



ESE 2025-26 Updates

Providing High-Quality Teaching & Learning Experiences in the Least Restrictive Environment

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Presentation to the
Osceola County School Board

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Exceptional Student Education (ESE) Department Mission

The ESE Department will provide a spectrum of innovative support that helps to inspire students with disabilities to reach their highest potential as responsible, productive citizens.

Topics to Cover

Introduction of Common Terms

Historical Overview and Data Trend

Enhancements and Updates for 2025-2026

Next Steps

Questions

Glossary of Terms

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE): This is a principle guiding exceptional student education programs. Under federal guidelines, students with disabilities should be educated with their non-disabled peers to the maximum extent possible, unless there is a strong, data-driven reason to do otherwise.

Self-Contained Classroom or Separate Class Setting: A setting in which all learners have a disability. Often, this refers to a singular classroom and students are educated together in a cohort for the entire day. As students increase independence with the barriers preventing the inclusive setting, they may move into the regular education setting for portions of the day.

Inclusion or Inclusive Opportunities: Inclusion secures opportunities for students with disabilities to learn alongside their non-disabled peers in regular education classrooms. Successful inclusive education for students with disabilities involves accepting differences, ensuring support, and encouraging full participation in the classroom.

Service Model: The structure of how IEP services are provided to students, which can include curriculum, supports, services, and setting.

Continuum of Services: Offering a range of educational services to make sure every child has access to a free and appropriate public education (FAPE). This range of services is called the "continuum of services." Different types of support and settings are available based on the needs of each student.

Glossary of Terms

Access Points or Instruction via Access Points Standards: Expectations written for students with significant cognitive disabilities to access the general education curriculum. Embedded in the Florida BEST Standards, access points reflect the core intent of the Standards with reduced levels of complexity. Parental consent is required in conjunction with qualifying eligibility criteria.

Functional Behavioral Assessment/Behavioral Intervention Plan: A Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) is the systematic process used to collect information about a behavior to determine its function. A Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP) is a formal written document that draws information from the FBA and outlines interventions that will be used to reduce or replace challenging behaviors while reinforcing desired behaviors.

Crisis Intervention: Appropriate responses to a series of recognizable behavior stages (Anxiety, Defensive Behavior, Risk Behavior, Tension Reduction) occurring in an escalating crisis which are designed to deescalate the situation.

Crisis Plan: For students that exhibit behaviors that frequently rise to the crisis level, the school team with support from the ESE Behavior Team, use the crisis development model to determine how to identify the four behavior stages unique to the student and the responses that deescalate the situation for the student. This is part of the student's behavior intervention plan.

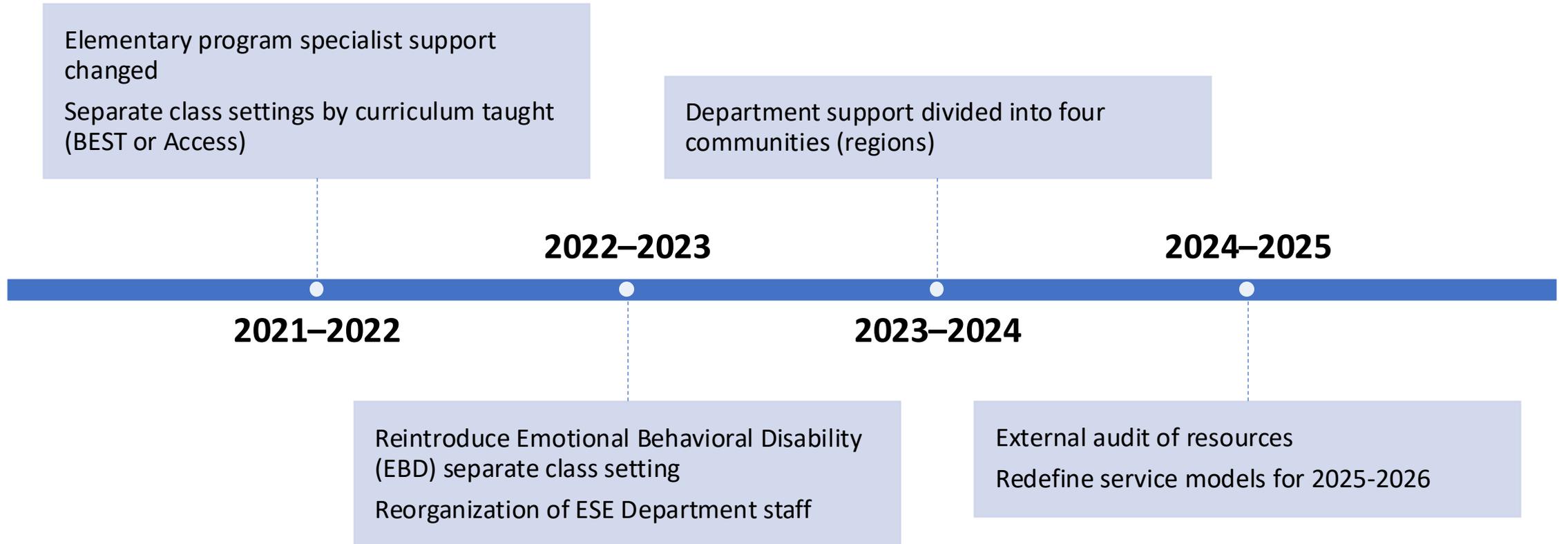
IEP Team: Per IDEA, this is the group that works together to develop the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) and at minimum includes the parent, at least one regular education teacher, at least one special education teacher, a representative who is qualified to provide or supervise the provision of special education (LEA).

