted in the change of placement occurred, and implement a behavioral intervention plan (BIP) for the student; or
 - If a BIP has already been developed, review and modify it, as necessary, to address the behavior; and
 - Except as provided in 6. of this section, return the student to the placement from which the student was removed, unless the parent and the school district agree to a change in placement as part of the modification of the BIP.
- d. For disciplinary changes of placement, if the behavior that gave rise to the violation of a Code of Student Conduct is determined not to be a manifestation of the student's disability, the relevant disciplinary procedures applicable to nondisabled students may be applied to the student in the same manner and for the same duration in which they would be applied to nondisabled students, except that services necessary to provide FAPE will be provided to the student with a disability, as described in 5. of this section.
- e. If a parent disagrees with the manifestation determination decision made by the IEP team pursuant to this rule, the parent may appeal the decision by requesting an expedited due process hearing as described in 7. of this section.

Describe the district's procedures for scheduling manifestation determination reviews within required timelines and determining participants for these reviews.

The ESE Resource Specialist for each school tracks and monitors the number of out of school suspensions on a daily basis. At the eighth day of suspension the staffing specialist will request a manifestation meeting to be scheduled. At this time it will be determined if there is a pattern of removals constituting a change in placement, a need to conduct a Functional Behavioral Assessment, develop or revision of a Behavior Intervention Plan, or a need for an Individual Educational Plan review to address the behavior issue.

Describe the district's procedures for initiating and conducting FBAs and BIPs in a timely manner.

If it is determined there is no Functional Behavior Assessment or Positive Behavior Intervention Plan at the manifestation meeting, one is recommended. Reevaluation notice is received and a verbal recommendation is made to the district behavior interventionists or school-based (Alternative School only) behavior interventionist. The staff will complete a Functional Behavior Assessment within 10 days and the school will develop a Positive Behavior Intervention Plan with the information within 20 school days from recommendation.

Describe the district's procedures for providing training regarding conducting FBAs and developing and implementing BIPs.

Annually, the ESE department, comprising of the Directors of ESE/Mental Health and Behavior, School psychologist, Behavior Interventionist, and ESE Resource Specialists meets with all ESE teachers, ESE paraprofessionals and all school counselors to reviews the Functional Behavior Assessment and Positive Behavior Intervention Plan documents, receives and answers questions. The Director of ESE meets annually with all principals and assistant principals to discuss the forms and the need for Functional Behavior Assessments and Positive Behavior Intervention Plans at the annual Administrative Retreat. Two times per month school based administrators meet with the superintendent, two assistant superintendents, and all district level administrators to discuss issues. Frequently a discussion is held regarding Alternatives to Suspension, Functional Behavior Assessments, and Behavior Intervention Plans or review a technical assistance paper with them.

Describe the district's procedures for providing FAPE for students when the behavior is determined not to be a manifestation of the student's disability

If the team determines that the behavior is determined to not be a manifestation of the student's disability, the relevant disciplinary procedures applicable to non-disabled students may be applied to the student in the same manner and for the same duration in which they would be applied to non-disabled students, except for recommendations of expulsion. No student with a disability is expelled. If the student with a disability is not removed for more than ten school days or fewer in that school year, the school does not provide any services. However, if more than 10 days in a school year, the student with disabilities will continue to receive educational services to (1) enable the student to continue to participate in the general curriculum; although in another setting, (2) progress toward meeting the goals in the student's IEP; and (3) receive as appropriate; a functional behavior assessment and positive behavior intervention plan designed to address the behavior violation so it does not continue to reoccur. In all cases the IEP team, in conjunction of the parent, determine need for additional services including counseling, psychiatric evaluation or additional programs to address the behavior problem(s).

Describe the district's procedures for requesting an expedited due process hearing when parents disagree with a manifestation determination.

The parent of a student with a disability may request an expedited due process hearing when they disagree with a manifestation determination following the guidelines in the Procedural Safeguards given to the parent with the meeting notice. When the school receives a request the district office will forward it to Florida's Division of Administrative Hearings, (DOAH), with a copy to the FLDOE. Parents can file an expedited due process hearing with the Florida Department of Education and a hearing must begin within 20 school days.

4. On the date a decision is made to make a removal that constitutes a change of placement of a student with a disability because of a violation of a code of student conduct, the school district will notify the parent of the removal decision and provide the parent with a copy of the notice of procedural safeguards.
5. Providing FAPE for students with disabilities who are suspended or expelled or placed in an IAES
 - a. A school district is not required to provide services to a student with a disability during removals totaling 10 school days or fewer in that school year if services are not provided to nondisabled students who are similarly removed.
 - b. Students with disabilities who are suspended or expelled from school or placed in an IAES will continue to receive educational services in accordance with s. 1003.01, F.S., including homework assignments, to enable the student to continue to participate in the general curriculum, although in another setting, and to progress toward meeting the goals in the student's IEP and receive, as appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment, behavioral intervention services, and modifications designed to address the behavior violation so that it does not reoccur.
 - c. After a student with a disability has been removed from the current placement for 10 school days in the school year, if the current removal is not more than 10 consecutive school days and is not a change of placement under this rule, school personnel, in consultation with at least one of the student's special education teachers, will determine the extent to which services are needed to enable the student to continue to participate in the general curriculum, although in another setting, and to progress toward meeting the goals in the student's IEP.
 - d. If the removal is a change of placement under Rule 6A-6.03312, F.A.C., the student's IEP team determines appropriate services under 5.b. of this section.

Describe the district's procedures for providing FAPE for students with disabilities who are suspended or expelled or placed in an IAES.

Students with disabilities who are suspended from school or placed in an IAES will continue to receive educational services, including homework assignments and instruction according to the Individual Educational Plan to enable the student to continue to participate in the general curriculum although assigned to Okeechobee Achievement Academy (OAA), and progress toward meeting the goals of the student's IEP; and receive as appropriate, a Functional Behavior Assessment, Positive Behavioral Intervention Plan (PBIP) designed to address the behavior violation so that the behavior does not reoccur. Okeechobee County does not expel students with disabilities. Note: The use of home instruction is considered with extreme caution when considering the provision of services to the students with disabilities and only occurs after multiple assignments from least restrictive (regular discipline class with inclusion teacher support, full time class with certified ESE teachers, trained for student with behavior disorders, reevaluation FBA/PBIP using certified Behavior Analyst. Trials of part day with intensive behavior retraining and or counseling, part day with additional home based services from a certified teacher and if required full time home-based with a written plan for re-entry are some alternatives that have been used in Okeechobee County.

Describe the district's procedures for providing training and supports for staff members who provide services to students with disabilities who are suspended or expelled or placed in an IAES.

All employees at Okeechobee Achievement Academy are trained and supported through PCMA's Behavior Tools. There are six school board employees who are certified to be trainers of this program. Annually the staff at OAA will be trained and certified/re-certified in Behavior Tools. Staff at the IAES are supported in many additional ways:

- o Included in NCI/CPI training offered by FDLRS Galaxy and an Okeechobee County certified trainer.
- o Provided Positive Behavior Intervention Support training
- o Given books and information on webinars dealing with Positive Behavior Intervention Support, alternatives to suspension
- o Given guidance by district behavior interventionists
- o Requests made by the Director of ESE, Principal of OAA or district level personnel for additional training or support is made to the ESE department or the Coordinator of Professional Development anytime throughout the year and delivered to the staff at the earliest available time
- o The Principal of OAA has weekly Professional Learning Community experiences for all staff regarding policies and procedures for dealing with students with disabilities with behavior issues

6. Special circumstances and interim alternative educational settings

- a. School personnel may remove a student to an IAES for not more than 45 school days without regard to whether the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability, if the student:
 - Carries a weapon to or possesses a weapon at school, on school premises, or to a school function under the jurisdiction of an SEA or a school district;
 - Knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of an SEA or a school district; or
 - Has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of an SEA or a school district.
- b. On the date that a decision is made to make a removal that constitutes a change of placement because of a violation of a code of student conduct, the school district will notify the parent of that decision and provide the parent with a copy of the notice of procedural safeguards.

Describe the district's procedures for notifying parents on the date that a decision is made to make a removal that constitutes a change of placement and providing parents with a copy of the notice of procedural safeguards on this date.

The principal of the school where the student is enrolled will immediately suspend the student for a maximum of ten school days and notify parents of the suspension. A manifestation determination meeting will be scheduled within those 10 days and will include the school principal, resource specialist, ESE Director, and any person who has knowledge of the incident that caused the suspension. If the student violated the Code of Student Conduct in regards to weapons, drugs or serious bodily harm whether or not the behavior was determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability; a change of placement to an IAES will be made for not more than 45 school days. The parent receives parental safeguards and written documentation of the removal at the meeting. If the parent is not present, a letter is sent via US mail or hand delivered to the parent by the principal of the school. Each notice has a copy of the Procedural Safeguards.

Describe the district's procedures for tracking students' removals to an IAES to ensure that the 45 school-day limit is maintained.

The date the student may return to school is written on the parent notice at the meeting. The ESE department as well as the Student Services department provides both the principal of the IAES and the principal of the student's home school with the date of return.

7. Appeal and expedited hearings

a. An expedited hearing may be requested by:

- The student's parent, if the parent disagrees with a manifestation determination or with any decision not made by an administrative law judge (ALJ) regarding a change of placement under Rule 6A-6.03312, F.A.C.
- The school district, if it believes that maintaining the current placement of the student is substantially likely to result in injury to the student or to others

b. The school district may repeat the procedures for expedited hearings if it believes that returning the student to the original placement is substantially likely to result in injury to the student or to others.

c. Expedited due process hearings requested under this subsection will be conducted by an ALJ for the Division of Administrative Hearings, Department of Management Services, on behalf of the Department of Education, and will be held at the request of either the parent or the school district regarding disciplinary actions. These hearings will meet the requirements prescribed in Rules 6A-6.03011 through 6A-6.0361, F.A.C., except that the hearing will occur within 20 school days of the date the request for due process is filed and an ALJ will make a determination within 10 school days after the hearing. In addition, unless the parents and the school district agree in writing to waive the resolution meeting described herein or agree to use the mediation process set forth in these rules:

- A resolution meeting will occur within seven days of receiving notice of the request for expedited due process hearing
- The expedited due process hearing may proceed unless the matter has been resolved to the satisfaction of both parties within 15 days of the receipt of the request for an expedited due process hearing

d. The decision of the ALJ rendered in an expedited hearing may be appealed by bringing a civil action in a federal district or state circuit court, as provided in s. 1003.57(1)(b), F.S.

Describe the district's procedures for setting up resolution meetings within seven days of receiving notice of a request for an expedited due process hearing.

The Director of Exceptional Student Education will be notified by the principal of the student's school by phone that the parent has requested an expedited due process hearing and will send a copy of the written request. At the first notice the director will contact the parent by phone, if available, or by certified registered mail of a date no more than seven days from the notice for a resolution meeting held at the district office. The parent is requested to indicate if the date is adequate and modifications are made if needed.

8. Authority of an Administrative Law Judge

An ALJ hears and makes a determination regarding an appeal and request for expedited due process hearing under this subsection and, in making the determination:

- a. An ALJ may return the student with a disability to the placement from which the student was removed if the ALJ determines that the removal was a violation of Rule 6A-6.03312, F.A.C., or that the student's behavior was a manifestation of the student's disability; or
- b. Order a change of placement of the student with a disability to an appropriate IAES for not more than 45 school days if the ALJ determines that maintaining the current placement of the student is substantially likely to result in injury to the student or to others.

The procedures under this subsection may be repeated if a school district believes that returning the student to the original placement is substantially likely to result in injury to the student or to others.

9. Student's placement during appeals or expedited due process proceedings

When an appeal as described in 7. above has been made by either the parent or the school district, the student will remain in the IAES determined by the IEP team pending the decision of the ALJ or until the expiration of the time period specified by school personnel, including expulsion for a student where no manifestation was found, unless the parent and the Department of Education or school district agree otherwise.

