



ESE Community Task Force Meeting  
June 1, 2015

Submitted by Sonja Clay, Director, ESE

The Exceptional Student Education (ESE) Task Force Planning Committee met on June 1, 2015, 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 - Public Comment**

Speakers

1. Wendy Carroll – Middle school students with disabilities in general education and support facilitators
2. Margaret Hedelund – Inclusion and paraprofessional training
3. Elissa Scheckowitz. – Paraprofessional and Substitute (Interim) Teacher training
4. Juliet Hartel Popkin– Consistency of ESE Family Counselor
5. Giselle Kinaci – Growth and disparity in classroom (special programs and general education)
6. Esai Aime– Need for training for ESE Specialists

**Agenda Item: Discussion Items (Proposed Recommendations for Superintendent)**

**All Levels**

1. Support Facilitator job description

Task Force members reviewed the sample job description from Putnam County. Staff shared that a draft pre-board approval will be shared with Task Force members by July 31st (prior to the school year).

## **All Levels - Continued**

### 2. Support Facilitation Caseloads

Task Force members requested that they continue to have updates on support facilitator caseloads.

### 3. Speech Language Pathologist Caseloads

District ESE Supervisors attended budget conferences and recommended that schools hire a Speech Language Pathologists (SLPs) to address high caseloads. Several schools have already hired SLPs and others currently have SLP advertisements posted.

Task Force members asked how delivery models are determined; and staff shared that this is a site-based decision.

### 4. Hire additional Assistive Technology (AT) Program Specialist

District ESE staff shared the need for an additional program specialist in lieu of an AT Supervisor. It was shared that this additional person would have a number of responsibilities to include ESE PreK, charter schools, Hospital Homebound, and serve as the contact person on the District's Technology committee

### 5. Response to Intervention (Rtl)

District ESE staff shared that they would continue to work with the Student Support Initiatives Department. Task Force members recommended that the RTI process be added to the website. It was shared that a Brainshark is available and "it is very good", but consistency among schools is needed. Task Force members shared that Rtl needs to be an immediate concern. Staff shared that there is a great deal of training that was conducted this year and will continue next year. Every training in the 2015-2016 school year will have an RTI component.

### 6. Behavior Technicians

Task Force members would like the ESE and Support Services Division to hire additional Behavior Technicians to allow for two per District team, to include ESE PreK. Staff shared that as Task Force prioritize the recommendations and upon Superintendent approval more work towards each recommendation will be shared. Grant funding will be a considered.

## **All Levels - Continued**

### 7. One teacher of Behavioral support per middle school

Task Force members proposed this as a recommendation.

### 8. Behavior Supervisor

District staff shared that at the time of this meeting, this item was still pending. Task Force members shared that this position may not be necessary if schools do not have behavior staff that requires supervision.

### 9. Summer Training for Support Facilitators

Task Force members asked about available summer trainings for teachers and paraprofessionals. Staff shared that this summer many sessions are being offered as on-line courses where teachers can be anywhere and have access to the content. Other trainings are will also be offered. Staff further shared that professional learning is important and the strategic efforts made to meet the needs of targeted audiences. Paraprofessional training is also being offered this summer. Throughout the year other trainings for paraprofessionals will be offered.

After the Task Force meeting, a copy of course offerings was shared with the ESE Task Force Chair, as per her request.

### 10. Training for paraprofessionals the week before school begins so that they are adequately prepared to meet the complex needs of students.

Staff shared that professional learning is important and the strategic efforts made to meet the needs of targeted audiences. Paraprofessional training is also being offered this summer. Throughout the year other trainings for paraprofessionals will be offered.

### 11. Assistive Technology (AT)

ESE Task Force members expressed concern about the purchasing of AT equipment. District ESE staff shared that purchasing issues were not related to the ESE and Support Services Division and will continue to monitor the purchasing process.