Historical Overview and Data Trend

ESE Advisory Committee

- March 2023-April 2023: Board-approved Advisory Committee convened
- April 25, 2023: Presentation of recommendations to the Board
- August 2023: Planning for continuation of ESE Advisory with SDOC staff
- October 2023-May 2024: Monthly ESE Advisory Committee meetings for 2023-2024 school year
- August 2024: Expansion of ESE Advisory to include a representative from every school

ESE Department Changes

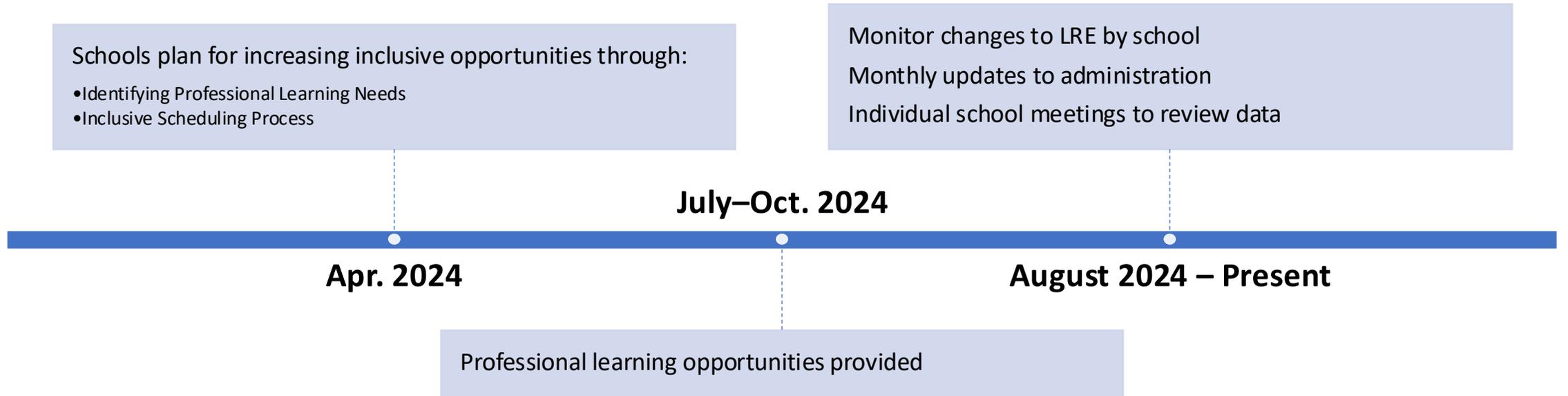


March 2024 – Separate Class Data from DOE

	County	Percent	Total
RANK	STATE	13.37%	406586
20	ST. JOHNS	8.77%	7962
24	BAY	9.49%	5087
29	SARASOTA	10.21%	6983
33	BREVARD	10.54%	12559
35	ESCAMBIA	10.77%	5784
40	ALACHUA	11.35%	3877
41	SEMINOLE	11.46%	9746
45	LEON	12.26%	4959
49	OKALOOSA	12.67%	5162
51	MANATEE	13.02%	7504