10. Protections for students not determined eligible for special education and related services

A regular education student who has engaged in behavior that violated a code of student conduct may assert any of the protections afforded to a student with a disability under Rule 6A-6.03312, F.A.C. if the school district had knowledge of the student's disability before the behavior that precipitated the disciplinary action occurred.

a. Basis of knowledge

A school district is deemed to have knowledge that a student is a student with a disability if:

- The parent has expressed concern in writing to supervisory or administrative personnel of the appropriate school district, or a teacher of the student, that the student needs special education and related services; or
- The parent has requested an evaluation to determine whether the student is in need of special education and related services; or
- The teacher of the student, or other school district personnel, expressed specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the student directly to the school district's special education director or to other supervisory school district personnel.

b. Exception

A school district would not be deemed to have knowledge of a disability (see above) if:

- The parent of the student has not allowed an evaluation to determine if the student is an eligible student with a disability;
- The parent of the student has refused to provide consent for initial provision of special education and related service;
- The parent of the student revoked consent for the student to receive special education and related services; or
- The school district conducted an evaluation in accordance with Rules 6A-6.03011 through 6A-6.0361, F.A.C., and determined that the student was not a student with a disability.

c. Conditions that apply if no basis of knowledge

- If the school district has no knowledge that the student is a student with a disability prior to disciplinary action, the student may be disciplined in the same manner as a nondisabled student who engages in comparable behaviors.
- If an evaluation request is made for the student during the time period of the disciplinary action, the evaluation will be conducted in an expedited manner. Until the evaluation is completed, the student remains in the educational placement determined by school authorities, which can include suspension or expulsion without educational services. If the student is determined to be a student with a disability, taking into consideration information from the evaluation and information provided by the parents, the school district will provide special education and related services consistent with the requirements of Rule 6A-6.03312, F.A.C.

11. Nothing in Rule 6A-6.03312, F.A.C., prohibits a school district from reporting a crime committed by a student with a disability to appropriate authorities or prevents state law enforcement and judicial authorities from exercising their responsibilities with regard to the application of federal and state law to crimes committed by a student with a disability.

12. Student records in disciplinary procedures

Regarding the person making the final determination for the disciplinary action, school districts will ensure that the special education and disciplinary records of students with disabilities are transmitted, consistent with the provisions of 34 CFR §300.535(b), s. 1002.22, F.S., and Rule 6A-1.0955, F.A.C.:

Describe the district's procedures for ensuring that special education and disciplinary records of students with disabilities are transmitted to the person making the final determination regarding the disciplinary action.

Upon notice that special education and disciplinary records of students with disabilities are requested either by the person making final determination regarding the disciplinary action or for consideration by the appropriate authorities to whom Okeechobee County reports crime. Parents will be informed that the Resource Specialist will provide special education records, such as most recent IEP, psycho-educational report, social and developmental history and discipline records for the purpose of assisting the system with making appropriate decisions and to serve the student effectively.

13. Disciplinary records of students with disabilities

School districts will include in the records of students with disabilities a statement of any current or previous disciplinary action that has been taken against the student and transmit the statement to the same extent that the disciplinary information is included in, and transmitted with, the student records of nondisabled students.

- a. The statement may be a description of any behavior engaged in by the student that required disciplinary action, a description of the disciplinary action taken, and any other information that is relevant to the safety of the student and other individuals involved with the student.
- b. If the student transfers from one school to another, the transmission of any of the student's records will include both the student's current IEP and any statement of current or previous disciplinary action that has been taken against the student.

Section E: Participation in State and District Assessments

Statutory and Regulatory Citations

34 CFR §§300.8

Chapters 458 and 459, F.S.

Sections 1003.01, 1003.428, 1003.4282, 1003.43, 1003.433, 1007.02, 1008.212, 1008.22, 1008.25 and 1011.62, F.S.

Rules 6A-1.09401, 6A-1.0943, 6A-1.09430, 6A-6.03011 through 6A-6.0361, 6A-6.03018, 6A-6.03020,

6A-6.03028, 6A-6.0331, 6A-6.03311 and 6A-6.03411, F.A.C.

Statewide, Standardized Assessment Program

1. Purpose

The student assessment program provides information about student mastery of grade-level state standards and informs parents of their child's educational progress.

2. Student participation

- a. Each student with a disability has the opportunity to participate in the statewide, standardized assessment program and any districtwide assessment of student achievement with allowable accommodations, if determined appropriate by the individual educational plan (IEP) team and recorded on the student's IEP.
- b. Accommodations identified for testing situations are those identified in the test administration manual and regularly used by the student in the classroom.
- c. A parent must provide signed consent for a student to receive instructional accommodations not permitted on statewide, standardized assessments and acknowledge, in writing, the implications of such accommodations.
- d. Students who are identified solely as gifted are not eligible for statewide, standardized assessment accommodations.

3. Allowable accommodations

Allowable and appropriate accommodations for statewide, standardized assessments are included in the test administration manual. Copies of current statewide, standardized assessment test administration manuals published by the FDOE's Bureau of Assessment and School Performance and Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services are available by contacting the FDOE at <http://www.fldoe.org/asp>.

4. Waiver of assessment requirements

A student with a disability, as defined in s. 1007.02, F.S., for whom the IEP team determines that the statewide, standardized assessments cannot accurately measure the student's abilities, taking into consideration all allowable accommodations, shall have assessment results waived for the purpose of receiving a course grade and a standard high school diploma. Such a waiver shall be designated on the student's transcript.

Extraordinary Exemption for Students with Disabilities

In accordance with s. 1008.212, F.S., a student with a disability may be eligible for an exemption from participation in the statewide assessment.

1. Definitions:

- a. "Statewide, standardized assessments" – Pursuant to s. 1008.22(3), F.S., the Commissioner of Education shall design and implement a statewide, standardized assessment program aligned to the core curricular content established in the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards. The Commissioner also must develop or select and implement a common battery of assessment tools that will be used in all juvenile justice education programs in the state. These tools must accurately measure the core curricular content established in the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards. Participation in the assessment program is mandatory for all school districts and all students attending public schools, including adult students seeking a standard high school diploma under s. 1003.4282, F.S., and students in Department of Juvenile Justice education programs, except as otherwise provided by law. If a student does not participate in the assessment program, the school

district must notify the student's parent and provide the parent with information regarding the implications of such nonparticipation.

- b. "Circumstance" means a situation in which accommodations allowable for use on the statewide, standardized assessment, a statewide, standardized end-of-course assessment, or an alternate assessment pursuant to s. 1008.22(3)(c), F.S., are not offered to a student during the current year's assessment administration due to technological limitations in the testing administration program, which lead to results that reflect the student's impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills, rather than the student's achievement of the benchmarks assessed by the statewide, standardized assessment, a statewide, standardized end-of-course assessment, or an alternate assessment.
 - c. "Condition" means an impairment, whether recently acquired or longstanding, which affects a student's ability to communicate in modes deemed acceptable for statewide assessments, even if appropriate accommodations are provided, and creates a situation in which the results of administration of the statewide, standardized assessment, an end-of-course assessment, or an alternate assessment would reflect the student's impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills rather than the student's achievement of the benchmarks assessed by the statewide, standardized assessment, a statewide, standardized end-of-course assessment, or an alternate assessment.
 - d. "Medical complexity" – Pursuant to s. 1008.22(11), F.S., a child with a medical complexity means a child who, based upon medical documentation from a physician licensed under Chapter 458 or 459, F.S., is medically fragile and needs intensive care due to a condition such as congenital or acquired multisystem disease; has a severe neurological or cognitive disorder with marked functional impairment; or is technology dependent for activities of daily living; and lacks the capacity to take or perform on an assessment.
 - e. "Parent" – Pursuant to Rule 6A-6.03411(1)(bb), F.A.C., parent means:
 - i. A biological or adoptive parent of a student;
 - ii. A foster parent;
 - iii. A guardian generally authorized to act as the student's parent, or authorized to make educational decisions for the student (but not the state if the student is a ward of the State);
 - iv. An individual acting in the place of a biological or adoptive parent (including a grandparent, stepparent, or other relative) with whom the student lives, or an individual who is legally responsible for the student's welfare; or
 - v. A surrogate parent who has been appointed in accordance with Rules 6A-6.03011 through 6A-6.0361, F.A.C.
2. A student with a disability for whom the IEP team determines is prevented by a circumstance or condition from physically demonstrating the mastery of skills that have been acquired and are measured by the statewide, standardized assessment, a statewide, standardized end-of-course assessment, or an alternate assessment pursuant to s. 1008.22(3)(c), F.S., shall be granted an extraordinary exemption from the administration of the assessment. A learning, emotional, behavioral, or significant cognitive disability, or the receipt of services through the homebound or hospitalized program in accordance with Rule 6A-6.03020, F.A.C., is not, in and of itself, an adequate criterion for the granting of an extraordinary exemption.
3. The IEP team, which must include the parent, may submit to the district school superintendent a written request for an extraordinary exemption at any time during the school year, but not later than 60 days before the current year's assessment administration for which the request is made. A request must include all of the following:
- a. A written description of the student's disabilities, including a specific description of the student's impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills.
 - b. Written documentation of the most recent evaluation data.
 - c. Written documentation, if available, of the most recent administration of the statewide, standardized assessment, an end-of-course assessment, or an alternate assessment.
 - d. A written description of the condition's effect on the student's participation in the statewide, standardized assessment, an end-of-course assessment, or an alternate assessment.

- e. Written evidence that the student has had the opportunity to learn the skills being tested.
 - f. Written evidence that the student has been provided appropriate instructional accommodations.
 - g. Written evidence as to whether the student has had the opportunity to be assessed using the instructional accommodations on the student's IEP that are allowable in the administration of the statewide, standardized assessment, an end-of-course assessment, or an alternate assessment in prior assessments.
 - h. Written evidence of the circumstance or condition as defined in Rule 6A-1.0943(1), F.A.C.
 - i. The name, address, and phone number of the student's parent.
4. Based upon the documentation provided by the IEP team, the school district superintendent shall recommend to the commissioner whether an extraordinary exemption for a given assessment administration window should be granted or denied. A copy of the school district's procedural safeguards as required in Rule 6A-6.03311, F.A.C., shall be provided to the parent. If the parent disagrees with the IEP team's recommendation, the dispute resolution methods described in the procedural safeguards shall be made available to the parent. Upon receipt of the request, documentation, and recommendation, the commissioner shall verify the information documented, make a determination, and notify the parent and the district school superintendent in writing within 30 days after the receipt of the request whether the exemption has been granted or denied. If the commissioner grants the exemption, the student's progress must be assessed in accordance with the goals established in the student's IEP. If the commissioner denies the exemption, the notification must state the reasons for the denial.
5. The parent of a student with a disability who disagrees with the commissioner's denial of an extraordinary exemption may request an expedited hearing. If the parent requests the expedited hearing, the FDOE shall inform the parent of any no-cost or low-cost legal services and other relevant services available in the area. The FDOE shall arrange a hearing with the Division of Administrative Hearings, which must be commenced within 20 school days after the parent's request for the expedited hearing. The administrative law judges at the division shall make a determination within 10 school days after the expedited hearing. The standard of review for the expedited hearing is de novo, and the Department has the burden of proof.

Exemption for a Child With Medical Complexity

In accordance with s. 1008.22, F.S., a child with a medical complexity may be exempt from participating in statewide, standardized assessments, including the Florida Standards Alternate Assessment (FSAA)—Performance Task and the FSAA—Datafolio, pursuant to the following provisions.

1. Child with a medical complexity

- a. *Definition of child with medical complexity.* A child with a medical complexity means a child who, based upon medical documentation from a physician licensed under Chapter 458 or 459, F.S., is medically fragile and needs intensive care due to a condition such as congenital or acquired multisystem disease; has a severe neurological or cognitive disorder with marked functional impairment; or is technology dependent for activities of daily living; and lacks the capacity to take or perform on an assessment.
- b. *Exemption options.* In accordance with Rule 6A-1.0943, F.A.C., if the parent consents in writing, and the IEP team determines that the child should not be assessed based upon medical documentation that the child meets the definition of a child with medical complexity, then the parent may choose one of the following three assessment exemption options.
 - i. One-year exemption approved by the district school superintendent. If the superintendent is provided written documentation of parental consent and appropriate medical documentation to support the IEP team's determination that the child is a child with medical complexity, then the superintendent may approve a one-year exemption from all statewide, standardized assessments, including those in the FSAA program. For all students approved by the district superintendent for a one-year exemption, the following information must be reported to the commissioner beginning June 1, 2015, and each June 1 thereafter:
 - 1. The total number of students for whom a one-year exemption has been granted by the superintendent; and
 - 2. For each student receiving an exemption, the student's name, grade level, and the specific statewide, standardized assessments from which the student was exempted.