## **All Levels - Continued**

### 12. Transportation/Busses – Pick up/Drop off Times

District ESE Staff shared that the ESE and Support Services Division is in constant contact with the Transportation Department regarding routes for ESE PreK programs. Task Force members would like to see this process address transportation needs of other students. It was shared that ESE PreK was the starting point and that the Transportation Department works diligently to assist the ESE and Support Division with all transportation concerns.

### 13. Teachers to be made aware of budget allowances for classroom supplies.

District ESE staff shared that at the start of each school year site visits are conducted by District teams to identify program needs. Additionally, Mr. Collado, Principal/Task Force member, shared that items are ordered based on curriculum and student needs specifically.

### 14. The need to have an accountability process in place to ensure that administration spends IDEA dollars on students with disabilities was discussed. Task Force members suggested that District staff could add curriculum and supplies to Staff Report. District staff shared that each program receives an equipment list.

Curriculum Supervisors participated in budget conferences in April. Supervisors will monitor vacancies and spending for materials/supplies through the summer and fall.

### 15. The need for additional IEP maintenance staff (teacher and clerk) was discussed. It was all stated that if Broward changes to Florida (PEER) IEP system, a great deal of funds could be saved.

District staff shared that the state created Portal to Exceptional Education Resources (PEER), and web-based IEP data management system, at no cost to all districts. Forty-seven districts are currently using PEER; other districts are considering this system - Miami-Dade, Orange, Pinellas. PEER currently does not have all of the elements of our current system, EasyIEP. The ESE and Support Services Division, however, will work with the state to build this system to our District's needs.

Task Force members shared that EasyIEP is a good system, but find that things get moved around; it was created to be less specific to the student; more legally defensive for the District; and they would like to have a place for comments, next steps, etc.

## **All Levels - Continued**

16. Task Force members discussed the need to establish Parent Volunteer program (4.6-7) by referring to the ACE initiative and modify it as appropriate

### **PreK**

1. Establish PreK class caps of six students per Intensive Classroom and 12 students per Specialized Classroom.

This item will be considered as a recommendation to the Superintendent.

2. Additional PreK teams to reach for the goal of being consistent with the Part C timeline, which is 75 days from initial call to staffing into placement and services.

District staff shared that from initial call to students being staffed and receiving services is at three and half months which is a great improvement in comparison to the waitlist of five or more months from the beginning of the 2014-2015 school year.

Task Force shared that available space for PreK classrooms became a concern due to the increase in identified preschool students with disabilities. Furthermore, having more than 18 preschool students with disabilities in a classroom posed various challenges for teachers.

3. Monitor new 216-day calendar of PreK evaluation staff for results in reduction of timelines. If 216-day calendar does not bring us closer to the Part C timeline requirement, move for a 241-day calendar of evaluation teams.
4. Update curriculum for PreK classrooms to include innovation – Namely Teach Town and Letter People.

District ESE Preschool staff is working with the District's Headstart/Early Intervention Department to update curriculum for preschool students with disabilities. The ESE and Support Services Division will also consider grant (discretionary/other) funding opportunities, if appropriate.

### **Middle School**

1. Establish formal matriculation process to ensure success from day-one

Summer Writing Team will develop matriculation/transition manual; stakeholder involvement will be enlisted in developing. Training for ESE Specialists will occur in September and March.

## Middle School - Continued

2. Decrease caseloads of Support Facilitators – create system to calculate “appropriate caseload” per support facilitator.

Reduced caseload to approximately 50 students per facilitator depending on the frequency, duration, and intensity of services. Caseload/workload are reviewed will be reviewed quarterly.

Task Force members shared that based on information received from recent budget conferences, the District is moving in the right direction with support facilitator caseloads

3. Give careful consideration to the schedule of ESE students by school administration and guidance counselors.

Task Force members shared their concern that a high amount of students with disabilities were being placed together in same classroom and teacher concerns. Priority scheduling of students with disabilities at the school level was recommended

District staff shared that scheduling is a part of the training provided by the ESE and Support Services Division. This Division collaborates with the Florida Inclusion Network (FIN) in flexible scheduling training, and reinforces scheduling through the role out of Support Facilitation Model.