	County	Percent	Total
RANK	STATE	13.37%	406586
52	PASCO	13.05%	12468
55	CLAY	13.48%	7720
57	COLLIER	14.06%	7410
62	VOLUSIA	14.60%	11628
67	LAKE	15.32%	7533
68	SANTA ROSA	15.46%	4406
69	ST. LUCIE	15.51%	6040
74	MARION	16.43%	6824
79	OSCEOLA	19.95%	8650
80	GADSDEN	21.61%	722

Actions Taken



**Enhancements and
Service Model Updates
2025-2026**

Enhancements

- Increasing **Inclusive Opportunities** in all schools
- Students needing more individualized services at identified schools within each region
- Updating the **Service Models** offered for **separate class settings** within the **Continuum of Services**
 - Pre-K
 - Behavior Supports
 - Instruction via **Access Points Standards**
 - Transition

Inclusive Opportunities

- **Inclusive** (Blended) VPK
 - All students entering kindergarten in the following school year
- Project Search (Transition)
 - Met criteria for graduation and deferred diploma
 - Locations
 - Advent Health
 - Gaylord Palms
 - SDOC
 - Goal is employment in area of skill learned, preferably at the place of interning

General Education Setting: 40-79%

- Percentage equates to time with non-disabled peers.
- Students shall:
 - have regular setting homeroom.
 - Be removed from instruction with non-disabled peers for only portions of the day:
 - Counseling or Social Skills
 - Therapy
 - Related Services
 - Weaker content areas to support closing gaps

Separate Class Settings Hub Sites

- Developmental K-2
- Behavior Supports
- Access- Independent
- Access- Supported
- Access- Participatory
- PK-ESE (3YO and 4YO)
- Transition-Dependent
- Transition

Separate Class Setting

- Developmental:
 - KG-2nd Only
 - Evidence from interventions demonstrating likely proposal by the IEP team for instruction via Access Points.
 - Despite the implementation of appropriate behavioral interventions with fidelity, student demonstrates frequent behavior requiring crisis intervention.
- Behavior Supports
 - Instruction via BEST Standards
 - Active Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP) with Crisis Plan
 - Despite the implementation of appropriate behavioral interventions with fidelity, student demonstrates frequent behavior requiring crisis intervention.

Separate Class Setting

- Access-Independent:
 - Instruction via Access Points
 - Minimal modifications to content or delivery required
 - May have some behavior that can be linked to:
 - Impaired verbal ability
 - Need for explicit social skills instruction
- Access-Supported
 - Instruction via Access Points
 - Moderate to significant modifications to content or delivery required
 - May have some behavior that can be linked to:
 - Functional Communication
 - Need for explicit social skills instruction

Separate Class Setting

- Access-Participatory:
 - Instruction via Access Points
 - Significant modifications to content or delivery required
 - Majority of the day focused on daily living or self-care
- PK-ESE (3YO and 4YO):
 - All 3 Year Olds, unless speech therapy only
 - Only 4 Year Olds that are:
 - Not eligible for kindergarten for the following school year
 - Are identified as needing additional time with non-disabled peers through the more restrictive setting process

Separate Class Setting

- Transition-Dependent:
 - Met criteria for graduation and deferred diploma
 - Focus on developing independence in daily living skills
- Transition-On Campus:
 - Met criteria for graduation and deferred diploma
 - Learning basic employment skills
 - Practicing daily living skills
- Transition-Off Campus:
 - Learning more refined employment skills
 - Generalized skills learned in the on-campus program within the community
 - Goal is employment upon aging out

Next Steps

District-Level Next Steps

- Communicate district-wide and support school-family communication
- Support transitions for students and staff switching schools
- Ensure all separate class school locations have:
 - Appropriate equipment/resources transferred
 - Curriculum purchase/training, if needed
 - Teams identified and trained to support classrooms
- Inclusive scheduling

School-Level Next Steps

- Communicate with families and partnered schools
- Support transitions for students switching schools
- Monitor all separate class school locations have:
 - Placement of equipment/resources in assigned classrooms
 - Request curriculum or resource needs
 - Request additional training, if needed
- Inclusive scheduling



BOARD & SUPERINTENDENT'S COMMENTS