- ii. One-, two-, or three-year or permanent exemption approved by the commissioner as described in s. 1008.22(11), F.S. In order for the commissioner to consider such an exemption, the following information must be submitted by the district superintendent to the commissioner no later than 30 calendar days before the first day of the administration window of the statewide, standardized assessment for which the request is made:
 1. The student's name, grade level, and the statewide, standardized assessment for which the exemption request is made;
 2. The name, address, and phone number of the student's parent;
 3. Documentation of parental consent for the exemption;
 4. Documentation of the superintendent's approval of the exemption;
 5. Documentation that the IEP team considered and determined that the student meets the definition of a child with medical complexity as defined in s.1008.22(11), F.S.; and
 6. Medical documentation of the student's condition as determined by a physician licensed in accordance with Chapter 458 or 459, F.S.
- iii. Upon receipt of the request, documentation, and recommendation, the commissioner shall verify the information documented, make a determination, and notify the parent and the district school superintendent in writing within 20 calendar days after the receipt of the request whether the exemption has been granted or denied.

Alternate Assessment Based on Alternate Academic Achievement Standards (AA-AAAS)

1. Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, for whom the statewide, standardized assessment— even with allowable accommodations—is not appropriate, may be eligible to participate in the statewide assessment program through the AA-AAAS.

2. Eligibility requirements

The decision that a student with a most significant cognitive disability will participate in the statewide alternate assessment program as defined in s. 1008.22(3)(c), F.S., is made by the IEP team and recorded on the IEP. The provisions with regard to parental consent for participation in the FSAA program, in accordance with Rule 6A-6.0331(10), F.A.C., must be followed. The following criteria must be met:

- a. Even with appropriate and allowable instructional accommodations, assistive technology, or accessible instructional materials, the student requires modifications as defined in Rule 6A-1.09401, F.A.C.; and
- b. The student requires direct instruction in academic areas of English language arts, math, social studies, and science based on access points pursuant to Rule 6A-1.09401, F.A.C., in order to acquire, generalize, and transfer skills across settings.

3. Eligibility areas excluded

Per Rule 6A-6.03018, F.A.C., and 34 CFR §300.8(c)(10)(ii), students with a primary exceptionality of a specific learning disability (SLD) cannot include students with learning problems that are primarily the result of an intellectual disability. Per section 1008.22, Florida Statutes, and Rule 6A-1.0943 F.A.C., only students with significant cognitive impairment are eligible to participate in the FSAA program. Therefore, students with a primary disability category of SLD must not participate in the FSAA program and subsequently should not be enrolled in access courses that align to the FSAA program.

4. District and IEP team requirements

If it is determined by the IEP team using the "Checklist for Course and Assessment Participation" that the student will participate in the statewide assessment through the AA-AAAS, the IEP will contain a statement of why the general assessment is not appropriate and why the AA-AAAS is appropriate. It also will indicate that notification was made to the parent and that the implications of the student's nonparticipation in the statewide, standardized assessment program were provided. The "Checklist for Course and Assessment Participation" may be accessed at <https://info.fldoe.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-7301/dps-2014-208.pdf>.

5. Administration of the AA-AAAS

The assessment will be administered individually by the student's exceptional student education teacher. If this is not possible, the test administrator will be a certified teacher or other licensed professional who has worked extensively with the student. All individuals who administer the AA-AAAS must be trained in administration procedures and receive annual update training.

Additional Information Required:

An alternate assessment is required for any districtwide assessment of student achievement that is not administered to students on alternate achievement standards.

The district administers district-wide assessment(s) of student achievement.

- ☒ Yes
☐ No

If yes, include the name of each districtwide assessment and whether the assessment is administered to students on alternate achievement standards. If the districtwide assessment is not administered to students on alternate achievement standards, identify the corresponding alternate assessment. (If your district uses a portfolio as a corresponding district alternate assessment, the data collected should be based on grade-level alternate achievement standards. For portfolios, indicate what information is being collected, how the information is being recorded, what type of scoring rubric is being used, and how the district ensures that all teachers are collecting the same information and scoring the data the same way.)

For elementary aged students who are capable of participating in district assessments such as iReady reading and I-ready math, then they are included for progress monitoring purposes. For students who participate in alternate assessments, teachers have the options to use VIZZLE or Unique Learning Systems to monitor and track progress. For secondary students, students are given district assessments using curriculum based assessments through NWEA system to monitor progress. Secondary students on the Alternate Assessment are monitored by VIZZLE or Unique Learning Systems.

Parental Consent Documentation

In accordance with Rule 6A-6.0331(10), F.A.C., the district may not proceed with a student's instruction in access points and the administration of an alternate assessment without written and informed parental consent unless the district documents reasonable efforts to obtain parental consent and the student's parent has failed to respond or the district obtains approval through a due process hearing.

The district certifies that it either obtains prior parental consent or due process approval for every student participating in the FSAA program. If prior parental consent is not obtained, the district certifies that it has documentation of reasonable efforts to obtain that approval and consent, or a final order from the Division of Administrative Hearings.

- ☒ Yes
☐ No

Percentage of Students on Alternate Assessment

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (which can be found at <https://www.ed.gov/essa>), limits the percentage of students that a state may assess with an AA-AAAS to no more than 1 percent of all assessed students in the grades assessed in a state for each subject.

While there is a limit on the percentage of students statewide who may participate in the AA-AAAS, there is no such limit among school districts; however, 34 CFR §200.6(c)(3)(ii) and (iv) require that a school district submit information justifying the need to assess more than 1 percent of its students in any subject with an AA-AAAS. The State must make that information publicly available, provided that such information does not reveal personally identifiable information about an individual student.

It is understood that districts have unique circumstances that may contribute to a higher number of students who are in access courses and participating in the FSAA program. The purpose of this justification is to ensure that districts are cognizant of their current processes and procedures to ensure that an IEP team decision to place a student in access courses is in alignment with state requirements and is the most appropriate academic decision for the student.

What is your district's 2018–19 participation percentage in FSAA in the following areas?

Reading

Okeechobee County had 58 students with disabilities participate in the ELA FSAA. This is 1.5% of the students tested in FSAA.

Mathematics

Okeechobee County had 67 students with disabilities participate in the Math FSAA. This is 1.8% of the students tested in FSAA.

Science

Okeechobee County had 26 students with disabilities participate in the Science FSAA. This is 2.2% of the students tested in FSAA.

Is the district over 1% in any area?

- ☒ Yes
☐ No

The criteria for the following statement is outlined in s. 1008.22(3)(c), F.S., and the Assessment Planning Resource Guide for IEP Teams, which can be found at https://fsaa-training.onlinehelp.cognia.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/8/docs/FlaAlt_ResourceGuideIEP.pdf, for use in determining student eligibility for participation in the FSAA program.

If the district is over the 1% in any area, please provide a description of how the district is ensuring that IEP teams are adhering to the criteria (see above.)

Adhere to more than two standard deviations below the mean when determining the need for FSSA. Assessment Participation Checklist Embedded in PEER is also used to determine if a student will participate in the FSAA. Thus, only students that are significantly cognitively disabled would be considered to participate in the FSAA. Some students have a medical condition, seizure activity, or other degenerative disease and our testing has shown decrease of IQ over time. Okeechobee County School District will utilize IEP Team Guide to Assessment for Students With Disabilities The IEP Team Guide to Assessment for Students With Disabilities flowchart as a visual outline of the process for determining instruction and assessment decisions for students with disabilities. IEP teams are encouraged to use this process and guide in conjunction with their collaborative knowledge and established IEP practices to determine the most appropriate means of assessment. https://fsaa-training.onlinehelp.cognia.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/8/docs/FlaAlt_ResourceGuideIEP.pdf

Provide a justification, with supporting evidence, that identifies specific programs or circumstances within the district that may contribute to higher enrollment of students in access courses and an exceeding of the 1% (e.g., center schools serving surrounding districts).

In Okeechobee County, 67.9% of mothers received prenatal care during the first trimester, 11.5 percentage points less than Florida overall. In Okeechobee County, 6.3% of mothers received prenatal care beginning in the third trimester, 2.5 percentage points higher than the state of Florida. The Kotelchuck Index, also called the Adequacy of Prenatal Care Utilization (APNCU), uses the initiation of prenatal care and the number of prenatal visits for calculating adequate prenatal care. In Okeechobee County, a total of 400 or 72.3% of births were to mothers that have a high school diploma or higher, while 27.7% were to mothers with less than a high school diploma. Among mothers with a high school diploma or higher, 80 or 20.0% had inadequate prenatal care, while 34.0% of those with less than a high school diploma had inadequate prenatal care. In Okeechobee, 16% of all arrests in 2004 were drug-related, 11% in 2009, 19% in 2014, and 18% in 2019. The Okeechobee County School District continues to monitor data to identify circumstances in the county that may be contributing to higher enrollments of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.

In the text box below, please provide a narrative response describing the district's self-assessment of disproportionality in each content area for each subgroup testing using the FSAA within the district. Please describe the method used to assess the district's proportionality for FSAA testing and the district's plan to address any area of identified disproportionality.

In Okeechobee County, fifty-six (56) students were scheduled to take FSAA ELA for the 19-20 school year. Of those students, 21 students (38%) were white, 5 (9%) were black and 5 (9%) were multiracial, 24 (43%) were Hispanic, and 1 (1%) was Asian. There were no American Indian/Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Island students scheduled to take the FSAA ELA for the 19-20 school year. Fifty-six students (56) were scheduled to take FSAA Math for the 19-20 school year. Of those students, 21 students (38%) were white, 5 (9%) were black and 5 (9%) were multiracial, 24 (43%) were Hispanic, and 1 (1%) was Asian. There were no American Indian/Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Island students scheduled to take the FSAA Math for the 19-20 school year. Fourteen (14) students were scheduled to take FSAA Science for the 19-20 school year. Of those students, 6 (43%) were white, 1 (7%) were black, 24 (43%) were Hispanic, and 1 (1%) was Asian. There were no American Indian/Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Island students scheduled to take the FSAA Science for the 19-20 school year. The 2020 LEA profile reports our school district demographics to be 44% white, 9% black, 42% Hispanic, <1% Asian, <1% American Indian/Alaskan Native, <1% Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Island, and 3% Two or more races. When comparing percentages of students taking FSAA by race with the demographics of our district, we see a minor discrepancy between the numbers. In FSAA ELA, 24% of the students were hispanic as compared with 42% of our overall population. For students of two or more races, 9% were taking FSAA ELA as compared with 3% of our total population identifying as multiracial. According to our LEA profile, 44% of our students are white, with the percentage of students taking FSA ELA was 38%. In FSAA Math and FSAA Science we saw similar percentages which were higher than our demographic percentages for black and multiracial students and lower for our white students. To address this concern, we will form a task force, consisting of our ESE resource specialists, a FLDOE representative and myself, to analyze our current methods of identifying students that we suspect require a modified curriculum and assessment to ensure that our rubrics are culturally sensitive and unbiased and that all assessment protocols are being followed with fidelity. Following the analysis of our current protocols, professional development will be provided to all ESE teachers to ensure students are evaluated with objectivity and without bias.

Section F: Eligibility Criteria for Prekindergarten Children with Disabilities

Statutory and Regulatory Citations

34 CFR §§300.25 and 300.101

Sections 1003.01, 1003.21, and 1003.57, F.S.

Rule 6A-6.03026, F.A.C.

Definition

A prekindergarten child with a disability is a child who meets the following criteria.

Eligibility Criteria

In accordance with s. 1003.21, F.S., a child is eligible for prekindergarten programs for children with disabilities based upon meeting the eligibility criteria for one or more specific exceptionalities listed below and upon meeting the age requirements shown.

1. The child is below three years of age and meets the criteria for eligibility for any of the following educational programs:
 - a. Deaf or hard of hearing
 - b. Visually impaired
 - c. Orthopedically impaired, other health impairment, or traumatic brain injury
 - d. Intellectual disabilities
 - e. Established conditions
 - f. Developmentally delayed
 - g. Dual-sensory impaired
 - h. Autism Spectrum Disorder
2. The child is age three through five years and meets the criteria for eligibility as a child with one or more of the following disabilities:
 - a. Intellectual disabilities
 - b. Speech and language impaired
 - c. Deaf or hard of hearing
 - d. Visually impaired
 - e. Orthopedically impaired, other health impairment, or traumatic brain injury
 - f. Emotional or behavioral disabilities
 - g. Specific learning disabilities
 - h. Homebound or hospitalized
 - i. Dual-sensory impaired
 - j. Autism Spectrum Disorder
 - k. Developmentally delayed

Child Evaluation

1. Evaluations are conducted in accordance with the requirements of rules for the eligibility areas listed in Sections 1. and 2. of the Eligibility Criteria.