4. All middle schools and high schools to have support model

ESE and Support Services has added 10 new Secondary School Support Model sites at the middle school level based on student need for the 2015-2016 school year, matriculation projections, high school phase in plan will begin 2016-2017 school year when student groups matriculate.

Anticipated date for matriculation manual is prior to the 2015-16 school year.

5. Provide professional development for all educators to identify children for counseling services who might be easily missed as needing the service because they may not have failing grades or significant behaviors.

Task Force members shared concerns regarding consistency of counselors for students with disabilities. District staff shared that a change in counselors could result for various reasons, to include student needs and staff assignments.

### **Middle School - Continued**

6. Examine specialized varying exceptionalities (SVE) middle school programs for consistency of supports proven in prior years to be necessary. Help middle school curriculum supervisors create a middle school “goal”.

District staff shared that Curriculum Supervisors will ensure that standards are followed by conducting quarterly SVE classroom walkthroughs as the District is accountable to Florida Alternate Assessment. Task Force members suggested that a designee be appointed to ensure that all SVE classes are monitored (use of appropriate materials/implementation of high standards). Staff further shared that the ESE and Support Services Division implemented classroom standards four years ago and two years ago they were aligned with Marzano. Staff conducts quarterly walk-throughs based on these standards.

### **High school**

1. Further expand Project Search and WOW programs.

Staff shared that in lieu of assigning students to the KCW Building, the WOW program will be moved to the Transportation Department. The Transition team is putting this process together.

2. District to provide additional staff for secondary transition programs (to include CTACE)

Transition team has five transition teachers, one training specialist, and one job coach to support 33 high schools and collaborate with the curriculum supervisor teams. Curriculum Teams provide support K-12 to 48 schools per team with six program specialists.

3. Determine and financially support CTACE initiatives towards partial industry certifications. This should assist with item 4.13-6.

District staff is working with CTACE to determine support needed.

4. Ensure Stand Up For Me curriculum is accessible to all (perhaps having this instruction imbedded within social studies curriculum might be a way to implement this for kids on regular standards)

This is training available for all BCPS teachers.

### **High school - Continued**

5. Ensure that students, parents and schools are aware of and trained in the Standing Up For Me curriculum. Further self-determination instruction for all students, not only those in SVE.

The Transition teams works with FDLRS to plan training for teachers, parents and students. Training is available during the day and at night.

6. District will inform principals that the Superintendent's office supports Lou Ruccolo's transition initiatives so that barriers that may exist will be lessened, or dissolved.

Task Force members discussed the need for additional Transition staff.

### **Communication**

1. Redesign ESE Advisory's parent survey to obtain direct input from parents on their personal experiences in order to truly represent the needs of the community.

ESE District staff shared that this item was not addressed in the Evergreen Report, but was a survey that was created with the ESE Advisory Council. According to some, it was confusing for parents and it was stated that too many surveys lose their effect.

The item that was addressed in this report focused on the Florida Diagnostic Resource Systems parent.

2. Provide user-friendly website to include the evaluation process (and what is included in the evaluation process), as well as what parents should look for in reviewing their own school/program for efficiency and support.

ESE District staff and some Task Force members acknowledged that there has been some updates to the ESE and Support Services website. Additional updates will continue to occur into the 2015-2016 school year.



### **Agenda Item – Proposed Next Steps**

The Task Force Chair solicited Task Force members for ideas of what should go forward and the following was recommended:

- Collapse Recommendation for Behavior Supervisor, Behavior Technicians – two per District team, and One Behavior Support Teacher per middle school classroom
- Matriculation Plan
- ESE Support Facilitation
- Training to include inclusion
- Transition
- ESE Best Practices
- Assistive Technology Program Specialists
- 100% ESE Specialists

Staff shared that upon approval of recommendations submitted to the Superintendent, it was recommended that this Task Force meet twice a year to monitor the progress of the work. This will allow staff time to work on approved recommendations. The Task Force agreed with this and proposed that meetings take place in December prior to Winter Break and again after Spring Break.

The meeting adjourned at 1 p.m.