



ESE Community Task Force Meeting

January 25, 2016

The Exceptional Student Education (ESE) Community Task Force Committee met on January 25, 2016, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Arthur Ashe Jr. Campus located at 1701 NW 23 Avenue, Fort Lauderdale, FL. 33311.

Stacey Hoaglund, Task Force Chair, provided the welcome, and reviewed the agenda.

Agenda Item/Discussion Items

Task Force members requested to receive information for review at least five days prior to each meeting. The ESE Director apologized for the delay and agreed to provide information at least five days prior to each meeting, as requested.

Matriculation Plan

Staff provided an overview of the newly created matriculation plan, which was developed with input from parents; elementary, middle, and high school-based staff; as well as district staff. This plan consists of recommended best practices/monthly activities designed to guide students with disabilities (PreK to adult living), their families, and school staff through a successful transition process.

Schools are expected to do some, not all activities.

Task force members discussed concerns that not every ESE Specialist was aware of this plan. Staff shared that this information was shared with all ESE Specialists in January 2016 and will be reviewed on an ongoing basis throughout the school year. Members also suggested having a separate button/link on our website for parents to access the matriculation plan.

Response to Intervention (Rtl)

Adrienne Dixon, Rti Specialist, Diversity, Prevention, & Intervention Department, of Support Services shared that her Division introduced the social/emotional framework to school this year. She also provided an overview of response to intervention procedures. This review included information about response to intervention (academics/behavior); and the differences between a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) and response to intervention (Rtl). Ms. Dixon also shared that MTSS, Rtl, and social/emotional learning are not ESE initiatives to place students in ESE programs. They are general education initiatives designed to keep students in general education classrooms with supports by making adjustments as appropriate. It expected that students would always have areas of growth.

Staff from ESE and Support Services Division attended/participated in MTSS/Rtl District Leadership meetings.

Task force members expressed concerns about teacher training and how often training is provided to them. Ms. Dixon shared that training is provided via Zone principal (Z-PAC) meetings with principals and select school staff. There is also a four session series via Brainshark available for teachers to review and learn more about this topic.

Task force members recommended that ESE Specialists receive additional training, and resources be shared at the school level as well as with parents. Members also were concerned that Z-PAC meetings were not mandatory for all principals.

Assistive Technology Contact – Roles and Responsibilities

Staff shared the assistive technology (AT) process with task force members along with the proposed roles and responsibilities of AT contacts at school sites. It was also shared that there are currently no identified AT contacts, five AT program specialists provide support to all schools. The request for an additional AT program specialist position is pending available funding.

Task force members expressed the need for an additional AT program specialist and AT contacts at each school site. The task force also discussed the need to provide a supplement to each AT contact.

ESE Preschool Caseloads

Staff shared that there are currently 312 ESE Preschool classrooms at 145 schools and seven agencies. Eighty-six additional paraprofessionals have been hired to assist these classrooms; not to include the agency programs. The number of specialized classrooms with 15-18 students as of January 21, 2016 was 30; the number of intensive classrooms with nine or more students was 28; and the number of behavior/intensive classrooms with nine or more students was two.

Task force members recommended that dollars are needed to purchase curriculum for PreK students with disabilities.

Middle School Support Facilitator Caseloads

Staff shared middle school support facilitator caseloads with task force members for their review and discussion. It was further shared that these positions are full-time equivalent generated. The level of frequency and duration of supports provided by each support facilitator is based on the needs of each student as per their Individual Education Plan. Some students may require direct instruction while others may not require direct support, but teacher-to-consultation.

Speech/Language Pathologist Caseloads

Task force members reviewed speech/language (SLP) caseloads and shared that some still appear to be high. Staff shared that the revision and approval of the Intellectual Disabilities Funding Guideline by the staff and the Superintendent has provided relief for SLP caseloads and workloads. Sixteen percent of SLP caseloads are over 80. The national average of caseloads ranges from 60-80.

Dan Gohl, Chief Academic Officer shared that he met with Florida Atlantic University, and Broward College to address this and other critical shortage areas.

Counseling Checklist

Task force members reviewed the counseling checklist as staff provided an overview of updates and how schools utilize this form.

Agenda Item - Public Comment— Public comment was permitted; one speaker

Meeting adjourned at 1:30 pm.