2. Existing screening and evaluation information available from agencies that previously served the child and family shall be used, as appropriate, to meet evaluation criteria for the rules for the eligibility areas listed in Sections 1. and 2. of the Eligibility Criteria.

Instructional Program

In regards to a child who is eligible for admission to public kindergarten in accordance with Section 1003.21, F.S., an eligible prekindergarten child with a disability may receive instruction for one additional school year in a prekindergarten classroom in accordance with the child's Individual Educational Plan (IEP) or Individualized Family Support Plan (IFSP).

The parent or guardian must be informed in writing of the implications of an additional year in the prekindergarten classroom (i.e., the additional year is not considered a "retention," thus impacting the future consideration of a "good cause exemption"). If a parent disagrees with the IEP team recommendation for an additional year of instruction in a prekindergarten classroom, the team's recommendation may not be used to deny a child admission to kindergarten.

Transition from Early Steps Part C Services to Part B Services

The district's processes and procedures regarding the transition of eligible children from Early Steps to the Part B Program for Prekindergarten Children with Disabilities, including district procedures that ensure the district's participation in the transition conference and development of the IEP by the third birthday, are described in the text box below.

The Part C Early Intervention Program (Early Steps), Family Services Coordinator contacts the ESE Director and initiates a referral, must be at least 90 days prior to the child's third birthdate. School staff are in attendance at a transition planning meeting whereby collateral data are shared with the school district about the student. The student's records are carefully reviewed and any required actions, such as further evaluation are planned. All reviews and planned evaluations are completed by the school psychologist, staffing specialist and other evaluators such as the speech pathologist and/or occupational/physical therapist in a timely manner so that eligibility and if found eligible, the IEP is written on or before the child's third birthday. When it is known that the student is transitioning to Part B, or when a referral is made by Child Find, a parent, or other agency, the Battelle Developmental Inventory-Second Edition (BDI-2) shall be administered by a qualified evaluation specialist, prior to the child's third birthday. When the student comes from a Part C agency (Early Steps), the BDI-2 shall be completed by agency staff, if within determined timeline or by school staff if outside the timeline. Parent requests made of the school district shall be referred to Child Find personnel, who complete the BDI-2. The information from the BDI-2 evaluation, therapy evaluations, parent and other collateral data from previous placements or evaluations shall be used in consideration of eligibility and to develop IEP components for eligible students. Parents shall be notified of their right to involve the Part C representative in the initial IEP meeting, via the Meeting Notice form. In all cases, a staffing is held and if the student is eligible, an IEP is developed. The district ensures that there is an IEP in effect prior the child's third birthday, and services are delivered on or before the child turns age three.

Unique Philosophical, Curricular, or Instructional Considerations

1. Philosophy

- a. The prekindergarten program for children with disabilities supports young children by recognizing and respecting their unique abilities, strengths, and needs.
- b. Services for young children with disabilities and their families include a range of educational, developmental, and therapeutic activities that are provided in least restrictive or natural learning environments where children experience learning opportunities that promote and enhance behavioral and developmental competencies.
- c. For a child with disabilities age three through five years, special education, which refers to specially designed instruction and related services, is provided to meet the unique needs of the child. Specially designed instruction means adapting, as appropriate, the content, methodology, or delivery of instruction.
- d. Programs and services for prekindergarten children with disabilities are based on practices that are developmentally appropriate for all young children. They acknowledge the importance of collaboration and partnerships with families and view the child in the context of the family and community. Understanding and knowledge of early childhood development serves as a foundation for these practices.

2. Curriculum

- a. Curriculum content, materials, and activities are consistent with the district's program philosophy.

- For prekindergarten children with disabilities, during the year prior to kindergarten entry, the Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards – 4 Years Old to Kindergarten are used to guide the selection of curriculum (curricula) in concert with a knowledge and understanding of the impact of the disability on the growth and development of the child.
 - The Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards: Birth to Kindergarten help to create a shared framework and common language between early childhood education and early childhood special education by emphasizing the sequence of development across multiple developmental domains and the importance of the classroom environment to include how curricula, materials, and equipment are selected.
 - For children birth to the age of eligibility for the VPK program, Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards: Birth to Kindergarten may be used to guide the selection of curriculum, materials, and equipment.
- b. Modifications, adaptations, and accommodations of curricula, materials, and activities selected may be needed to meet the unique needs of the child. Ongoing progress monitoring is conducted to ensure that the instruction or interventions provided are effective in attaining the desired outcomes.

3. Instructional support

- a. Young children receive instructional support through specially designed instruction and related services as determined by the IEP process or early intervention services as determined through the IFSP process. These services are based on peer-reviewed, research-based practices to the extent practicable.
- b. Teachers and related services personnel are trained in how to design and implement individualized programs to address the learning needs of children with disabilities.
- c. Teachers and related services personnel are provided with administrative support to ensure reasonable class size and workload, adequate funds for materials, and professional development. Teachers provide instruction in the domains of development, including cognitive development, motor development, language and communication, social emotional development, and adaptive behavior. Instruction and related services may be offered in a continuum of placements and settings that may include regular, resource, or special class settings in public, community-based, or home-based settings.
- d. School districts may provide related services to children and professional development for teachers and related services personnel in coordination with community agencies, including other early childhood partners such as Early Learning Coalitions and Head Start. Additionally, support for professional development and related services may, as appropriate, be provided in collaboration with discretionary projects funded by the Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services, the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind, and other agencies of state and local government, including, but not limited to, the Division of Blind Services, the Department of Children and Families, and the Department of Health, Children's Medical Services.

The school district has the option to include additional information regarding evaluations, qualified evaluators, or unique philosophical, curricular, or instructional considerations for prekindergarten children with disabilities.

- ☐ The school district has provided additional information for this section in Appendix B of this document.
- ☒ There is no additional information for this section.

Section G: Individualized Family Support Plan for Students with Disabilities Ages Birth through Five Years

☒ This section is not applicable for the district.

Students with Disabilities Ages Birth through 2 Years

Statutory and Regulatory Citations

34 CFR §303.340

Sections 1003.03, 1003.21 and 1003.57, F.S.

Rules 6A-6.0331 and 6A-6.03029, F.A.C.

Definition

An individualized family support plan (IFSP) is a written plan identifying the specific concerns and priorities of families who have children with disabilities, ages birth through 2 years (below 36 months), related to enhancing a child's development and the resources to provide early intervention services. To meet the identified outcomes for an individual child and family, a planning process involving the family, professionals, and others is used to prepare the document. An IFSP must be used for children ages birth through 2 years.

Procedures

1. Content of an IFSP

The IFSP is in writing and includes:

- a. A statement of the child's present levels of physical development (including vision, hearing, and health status), cognitive development, communication development, social or emotional development, and adaptive skills development based on the information from the child's evaluation and assessment;
- b. With concurrence of the family, a statement of the family's resources, priorities, and concerns related to enhancing the development of the child as identified through the assessment of the family;
- c. A statement of the measurable results or measurable outcomes expected to be achieved by the child and the family, including pre-literacy and language skills, as developmentally appropriate for the child, and the goals, criteria, procedures, and timelines used to determine the degree to which progress toward achieving the measurable results or outcomes is being made and whether modifications or revisions of the expected results or outcomes or services are necessary;
- d. A statement of the specific early intervention services based on peer-reviewed research, to the extent practicable, or the special education and related services necessary to meet the unique needs of the child and the family to achieve the results or outcomes identified on the IFSP, including:
 - i. Frequency, intensity and method of delivering services;
 - ii. Location of the services;
 - iii. Length of the services;
 - iv. Funding source or payment arrangements, if any;
 - v. Anticipated duration of these services;
 - vi. Other services;
 - vii. Projected dates for initiation of services for children birth through 2, which must be as soon as possible but within thirty (30) calendar days of the date the parent consents to the service, and the anticipated duration of these services;
 - viii. Steps to be taken to support the transition of the child, when exiting the Early Steps program to preschool services for children with disabilities ages (3) through (5), or other services that may be available. The steps required for transition shall include:

1. Discussions with, and training of, parents regarding future placements and other matters related to the child's transition;
 2. Procedures to prepare the child for changes in service delivery, including steps to help the child adjust to, and function in, a new setting;
 3. Notification information to the school district for the purpose of child find;
 4. With parental consent, the transmission of information about the child to the school district to ensure continuity of services, including a copy of the most recent evaluation and assessments of the child and family and a copy of the most recent IFSP that has been developed and implemented; and,
 5. Identification of transition services and other activities that the IFSP team determines are necessary to support the child.
- e. A statement of the natural environments in which early intervention services, or special education and related services, are to be provided, and a justification of the extent, if any, to which the services will not be provided in a natural environment;
- f. A statement of the strategies needed in order to meet the child's and family's outcomes;
- g. The name of the service coordinator from the profession most immediately relevant to the child's or family's needs, or the individual who is otherwise qualified to be responsible for the implementation of the early intervention or special education and related services identified in the IFSP, including transition services and coordination with other agencies and persons. In meeting this requirement, the school district may assign the same service coordinator who was appointed at the time the child was initially referred for evaluation to be responsible for implementing a child's and family's IFSP or appoint a new service coordinator;
- h. Family demographic and contact information;
- i. A statement of eligibility, including recommendations for children not found eligible;
- j. A description of everyday routines, activities and places in which the child lives, learns and plays and individuals with whom the child interacts;
- k. Identification of the most appropriate IFSP team member to serve as the primary service provider;
- l. Documentation of the names of the individuals who participated in the development of the IFSP, the method of participation and the individual responsible for implementing the IFSP; and,
- m. For children ages birth through 2 years:
- i. Identification of any medical and additional supports that the child or family needs or is receiving through other sources, but that are neither required nor funded under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Part C, 34 CFR §303.344(e); and,
 - ii. A description of the steps the service coordinator or family will take to assist the child and family in securing additional supports not currently being provided.
2. Timelines for IFSPs for children with disabilities ages birth through 2 years. These timelines shall include the following:
- a. For a child who has been evaluated for the first time and determined to be eligible, a meeting to develop the initial IFSP must be conducted within forty-five (45) days from referral;
 - b. A review of the IFSP for a child and the child's family must be conducted every 6 months from the date of the initial or annual evaluation of the IFSP or more frequently if conditions warrant, or if the family requests such a review. The review may be carried out at a meeting or by another means that is acceptable to the parents and other participants. The purpose of the periodic review is to determine:
 - The degree to which progress toward achieving the results or outcomes identified on the IFSP is being made;
 - Whether modifications or revision of the results or outcomes or services are necessary; and

- Whether additional needs have been identified based on ongoing assessment or observation.
- c. A face-to-face meeting must be conducted on at least an annual basis by the IFSP team to re-determine eligibility and review the IFSP for a child and the child's family, and to revise, change or modify its provisions and assess the continuation of the outcomes, strategies and recommended services, as needed. The results of any current evaluations, and other information available from ongoing assessments of the child and family, must be considered at the annual review of the IFSP to determine continuing eligibility and the early intervention services that are needed and will be provided.
- d. IFSP meetings must be conducted:
 - i. In settings and at times that are convenient to families;
 - ii. In the native language of the family or other mode of communication used by the family, unless it is clearly not feasible to do so;
- e. Meeting arrangements must be made with and written notice provided to the family and other participants early enough before the meeting date to ensure that they will be able to attend;
- f. The contents of the IFSP must be fully explained to the parent(s) and informed written consent from the parent(s) must be obtained prior to the provisions of early intervention services described in the plan. If the parent(s) does not provide consent with respect to a particular early intervention service, that service may not be provided. The early intervention services to which parental consent is obtained must be provided.

