



**THE SCHOOL BOARD OF SARASOTA COUNTY, FLORIDA  
EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT EDUCATION SERVICES**

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Sonia Figaredo-Alberts, Executive Director  
Exceptional Student Services

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:                    Dr. Brennan Asplen III, Superintendent  
                         Mr. Chris Renouf, Assistant Superintendent/Chief Academic Officer  
                         School Board Members**

**FROM:                Sonia Figaredo-Alberts, Executive Director  
                         Tammy Cassels, Director of Exceptional Student Education  
                         Exceptional Student Education**

**DATE:                December 15, 2021**

**RE:                    ESE Special Programs & Procedures (SP&P)**

I have attached, for your information and reference, an Executive Summary of the ESE Special Programs and Procedures (SP&P).

The Executive Summary provides an overview of changes since the last revision in July 2021. The effective date outlines changes to SP&P effective for the school years 2020-2023. FLDOE approved it on September 14, 2021. The signature page, confirming your approval certification, will be submitted to the Department of Education, Bureau of Exceptional Student Education, and Student Services.

Thank you for your ongoing support and commitment to quality programs for Sarasota's exceptional students.

**Cc:                    Brandon Johnson  
                         Steve Cantees  
                         Debra Giacalone**

## **Executive Summary**

### **Introduction**

The Special Programs and Procedures Document is submitted every three years by each Florida School District to the Department of Education. It may be amended at any time due to changes in legislation. Since the 1997-98 school year, the submission for all Florida school districts has been an addendum preprinted by the Department of Education assuring compliance with the IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act).

The document is still based on Federal and State Statute and State Board of Education regulations; however, approximately 90% of the document is pre-printed by FLDOE and not subject to modifications by the district. New State Board of Education Rules have been developed in several ESE areas, along with significant changes in legislation.

Areas typically permitting district input include qualified evaluators for student assessment, curriculum, program philosophy, and descriptions of program support services. In the past, areas of district input were typically written broadly enough so that routine year-to-year program changes did not necessitate revisions of the district procedures document. This submission (based on FDLOE recommendations) contains changes in the document, which are summarized in the following areas.

## **Part I, General Policies and Procedures**

### **Section B.4: Department of Juvenile Justice Facilities**

- Process amended to address Sarasota County students who are placed in county jail
  - Process amended to address Out of County students who are placed in county jail
- Reminder: There is no Juvenile Justice Facility in Sarasota County

## **Part II, Policies and Procedures for Students with Disabilities**

### **Section D: Discipline**

- When a parent/guardian disagrees with the outcome of a Manifestation Determination Hearing, the parent has the right to request an expedited due process hearing by sending a copy of the request to the Executive Director of Exceptional Student Education. The Executive Director sends a copy to the Florida Department of Education (FDOE) and the School Board Attorney, who files the request with the Division of Administrative Hearings (DOAH). During the appeal, the student remains in the recommended change of placement pending the outcome of the appeal. The expedited hearing is conducted by an Administrative Law Judge within 20 school days of the date the due process was filed.

- Presently, Sarasota County does not have a 45-day Interim Alternative Education Setting (IAES) for students who are suspended or expelled. Appropriate delivery of services and placement of services are determined by the relevant members of the IEP team, including the parent. Services can be provided in a variety of settings that allows the student to participate and progress in the curriculum and continue working toward the goals on the IEP.
- When a disciplinary infraction results in the recommendation of a suspension beyond the 10th day, the school principal, in coordination with the school's ESE liaison, contacts the parent to inform them of the disciplinary infraction and consequence. At this time, a discussion occurs regarding the date and time of the upcoming Manifestation meeting or IEP meeting. Procedural safeguards are either mailed home or sent home with the student on the same day as the decision is made recommending a change of placement.
- The district has procedures in place to ensure that special education and disciplinary records of students with disabilities are transmitted to the person making the final determination regarding disciplinary action. The District Discipline Committee is convened to make the final determination regarding disciplinary action that may involve an alternative school recommendation upon completion of a manifestation meeting with required team members at the student's school of enrollment. A referral packet (including ESE records and disciplinary records) is sent to the District Discipline Office by a school-based administrator to the District Discipline Committee for review to determine appropriate action.

## **Section E: Participation in State and District Assessments**

- I-Ready is the districtwide assessment available to all K-8 students for progress monitoring
- In grades 9-12, students are assessed through Teach Town Basics diagnostic tools and/or enCORE diagnostic tools with ongoing assessments in pre/post unit activities. Individual skill gaps, as well as content standards, are also addressed.
- Students in grades 9-12, enrolled in courses with FSAA/EOC assessments, progress monitoring data is collected on standards progress and may be used as part of the waiver process.
- The district staff ensures that IEP teams are adhering to the criteria for determining the eligibility for participation in Access Points and Florida Standards Alternate Assessment through training, support, and ongoing monitoring.
- At the present time, the district has not been identified as having a concern regarding disproportionality within the subgroups. The following are continued practices to monitor and ensure systemic implementation for all students.
- District staff reviews documentation and data with school teams to ensure students meet the criteria for alternate assessment. This process involves school-based teams,

including the psychologist, to gather all relevant information (cognitive assessment, achievement assessment, adaptive assessment, language assessments, district assessments, accommodation logs, assistive technology data, progress on general education standards, performance on district and state assessments and social history data).

## **Part V: Appendices**

### **II.B.8 Intellectual Disabilities Additional Attachments**

**(Based on the Commissioner's Letter dated March 15, 2021)**

- **Condition 3 Summary (3-31-21)**
  - **Quarterly Data Submission**
- **Condition 3 Summary (6-30-21)**
  - **Quarterly Data Submission (6-30-21)**
- **FDOE Annual Narrative Summary (8-31-21)**
- **Focus Area 4 FDOE Parent Training Plan (1-28-21)**
- **PD Plan Focus Area One (5-14-21)**