3. The IFSP must:

- a. Family demographic and contact information;
- b. The frequency, intensity, and method of delivery of the early intervention services;
- c. The location and length of the early intervention services;
- d. Funding source or payment arrangements, if any;
- e. Anticipated duration of the services;
- f. Other services to the extent appropriate;
- g. A statement of eligibility, including recommendations for children not found eligible;
- h. A description of everyday routines, activities, and places in which the child lives, learns, and plays and individuals with whom the child interacts;
- i. Identification of the most appropriate IFSP team member to serve as the primary service provider;
- j. Documentation of the names of the individuals who participated in the development of the IFSP, the method of participation, and the individual responsible for implementing the IFSP;
- k. Identify any medical and additional supports that the child or family needs or is receiving through other sources but that are neither required nor funded under IDEA, Part C;

The name of the service coordinator from the profession most immediately relevant to the child's or family's needs or the individual who is otherwise qualified to be responsible for the implementation of the services identified on the plan including transition services and coordination with other agencies and persons;

- l. Include a description of the steps the service coordinator or family may take to assist the child and family in securing additional supports not currently being provided;

4. Participants in IFSP meetings (ages birth through 2 years)

Participants in the development of IFSPs (both initial and annual) for children with disabilities age birth through 2 years must include:

- a. The parent or parent(s) of the child;
 - b. Other family members as requested by the parent(s), if feasible to do so;
 - c. An advocate or individual outside of the family, if the parent(s) request that the individual participate;
 - d. The service coordinator who has been working with the family since the initial referral of the child for evaluation, or the person designated responsible for implementation of the IFSP;
 - e. For initial IFSP meetings, individuals who are directly involved in conducting the evaluation and assessment;
 - f. The individual who will be providing early intervention services to the child or family, as appropriate.
 - g. If any of these participants is unable to attend a meeting, arrangements must be made for the individual's involvement through other means, including:
 - i. Participating in a telephone or video conference call;
 - ii. Having a knowledgeable authorized representative attend the meeting; or
 - iii. Making pertinent records available at the meeting.
5. Provision of services before evaluation and assessments are completed. Early intervention services for a child with disabilities ages birth through 2 years and the child's family may commence before the completion of the evaluation and assessments if the following conditions are met:
- a. Parental consent is obtained;
 - b. An interim IFSP is developed that includes:
 - i. The name of the service coordinator who will be responsible for implementation of the interim IFSP and coordination with other agencies and individuals;
 - ii. The early intervention services that have been determined to be needed immediately by the child and the child's family;
 - iii. Signatures of those who developed the IFSP.
 - c. The evaluation and assessments are completed within 45 calendar days from referral.
6. Financial responsibility. For children ages birth through two years, the school district shall only be responsible for the early intervention services specified and agreed to through the IFSP process.

Students with Disabilities Ages 3-5 Years

Statutory and Regulatory Citations

34 CFR §§300.323 and 303.340

Sections 1003.03, 1003.21 and 1003.57, F.S.

Rules 6A-6.03028, 6A-6.03029 and 6A-6.0331, F.A.C.

Definition

An IFSP is a written plan identifying the specific concerns and priorities of a family related to enhancing their child's development and the resources to provide early intervention services to children with disabilities ages birth through 2 years or special education and related services to children with disabilities ages 3-5 years. School districts may utilize, at the option of the school district and with written parental consent, an IFSP, consistent with Rule 6A-6.03029, F.A.C., in lieu of an IEP. Parents must be provided with a detailed explanation of the difference between an IFSP and an IEP. To meet the identified outcomes for an individual child and family, a planning process involving the family, professionals, and others shall be used to prepare the document.

Procedures

1. Content of an IFSP

The IFSP is in writing and includes:

- a. A statement of the child's present levels of physical development (including vision, hearing, and health status), cognitive development, communication development, social or emotional development, and adaptive skills development based on the information from the child's evaluation and assessment;
- b. With concurrence of the family, a statement of the family's resources, priorities, and concerns related to enhancing the development of the child as identified through the assessment of the family;
- c. A statement of the measurable results or measurable outcomes expected to be achieved by the child and the family, including an educational component that promotes school readiness and incorporates pre-literacy, language, and numeracy skills, as developmentally appropriate for the child, and the goals, criteria, procedures, and timelines used to determine the degree to which progress toward achieving the measurable results or outcomes is being made and whether modifications or revisions of the expected results or outcomes or services are necessary;
- d. A statement of the specific early intervention services based on peer-reviewed research, to the extent practicable, or the special education and related services necessary to meet the unique needs of the child and the family, to achieve the results or outcomes identified on the IFSP;
 - i. Frequency, intensity and method of delivering services;
 - ii. Location of the services;
 - iii. Length of the services;
 - iv. Funding source or payment arrangements, if any;
 - v. Anticipated duration of these services;
 - vi. Other services;
- e. The projected dates for initiation of services;
- f. The name of the service coordinator from the profession most immediately relevant to the child's or family's needs or the individual who is otherwise qualified to be responsible for the implementation of the plan and coordination with other agencies and persons. In meeting this requirement, the school district may assign the same service coordinator who was appointed at the time that the child was initially referred for evaluation to be responsible for implementing a child's and family's IFSP or may appoint a new service coordinator;
- g. Family demographic and contact information;
- h. A statement of eligibility, including recommendations for children not found eligible;
 - i. A description of everyday routines, activities, and places in which the child lives, learns, and plays and individuals with whom the child interacts;
 - j. Identification of the most appropriate IFSP team member to serve as the primary service provider;
 - k. Documentation of the names of the individuals who participated in the development of the IFSP, the method of participation and the individual responsible for implementing the IFSP;
 - l. The frequency, intensity, and method of delivery of the early intervention services;
- m. The location and length of the services;
- n. The payment arrangements, if any;
- o. Anticipated duration of the services;

p. Other services; and

q. The steps to be taken to support the transition of the child when exiting the Early Steps program to preschool services for children with disabilities ages 3-5 years, or other services that may be available. The steps required for transition shall include:

- Discussions with, and training of, parent(s) regarding future placements and other matters related to the child's transition;
- Procedures to prepare the child for changes in service delivery, including steps to help the child adjust to, and function in, a new setting;
- With parental consent, the sharing of information about the child to the school district to ensure continuity of services, including evaluation and assessment information and copies of IFSPs that have been developed and implemented; and
- Identification of transition services and other activities that the IFSP team determines are necessary to support the child.

2. Requirements for IFSPs for children ages 3-5 years are in accordance with the requirements in Rule 6A-6.03028, F.A.C.

- o By the third birthday of a child who has been participating in the early intervention program for infants and toddlers with disabilities, an IEP consistent with Rule 6A-6.03028(3)(e), F.A.C., or an IFSP consistent with Rule 6A-6.03029, F.A.C., must be developed and implemented.
- o For the purpose of implementing the requirements of Rule 6A-6.03029, F.A.C., each school district will participate in transition planning conferences arranged by the state lead agency for the infants and toddlers with disabilities early intervention program.
- o If the child's third birthday occurs during the summer, the child's IEP team shall determine the date when services under the IEP or IFSP will begin.

3. Participants in IFSP meetings for children with disabilities (ages 3-5 years) include:

- a. The parent(s);
- b. Not less than one regular education teacher, if the child is or may be participating in the regular education environment;
- c. Not less than one special education teacher or, where appropriate, not less than one special education provider of the student;
- d. A representative of the local district who is qualified to provide or supervise the provision of specially designed instruction for children with disabilities and is knowledgeable about the general curriculum and the availability of resources of the local district;
- e. An individual who can interpret the instructional implications of the evaluation results. This individual may be a member of the committee as described in b.-d. of this subsection;
- f. At the discretion of the parent or the school district, other individuals who have knowledge or special expertise regarding the child, including related services personnel (**Note:** The determination of the knowledge or special expertise shall be made by the party who invited the individual to participate in the IFSP meeting); and
- g. Whenever appropriate, the child.

4. IEPs and meetings for students with disabilities placed in private schools or community facilities by the school district.

- a. If a student with a disability is placed in a private school by the school district, in consultation with the student's parents, the school district shall:
 - Ensure that the student has all of the rights of a student with a disability who is served by a school district.

- Initiate and conduct a meeting to develop an IEP or an IFSP in accordance with Rules 6A-6.03011 through 6A-6.0361, F.A.C., before the school district places the student; and,
 - Ensure the attendance of a representative of the private school at the meeting. If the representative cannot attend, the school district shall use other methods to ensure participation by the private school, including individual or conference telephone calls.
- b. After a student with a disability enters a private school or facility, any meetings to review and revise the student's IEP may be initiated and conducted by the private school or facility at the discretion of the school district, but the school district must ensure that the parents and a school district representative are involved in decisions about the IEP and agree to proposed changes in the IEP before those changes are implemented by the private school.
- c. Even if a private school or facility implements a student's IEP, responsibility for compliance with these rules remains with the school district.
- d. Paragraphs a.-c. of this subsection apply only to students who are or have been placed in or referred to a private school or facility by a school district as a means of providing FAPE.
5. If placement in a public or private residential program is necessary to provide special education to a student with a disability, the program, including nonmedical care and room and board, must be at no cost to the parents of the student.
6. For children ages 3-5 years, the school district is only financially responsible for the provision of special education and related services necessary for the child to benefit from special education.

Part III. Policies and Procedures for Students Who are Gifted

Section A: Exceptional Student Education Eligibility for Students who are Gifted

☐ This section is not applicable for the Department of Corrections.

Statutory and Regulatory Citations

Sections 1003.01 and 1003.57, F.S.

Rules 6A-6.03019 and 6A-6.030191, F.A.C.

Definition

A student who is gifted is one who has superior intellectual development and is capable of high performance.

Eligibility Criteria

A student is eligible for special instructional programs for the gifted from kindergarten through Grade 12 if the student meets the criteria under 1. or 2. below:

1. The student demonstrates:
 - a. The need for a special program
 - b. A majority of characteristics of gifted students according to a standard scale or checklist
 - c. Superior intellectual development as measured by an intelligence quotient of two standard deviations or more above the mean on an individually administered standardized test of intelligence
2. The student is a member of an underrepresented group and meets the criteria specified in an approved school district plan for increasing the participation of underrepresented groups in programs for students who are gifted. Underrepresented groups are defined in Rule 6A-6.03019, F.A.C. as students with limited English proficiency or students from low socio-economic status families.

Additional Information:

- ☐ The school district has a plan for increasing the participation of underrepresented groups in programs for gifted students. The plan is provided in Appendix C of this document.
- ☒ The school district does not have a plan for increasing the participation of underrepresented groups in programs for gifted students.

Student Evaluation

1. The minimum evaluations for determining eligibility address the following:
 - a. Need for a special instructional program
 - b. Characteristics of the gifted
 - c. Intellectual development
 - d. May include those evaluation procedures specified in an approved district plan to increase the participation of students from underrepresented groups in programs for the gifted
2. Evaluations and qualified evaluators for students who are gifted are listed in Part I of this document.

Temporary Break in Service

The team developing the Educational Plan (EP) may determine that a student's needs may currently be appropriately met through other academic options. The parent or student may indicate that they do not desire service for a period of time. Should the decision be made to waive the services offered on the current educational plan, the student may resume service at any time.

Unique Philosophical, Curricular, or Instructional Considerations

1. Philosophy

- a. Each student identified as being eligible for gifted services is entitled to receive a free appropriate public education which will enable the student to progress in the general curriculum to the maximum extent appropriate.
- b. Specially designed instruction, appropriate related services, and programs for students who are gifted shall provide significant adaptations in one or more of the following: curriculum, methodology, materials, equipment, or environment designed to meet the individual and unique needs and goals of each student who is gifted.
- c. A range of service delivery options is available to meet the student's special needs. Teachers are trained to provide the unique services identified for each student and are provided with administrative support to ensure reasonable class size, adequate funds for materials and inservice training.

2. Curriculum

- a. Curriculum options include an effective and differentiated curriculum designed for the abilities of the student who is gifted to ensure that each individual student progresses in the curriculum.
- b. The curriculum may include, but is not limited to, opportunities for problem solving, problem-based learning, application of knowledge and skills, and other effective instructional strategies.
- c. The teachers of the students who are gifted are trained to provide a curriculum based on the educational characteristics and needs of the learner who is gifted.
- d. Curriculum for each student will be determined by the EP and will focus on the performance levels for the student and needs for developing further skills and abilities, recognizing opportunities to extend the present program through appropriate scaffolding for students who are gifted.
- e. The curriculum for the student who is gifted will assume access to the general curriculum (State standards) with emphasis on what the EP team determines will offer opportunities for growth for the learner who is gifted based on the student's strengths and present level of performance.

3. Instructional support

- a. Students identified as eligible for gifted services receive instructional support through the specially designed instruction and related services as determined through the development of the EP.
- b. Teachers of the students who are gifted provide instruction and support to further develop the student's demonstrated ability.
- c. Teachers are provided with administrative support to develop an individualized program to meet the goals for each student as determined by the EP.
- d. Students who are gifted may indicate a need for special counseling and guidance in understanding their special characteristics.
- e. Support services are provided in coordination with local school district student services and community agencies, the Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System associate centers, special projects funded by the Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services, and other agencies of state and local government.
- f. No student may be given special instruction for students who are gifted until after he or she has been properly evaluated and found eligible for gifted services.

The school district has the option to include additional information regarding evaluations, qualified evaluators, or unique philosophical, curricular, or instructional considerations for students who are gifted.

- ☐ The school district has provided additional information for this section in Appendix B of this document.
- ☒ There is no additional information for this section.

Section B: Educational Plans for Students who are Gifted

Statutory and Regulatory Citation

Sections 1001.02, 1003.01, and 1003.57, F.S.

Rule 6A-6.030191, F.A.C.

Procedures

1. The district is responsible for developing Educational Plans (EPs) for students who are identified solely as gifted.

Note: Individual Educational Plans (IEPs) rather than EPs are developed for those students who are gifted and are also identified as having a disability.

- a. The EP includes:

- A statement of the student's present levels of educational performance that may include, but is not limited to, the student's strengths and interests, the student's needs beyond the general curriculum, results of the student's performance on state and district assessments, and evaluation results
- A statement of goals, including benchmarks or short-term objectives
- A statement of the specially designed instruction to be provided to the student
- A statement of how the student's progress toward the goals will be measured and reported to the parents
- The projected dates for the beginning of services and the anticipated frequency, location, and duration of these services

- b. The EP team considers the following during development, review, and revision of the EP:

- The strengths of the student and the needs resulting from the student's giftedness
- The results of recent evaluations, including class work and state or district assessments
- In the case of a student with limited English proficiency, the language needs of the student as they relate to the EP

- c. Timelines for development of the EP include the following:

- An EP is in effect at the beginning of each school year for each student identified as gifted who is continuing in a special program.
- An EP is developed within 30 calendar days following the determination of eligibility for specially designed instruction in the gifted program and is in effect prior to the provision of these services.
- Meetings are held to develop and revise the EP at least once every three years for students in Grades K–8 and at least every four years for students in Grades 9–12.
- EPs may be reviewed more frequently, as needed, such as when a student transitions from elementary to middle school or from middle to high school.

- d. EP participants include:

- The parents, whose role includes providing information on the student's strengths, expressing concerns for enhancing the education of their child, participating in discussions about the child's need for specially designed instruction, participating in deciding how the child will be involved and participate in the general curriculum, and participating in the determination of what services the district will provide to the child and in what setting
- At least one teacher of the gifted program

- One regular education teacher of the student who, to the extent appropriate, is involved in the development of the student's EP; involvement may include the provision of written documentation of a student's strengths and needs for review and revision of the subsequent EPs
- A representative of the school district who is qualified to provide or supervise the provision of specially designed instruction for students who are gifted and is knowledgeable about the general curriculum and the availability of resources of the school district; at the discretion of the district, one of the student's teachers may be designated to serve as the representative of the district
- An individual who can interpret the instructional implications of the evaluation results; this individual may be a teacher of the gifted, a regular education teacher, or a representative of the school district as described above
- At the discretion of the parent or the school district, other individuals who have knowledge or special expertise regarding the student, including related services personnel (**Note:** The determination of the knowledge or special expertise shall be made by the party who invited the individual to participate in the EP meeting)
- Whenever appropriate, the student

2. Parent participation in EP meetings

The district takes the following steps to ensure that one or both of the parents of a student identified as gifted is present or provided the opportunity to participate at EP meetings:

- a. Notifying parents of the meeting early enough to ensure that they will have an opportunity to attend
- b. Scheduling the meeting at a mutually agreed on time and place
 - i. A written notice to the parent indicates the purpose, time, location of the meeting, and who, by title or position, will be in attendance. It also includes a statement informing the parents that they have the right to invite an individual with special knowledge or expertise about their child. If neither parent can attend, the district uses other methods to ensure parent participation, including individual or conference telephone calls.
 - ii. A meeting may be conducted without a parent in attendance if the district is unable to obtain the attendance of the parents. In this case, the district maintains a record of its attempts to arrange a mutually agreed on time and place. These records include such items as:
 - Detailed records of telephone calls made or attempted and the results of those calls
 - Copies of correspondence sent to the parents and any responses received
 - Detailed records of visits made to the parent's home or place of employment and the results of those visits
 - iii. The district takes whatever action is necessary to ensure that the parent understands the proceedings at the meeting, including arranging for an interpreter for parents who are deaf or whose native language is other than English. A copy of the EP shall be provided to the parent at no cost.

3. Implementation of the EP

- a. An EP is in effect before specially designed instruction is provided to an eligible student and is implemented as soon as possible following the EP meeting.
- b. The EP is accessible to each of the student's teachers who are responsible for the implementation, and each teacher of the student is informed of specific responsibilities related to the implementation of the EP.

One of the following must be selected:

- ☒ I have read and understand the above information.
- ☐ This section is not applicable for the Department of Corrections.

Part IV. Policies and Procedures for Parentally-Placed Private School Students with Disabilities

Section A: Provision of Equitable Services to Parentally-Placed Private School Students with Disabilities

Statutory and Regulatory Citations

34 CFR §§300.130–300.144

Rule 6A-6.030281, F.A.C.

Definition

Parentally-placed private school students with disabilities means students with disabilities enrolled by their parents in private, including religious, **non-profit** schools or facilities that meet the definition of elementary school or secondary school under rules 6A-6.03011 through 6A-6.0361, F.A.C., and does not include students with disabilities who are or have been placed in or referred to a private school or facility by the school district as a means of providing special education and related services. This definition does not include students with disabilities enrolled by their parents in **for-profit** private schools.

Procedures

1. Policies and procedures for parentally-placed private school students with disabilities

The school district will maintain policies and procedures to ensure the provision of equitable services to students with disabilities who have been placed in private schools by their parents.

2. Child find for parentally-placed private school students with disabilities

The school district will locate, identify, and evaluate all students with disabilities who are enrolled by their parents in private, including religious, elementary and secondary schools located in the school district's jurisdiction. The child find process will be designed to ensure the equitable participation of parentally-placed private school students and an accurate count of those students.

a. Activities

In carrying out the requirements of this section, the school district will undertake activities similar to the activities undertaken for the school district's public school students.

b. Cost

The cost of carrying out the child find requirements, including individual evaluations, may not be considered in determining if the school district has met its obligation.

c. Completion period

The child find process will be completed in a time period comparable to that for other students attending public schools in the school district.

d. Out-of-state students

The school district in which private, including religious, elementary and secondary schools are located will, in carrying out the child find requirements, include parentally-placed private school students who reside in a state other than Florida.

3. Confidentiality of personally identifiable information

If a student is enrolled, or is going to enroll, in a private school that is not located in the school district of the parent's residence, parental consent will be obtained before any personally identifiable information about the child is released between officials in the school district where the private school is located and officials in the school district of the parent's residence.

4. Provision of services for parentally-placed private school students with disabilities – basic requirement

To the extent consistent with the number and location of students with disabilities who are enrolled by their parents in private, including religious, elementary and secondary schools located in the school district's jurisdiction, provision is made for the participation of those students in the program assisted or carried out under Part B of IDEA by providing them with special education and related services, including direct services determined in accordance with 12. and 13. below, unless the U.S. Secretary of Education has arranged for services to those students under the by-pass provisions in 34 CFR §§300.190 through 300.198.

a. Services plan for parentally-placed private school students with disabilities

A services plan will be developed and implemented for each private school student with a disability who has been designated by the school district in which the private school is located to receive special education and related services.

b. Record keeping

The school district will maintain in its records, and provide to the Florida Department of Education (FDOE), the following information related to parentally-placed private school students covered:

- The number of students evaluated
- The number of students determined to be students with disabilities
- The number of students served

5. Expenditures

To meet the requirements, the school district will spend the following on providing special education and related services (including direct services) to parentally-placed private school students with disabilities:

- a. For children and students aged three through 21, an amount that is the same proportion of the school district's total subgrant under Section 611(f) of IDEA as the number of private school students with disabilities aged three through 21 who are enrolled by their parents in private, including religious, elementary, and secondary schools located in the school district's jurisdiction, is to the total number of students with disabilities in its jurisdiction aged three through twenty-one (21).
- b. For children aged three through five years, an amount that is the same proportion of the school district's total subgrant under Section 619(a) of IDEA as the number of parentally-placed private school students with disabilities aged three through five who are enrolled by their parents in private, including religious, elementary and secondary schools located in the school district's jurisdiction, is to the total number of students with disabilities in its jurisdiction aged three through five.
- c. Children aged three through five years are considered to be parentally-placed private school students with disabilities enrolled by their parents in private, including religious, elementary schools, if they are enrolled in a private school that meets the definition of elementary school under Florida law.
- d. If the school district has not expended for equitable services all of the funds described in paragraphs a) and b) above by the end of the fiscal year for which Congress appropriated the funds, the school district will obligate the remaining funds for special education and related services (including direct services) to parentally-placed private school students with disabilities during a carry-over period of one additional year.

6. Calculating proportionate amount

In calculating the proportionate amount of federal funds to be provided for parentally-placed private school students with disabilities, the school district, after timely and meaningful consultation with representatives of private schools, will conduct a thorough and complete child find process to determine the number of parentally-placed students with disabilities attending private schools located in the school district. (See Appendix B to IDEA regulations for an example of how proportionate share is calculated)

7. Annual count of the number of parentally-placed private school students with disabilities

The school district will, after timely and meaningful consultation with representatives of parentally-placed private school students with disabilities, determine the number of parentally-placed private school students with disabilities attending private schools located in the school district and ensure that the count is conducted on any date between October 1 and December 1, inclusive, of each year. The count will be used to determine the amount that the school district will spend on providing special education and related services to parentally-placed private school students with disabilities in the next fiscal year.

8. Supplement, not supplant

State and local funds may supplement and in no case supplant the proportionate amount of federal funds required to be expended for parentally-placed private school students with disabilities.

9. Consultation with private school representatives

To ensure timely and meaningful consultation, the school district will consult with private school representatives and representatives of parents of parentally-placed private school students with disabilities during the design and development of special education and related services for the students regarding the following:

- a. The child find process, including how parentally-placed private school students suspected of having a disability can participate equitably and how parents, teachers, and private school officials will be informed of the process
- b. The determination of the proportionate share of federal funds available to serve parentally-placed private school students with disabilities, including the determination of how the proportionate share of those funds was calculated
- c. The consultation process among the school district, private school officials, and representatives of parents of parentally-placed private school students with disabilities, including how the process will operate throughout the school year to ensure that parentally-placed students with disabilities identified through the child find process can meaningfully participate in special education and related services
- d. Provision of special education and related services; how, where, and by whom special education and related services will be provided for parentally-placed private school students with disabilities, including a discussion of:
 - The types of services, including direct services and alternate service delivery mechanisms
 - How special education and related services will be apportioned if funds are insufficient to serve all parentally-placed private school students
 - How and when those decisions will be made
- e. How, if the school district disagrees with the views of private school officials on the provision of services or the types of services (whether provided directly or through a contract), the school district will provide to such private school officials a written explanation of the reasons why the school district chose not to provide services directly or through a contract

10. Written affirmation

When timely and meaningful consultation has occurred, the school district will obtain a written affirmation signed by the representatives of participating private schools. If the representatives do not provide the affirmation within a reasonable period of time, the school district will forward the documentation of the consultation process to FDOE.

11. Compliance

A private school official has the right to submit a complaint to the FDOE that the school district did not engage in consultation that was meaningful and timely or did not give due consideration to the views of the private school official. If the private school official wishes to submit a complaint, the official will provide to FDOE the basis of the noncompliance by the school district with the applicable private school provisions, and the school district will forward the appropriate documentation to FDOE. If the private school official is dissatisfied with the decision of FDOE, the official may submit a complaint to the U.S. Secretary of Education by providing the information on noncompliance, and FDOE will forward the appropriate documentation to the U.S. Secretary of Education.

12. Equitable services determined

- a. No parentally-placed private school student with a disability has an individual right to receive some or all of the special education and related services that the student would receive if enrolled in a public school.
- b. Decisions about the services that will be provided to parentally-placed private school students with disabilities will be made in accordance with the information in this section.
- c. The school district will make the final decisions with respect to the services to be provided to eligible parentally-placed private school students with disabilities.

13. Services plan for each student served

- a. If a student with a disability is enrolled in a religious or other private school by the student's parents and will receive special education or related services from the school district, the school district will initiate and conduct meetings to develop, review, and revise a services plan for the student and ensure that a representative of the religious or other private school attends

each meeting. If the representative cannot attend, the school district will use other methods to ensure participation by the religious or other private school, including individual or conference telephone calls.

- b. Each parentally-placed private school student with a disability who has been designated by the school district to receive services will have a services plan that describes the specific direct special education services that the school district will provide to the student in light of the services that the school district has determined it will make available to parentally-placed private school students with disabilities.
- c. The services plan will be developed, reviewed, and revised consistent with the requirements for IEP development, review, and revision.

14. Equitable services provided

- a. The provision of equitable services will be by employees of the school district or through contract by the school district with an individual, association, agency, organization, or other entity.
- b. The services provided to parentally-placed private school students with disabilities will be provided by personnel meeting the same standards as personnel providing services in the public schools, except that private elementary and secondary school teachers who are providing equitable services to parentally-placed private school students with disabilities do not have to meet the highly qualified special education teacher requirements under Florida law.
- c. Parentally-placed private school students with disabilities may receive a different amount of services than students with disabilities in public schools.
- d. Special education and related services provided to parentally-placed private school students with disabilities, including materials and equipment, will be secular, neutral, and non-ideological.

15. Location of services and transportation

- a. Equitable services to parentally-placed private school students with disabilities may be, but are not required to be, provided on the premises of private, including religious, schools.
- b. If necessary for the student to benefit from or participate in the services, a parentally-placed private school student with a disability will be provided transportation from the student's school or the student's home to a site other than the private school and from the service site to the private school, or to the student's home, depending on the timing of the services.
- c. The school district is not required to provide transportation from the student's home to the private school.
- d. The cost of any transportation provided under this section may be included in calculating whether the school district has expended its proportionate share.

16. Due process hearings and procedural safeguards

- a. Except as provided herein, the procedures related to procedural safeguards, mediation, and due process hearings do not apply to complaints that the school district has failed to meet the requirements in this section, including the provision of services indicated on the student's services plan. However, such procedures do apply to complaints that the school district has failed to meet the requirements related to child find, including the requirements related to conducting appropriate evaluations of students with disabilities.
- b. Any request for a due process hearing regarding the child find requirements will be filed with the school district in which the private school is located and a copy will be forwarded to FDOE.

17. State complaints

- a. Any complaint that the school district has failed to meet the requirements related to the provision of equitable services, services plans, expenditures, consultation with private school representatives, personnel, or equipment and supplies will be filed in accordance with the state complaint procedures described in rules 6A-6.03011 through 6A-6.0361, F.A.C.
- b. A complaint filed by a private school official under this section will be filed with FDOE in accordance with its state complaint procedures as prescribed in Rule 6A-6.03311, F.A.C.

18. Requirement that funds not benefit a private school

- a. The school district will not use funds provided under IDEA to finance the existing level of instruction in a private school or to otherwise benefit the private school.
- b. The school district will use funds provided under Part B of IDEA to meet the special education and related services needs of parentally-placed private school students with disabilities, but not for the needs of a private school or the general needs of the students enrolled in the private school.

19. Use of personnel

- a. The school district may use funds available under IDEA to make public school personnel available in other than public facilities to the extent necessary to provide equitable services for parentally-placed private school students with disabilities if those services are not normally provided by the private school.
- b. The school district may use funds available under IDEA to pay for the services of an employee of a private school to provide equitable services if the employee performs the services outside of his or her regular hours of duty and the employee performs the services under public supervision and control.

20. Separate classes prohibited

The school district will not use funds available under IDEA for classes that are organized separately on the basis of school enrollment or religion of the students if the classes are at the same site and the classes include students enrolled in public schools and students enrolled in private schools.

21. Property, equipment, and supplies

- a. The school district will control and administer the funds used to provide special education and related services and hold title to and administer materials, equipment, and property purchased with those funds for the uses and purposes provided in this section.
- b. The school district may place equipment and supplies in a private school for the period of time needed for the provision of equitable services.
- c. The school district will ensure that the equipment and supplies placed in a private school are used only for IDEA purposes and can be removed from the private school without remodeling the private school facility.
- d. The school district will remove equipment and supplies from a private school if the equipment and supplies are no longer needed for IDEA purposes or removal is necessary to avoid unauthorized use of the equipment and supplies for other than IDEA purposes.
- e. No funds under IDEA will be used for repairs, minor remodeling, or construction of private school facilities.

Section B: John M. McKay Scholarships for Students with Disabilities Program

Statutory and Regulatory Citations

Sections 1002.01, 1002.39, 1002.43 1002.66 and 1003.21, F.S.

Definition

The John M. McKay Scholarships for Students with Disabilities Program provides the option for students with an IEP or an accommodation plan issued under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (excluding a temporary accommodation plan which is valid six months or less) to attend a public school other than the one to which the student is assigned or to receive a scholarship to a participating private school of choice.

Eligibility Criteria

1. The parent of a student with a disability may request and receive from the state a McKay Scholarship for the student to enroll in and attend a private school if:
 - a. The student has received specialized instructional services under the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program during the previous school year and the student has a current IEP developed by the local school board in accordance with rules of the State Board of Education for the John M. McKay Scholarships for Students with Disabilities Program or a 504 accommodation plan has been issued
 - b. The student has spent the prior school year in attendance at a Florida public school or the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind (FSDB). Prior school year in attendance means that the student was enrolled and reported by one of the following:
 - A school district for funding during the preceding October and February Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) surveys in kindergarten through Grade 12, which shall include time spent in a Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) commitment program if funded under the FEFP
 - The FSDB during the preceding October and February student membership surveys in kindergarten through Grade 12
 - A school district for funding during the preceding October and February FEFP surveys, was at least four years old when so enrolled and reported, and was eligible for services under s. 1003.21, F.S.

Note: A dependent child of a member of the United States Armed Forces who transfers to a school in this state from out of state or from a foreign country pursuant to a parent's permanent change of station orders is exempt from the previous requirements but must meet all other eligibility requirements to participate in the program.

Additionally a foster child is exempt from the previous requirements but must meet all other eligibility requirements to participate in the program.

- c. The parent has obtained acceptance for admission of the student to a private school that is eligible for the program and has requested a scholarship from the department at least 60 days prior to the date of the first scholarship payment. The request must be through a communication directly to the FDOE in a manner that creates a written or electronic record of the request and the date of receipt of the request. FDOE must notify the district of the parent's intent upon receipt of the parent's request.
2. A student is not eligible for a John M. McKay Scholarship while:
 - a. Enrolled in a school operating for the purpose of providing educational services to youth in DJJ commitment programs;
 - b. Receiving an educational scholarship in accordance with Chapter 1002, F.S.;
 - c. Participating in a home education program as defined in s. 1002.01, F.S.;
 - d. Participating in a virtual school, correspondence school, or distance learning program that receives state funding pursuant to the student's participation, unless the participation is limited to no more than two courses per school year;

- e. Participating in a private tutoring program in accordance with s. 1002.43, F.S.;
- f. Enrolled in the FSDB; or
- g. Not having regular and direct contact with his or her private school teachers at the school's physical location, unless that student is participating under the Transition to Work Program within the private school.

Procedures

1. The amount of the scholarship is calculated based on the student's matrix of services document or the amount of the private school's tuition and fees, whichever is less.
2. For purposes of continuity of educational choice, a John M. McKay Scholarship shall remain in force until the student returns to a public school, graduates from high school, or reaches the age of 22, whichever occurs first.
3. A scholarship student who enrolls in a public school or public school program is considered to have returned to a public school for the purpose of determining the end of the scholarship's term. However, if a student enters a DJJ detention center for a period of no more than 21 days, the student is not considered to have returned to a public school for that purpose.
4. Upon reasonable notice to the FDOE and the school district, the student's parent may remove the student from the private school and place the student in a public school.
5. Upon reasonable notice to the FDOE, the student's parent may move the student from one participating private school to another participating private school.

School District Obligations

1. Notifying parents of students with disabilities about the scholarship program by April 1 of each year and within 10 days after an IEP team meeting or a 504 accommodation plan is issued.
2. Informing parents of the availability of the Information Hotline and School Choice website.
3. Offering parents an opportunity to enroll their student in another public school within their district.
4. Keeping all district contact information up-to-date with the FDOE, which can be done through the <http://www.floridaschoolchoice.org> website when logged in as a district administrator.
5. Submitting an annual Parental Notification Verification Form to the FDOE in the spring of each school year.
6. Notifying parents, within 10 days of filing intent, if a matrix has not been completed, and informing parents that the required matrix completion date is 30 days after a filed intent.
7. For a student with a disability who does not have a matrix of services, completing a matrix of services within 30 days of the parent's filed intent date that assigns the student to one of the three levels of service.
Note: Changes in a matrix of services document may be made only for a technical, typographical, or calculation error.
8. Providing locations and times, if requested, for any McKay Scholarship student attending a private school within the district to take statewide assessment exams.
9. Providing reevaluation notifications to parents of scholarship students at least once every three years.
10. Confirming that scholarship students have not enrolled in public school by completing the District Enrollment Verification files quarterly prior to scholarship.
11. Reporting students who receive McKay Scholarship funding as **3518**, which designates them as McKay private school students on the full-time equivalent (FTE) survey.
12. Notifying the FDOE if a student enrolls in public school, is registered as a home education student, or is committed to a DJJ commitment program for more than 21 days.
13. Providing transportation to the public school if the parent's choice is consistent with the district's school choice plan.

14. Accepting a McKay student from an adjacent district if there is space available and there is a program with the services agreed to in the individual educational plan or 504 accommodation plan that is already in place.

Section C: Gardiner Scholarship Program

Statutory and Regulatory Citation

Chapter 1005, Part III, F.S

Sections 393.063, 393.069, 456.001, 1002.01, 1002.21, 1002.385, 1002.395, 1002.66 and 1005.02, F.S.

Definition

The Gardiner Scholarship provides the option for a parent to better meet the individual educational needs of an eligible child.

- The following are defined as they relate to the Gardiner Scholarship:
 - "Approved provider" means a provider who has been approved by the Agency for Persons with Disabilities, a health care practitioner pursuant to s. 456.001(4), F.S., or a provider approved by the department pursuant to s. 1002.66, F.S.
 - "Curriculum" means a complete course of study for a particular content area or grade-level, which includes any required supplemental materials.
 - "Department" means the FDOE.
 - "Disability" means, a three- or four- year old child or for a student in kindergarten to Grade 12, and any of the following:
 - Autism spectrum disorder, as defined in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition, published by the American Psychiatric Association, as defined in s. 393.069, F.S.;
 - Cerebral Palsy, as defined in 393.063, F.S.;
 - Down Syndrome, as defined in s.393.063, F.S.;
 - Intellectual Disability, as defined in s.393.063, F.S.;
 - Prader-Willi syndrome, as defined in s. 393.063 , F.S.;
 - Spina bifida, as defined in s. 393.063, F.S.;
 - For a student in kindergarten, being a high-risk child, as defined in 393.063, F.S.;
 - Muscular dystrophy;
 - Williams Syndrome;
 - Rare diseases which affect patient populations of fewer than 200,000 individuals in the United States, as defined by the National Organization for Rare Disorders;
 - Anaphylaxis;
 - Deaf;
 - Visually impaired;
 - Traumatic brain injured;
 - Hospital or homebound as defined by Rule 6A-6.03020, F.A.C.; or
 - Identification as having a dual sensory impairment according to Rule 6A-6.03022, F.A.C., and evidenced by reports from the local school district.
 - "Eligible" to receive a Gardiner Scholarship means that the student:
 - Is a resident of this state;

- Is or will be three or four years on or before September 1 of the year in which the student applies for program participation, or is eligible to enroll in kindergarten through Grade 12 in a public school in the state;
 - Is the subject of an IEP written in accordance with rules of the State Board of Education or has received a diagnosis of a disability as defined below from a physician who is licensed under Chapter 458 or Chapter 459 or a psychologist who is licensed in this state.
 - Has a disability as defined above.
- "Eligible nonprofit scholarship-funding organization" as defined in 1002.395, F.S.
 - "Eligible postsecondary institution" means any of the following:
 - Florida College System institution;
 - State university;
 - School district technical center;
 - School district adult general education center; or
 - An accredited nonpublic postsecondary educational institution, as defined in s. 1005.02, F.S., that is licensed to operate in the state pursuant to requirements specified in Part III of Chapter 1005, F.S.
 - "Eligible private school" means a private school, pursuant to s. 1002.01, F.S. that is located in Florida and offers an education to students in any grade from kindergarten to Grade 12.
 - "IEP" means an individual education plan.
 - "Inactive" means that no eligible expenditures have been made from an account funded by the Gardiner Scholarship.
 - "Parent" means a resident of this state who is a parent, as defined in s. 1002.21, F.S.
 - "Program" means the Gardiner Scholarship Program.

School District's Obligations and Parental Options

- Include the following:
 - The school district shall notify a parent who has made a request for an IEP that the district is required to complete the IEP and matrix of services within 30 days after receiving notice of the parent's request;
 - The school district shall conduct a meeting and develop an IEP and a matrix of services within 30 days after receiving notice of the parent's request in accordance with State Board of Education rules;
 - Provide for state assessments to students, upon parental request.

Part V. Appendices

Appendix A: General Policies and Procedures

One of the following must be selected:

Procedural Safeguards for Students with Disabilities:

- ☒ The Florida Department of Education's Notice of Procedural Safeguards for Parents of Students with Disabilities, as posted on the department's website.
- ☐ A different notice of procedural safeguards for parents of students with disabilities, included as an attachment.

One of the following must be selected:

Procedural Safeguards for Students Who Are Gifted:

- ☒ The Florida Department of Education's Procedural Safeguards for Exceptional Students Who Are Gifted, as posted on the department's website.
- ☐ A different notice of procedural safeguards for parents of students who are gifted, included as an attachment.
- ☐ This requirement is not applicable for the Department of Corrections.

Appendix B: Unique Philosophical, Curricular, or Instructional Considerations

The school district has included as an attachment additional information related to evaluations; qualified evaluators; or philosophical, curricular, or instructional considerations for the exceptionalities identified below:

II.B.1 Autism Spectrum Disorder

- ☐ Evaluations
- ☐ Qualified Evaluators
- ☐ Unique Philosophical, Curricular or Instructional Considerations

II.B.2 Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing

- ☐ Evaluations
- ☐ Qualified Evaluators
- ☐ Unique Philosophical, Curricular or Instructional Considerations

II.B.3 Developmentally Delayed

- ☐ Evaluations
- ☐ Qualified Evaluators
- ☐ Unique Philosophical, Curricular or Instructional Considerations

II.B.4 Dual-Sensory Impaired

- ☐ Evaluations
- ☐ Qualified Evaluators
- ☐ Unique Philosophical, Curricular or Instructional Considerations

II.B.5 Emotional or Behavioral Disabilities

- ☐ Evaluations
- ☐ Qualified Evaluators
- ☐ Unique Philosophical, Curricular or Instructional Considerations

II.B.6 Established Conditions

- ☐ Evaluations
- ☐ Qualified Evaluators
- ☐ Unique Philosophical, Curricular or Instructional Considerations

II.B.7 Homebound or Hospitalized

- ☐ Evaluations
- ☐ Qualified Evaluators
- ☐ Unique Philosophical, Curricular or Instructional Considerations

II.B.8 Intellectual Disabilities

- ☐ Evaluations

☐ Qualified Evaluators☐ Unique Philosophical, Curricular or Instructional Considerations**II.B.9 Orthopedic Impairment**☐ Evaluations☐ Qualified Evaluators☐ Unique Philosophical, Curricular or Instructional Considerations**II.B.10 Other Health Impairment**☐ Evaluations☐ Qualified Evaluators☐ Unique Philosophical, Curricular or Instructional Considerations**II.B.11 Traumatic Brain Injury**☐ Evaluations☐ Qualified Evaluators☐ Unique Philosophical, Curricular or Instructional Considerations**II.B.12 Specific Learning Disabilities**☐ Evaluations☐ Qualified Evaluators☐ Unique Philosophical, Curricular or Instructional Considerations**II.B.13 Speech Impairments**☐ Evaluations☐ Qualified Evaluators☐ Unique Philosophical, Curricular or Instructional Considerations**II.B.14 Language Impairments**☐ Evaluations☐ Qualified Evaluators☐ Unique Philosophical, Curricular or Instructional Considerations**II.B.15 Visually Impaired**☐ Evaluations☐ Qualified Evaluators☐ Unique Philosophical, Curricular or Instructional Considerations**II.B.16 Related Services – Occupational Therapy**☐ Evaluations☐ Qualified Evaluators

☐ Unique Philosophical, Curricular or Instructional Considerations

II.B.17 Related Services – Physical Therapy

☐ Evaluations

☐ Qualified Evaluators

☐ Unique Philosophical, Curricular or Instructional Considerations

II.C. Individual Educational Plans (IEPs)

II.F. Prekindergarten Children with Disabilities

☐ Evaluations

☐ Qualified Evaluators

☐ Unique Philosophical, Curricular or Instructional Considerations

III.A. Gifted

☐ Evaluations

☐ Qualified Evaluators

☐ Unique Philosophical, Curricular or Instructional Considerations

Appendix C: District Plan to Increase the Participation of Underrepresented Students in the Program for Students who are Gifted

☒ This section is not applicable for the district.

Current Status

Provide the following data:

Total Student Population

Total Number of Students

Total Number of Gifted Students

Percent of All Gifted Students

Limited English Proficient (Limited English proficient students are those who are coded as "LY," "LN," "LP," or "LF")

Number of LEP Students

Number of LEP Gifted Students

Percent of LEP Gifted Students

Percentage of LEP Gifted Compared to Total Number of Gifted Students

*In order to calculate the "Percentage of LEP Gifted Compared to Total Number of Gifted Students", divide the number of LEP gifted students by the total number of gifted students in the district and move the decimal point two numbers to the right.

Low Socio-Economic Status (SES) Family

Number of Low SES Students

Number of Low SES Gifted Students

Percent of Low SES Gifted Students

Percentage of Low SES Gifted Compared to Total Number of Gifted Students

*In order to calculate the "Percentage of Low SES Gifted Compared to Total Number of Gifted Students", divide the number of Low SES gifted students by the total number of gifted students in the district and move the decimal point two numbers to the right.

** Percentage of students who are gifted equals the number of students who are gifted within a category divided by the total number of students within that category

District Goal

Provide the district's goal to increase the participation of students from underrepresented groups in programs for students who are gifted, including the targeted category(ies).

1. Screening and Referral Procedures

- o A description of the screening and referral procedures that will be used to increase the number of students referred for evaluation

2. Student Evaluation Procedures

- o A description of the evaluation procedures and measurement instruments that will be used

3. Eligibility Criteria

- o A description of the criteria, based on the student's demonstrated ability or potential in the specific areas of leadership, motivation, academic performance, and creativity, that will be applied to determine the student's eligibility; if a matrix is used when determining eligibility, a copy is included as an attachment

4. Instructional Program Modifications or Adaptations

- o A description of the instructional program modifications or adaptations that will be implemented to ensure successful and continued participation of students from underrepresented groups in the existing instructional program for students who are gifted

5. District Evaluation Plan

- o A description of the district's plan used to evaluate its progress toward increasing participation by students from underrepresented groups in the program for students who are gifted

Appendix D: District Policies Regarding the Allowable Use or Prohibition of Physical Restraint and Seclusion

- ☒ This section is not applicable for the district.

Select from the following:

- ☐ The school district's policy regarding the allowable use or prohibition of physical restraint of students with disabilities is included as an attachment.
- ☐ The school district's policy regarding the allowable use or prohibition of seclusion of students with disabilities is included as an attachment.

Appendix E: Policies and Procedures Unique to Developmental Research (Laboratory) Schools

- ☒ This section is not applicable for the district.

Section 1002.32, Florida Statutes (F.S.), establishes the category of public schools known as developmental research (laboratory) schools (lab schools). In accordance with s. 1002.32(3), F.S., "The mission of a lab school shall be the provision of a vehicle for the conduct of research, demonstration, and evaluation regarding management, teaching, and learning." Each lab school shall emphasize mathematics, science, computer science, and foreign languages. The primary goal of a lab school is to enhance instruction and research in such specialized subjects by using the resources available on a state university campus, while also providing an education in nonspecialized subjects. The exceptional education programs offered shall be determined by the research and evaluation goals and the availability of students for efficiently sized programs (s. 1002.32(3)(e), F.S.).

Describe the exceptional education services available within the lab school:

Appendix F: Best Practices in Inclusive Education (BPIE) Assessment

Section 1003.57(1)(f), Florida Statutes, establishes the following requirement for school districts, "Once every three years, each school district and school shall complete a Best Practices in Inclusive Education (BPIE) assessment with a Florida Inclusion Network facilitator and include the results of the BPIE assessment and all planned short-term and long-term improvement efforts in the school district's exceptional student education policies and procedures. BPIE is an internal assessment process designed to facilitate the analysis, implementation, and improvement of inclusive educational practices at the district and school team levels."

- ☒ The district's completed BPIE Indicator Rating Tally Sheet is attached.
- ☒ The district's plan to address the prioritized BPIE Indicators is attached.

Appendix G: District Procedures During a Declared State of Emergency

In the box below, please provide a narrative response describing your district's procedures during a declared state of emergency impacting the provision of special instruction and services for exceptional students.

During the 2019-2020 school year state of emergency declared in March 2020, the Okeechobee County School system implemented distance learning plans. These plans were developed and reviewed with parents/guardians who then received a copy. Staff maintained logs of correspondence and services during the state of emergency. The distance learning plans and documentation logs developed during this time could be modified and implemented during any declared state of emergency that may occur in the future. Okeechobee County plans to assess and address any gaps in learning and related skills for students with disabilities within the district due to the impact of school closures as a result of COVID-19 (which should include ESY within a comprehensive plan that also includes proactive dispute resolution, health and safety, assistive technology considerations, etc.). The district will identify persons who will be serving on the district's crisis response team to address responses needed specific to the district's students with disabilities. The description of the districts comprehensive plan are as follows: Okeechobee County will utilize the Florida's guidelines (see <http://www.fldoe.org/academics/exceptional-student-edu/beess-resources/presentations-pubs/#e>) which specifically refer to extenuating circumstances related to each student's current situation to determine the need for Extended School Year (ESY) services. Based on data and identification of need, ESY would be considered for students to receive FAPE. ESY is not limited to summer, and where appropriate, would occur throughout the school year. It's possible that this unique ESY plan due to COVID-19 be documented in a separate form and determined through an IEP amendment process.. The district plans will be reviewed and revised to ensure that there is a clear plan of communication regarding this process. The link provided contains the guiding questions for data review to determine the need for ESY services to provide FAPE for students with disabilities. Florida's guidelines (see <http://www.fldoe.org/academics/exceptional-student-edu/beess-resources/presentations-pubs/#e>) The district is planning on providing the Governor's mandated summer camp for grades K-5, and students in grades 6-12 are currently attending summer school. Students who show a need for additional instruction based on progress monitoring completed prior to COVID-19 will be invited to attend. Students with disabilities will be included and the students' accommodations will be implemented. As soon as students with disabilities return to school, progress monitoring and summer camp data will be reviewed to determine individual needs. Once the need(s) has been identified, a plan will be developed through the IEP process. Services will be determined and provided to the extent that meets the need(s) of the student(s) throughout the school year. Okeechobee County will encourage medically vulnerable students, staff and those who live with medically vulnerable students' families to consult with their family doctor and develop a plan for their safe participation in schooling. These plans should include "plans for medically vulnerable students who come to school, and how school health staff will develop school health comprehensive care plans in consultation with the county health department." School health providers will be invited to the IEP meeting to develop or revise health care plans to give support to the student and staff. Communication with employees, parents, and students via emails, texts, and phone calls to communicate preventative care practices will be provided. The schools, and district staff will have access to approved face coverings, gloves, sanitizer, soap, etc. In all schools there will be signage about hygiene and social distancing. Through professional development activities, district website, and district social media, employees, parents, and the community members will be provided information for the care, welfare, and safety of staff and students.