It’s Feeling Hot in Here!

In Florida, that is, as the summer heat is setting in both literally and metaphorically. The heat in education this year is rising around several topics that, from an optimistic viewpoint, are exciting! For instance, the implementation of new legislation has us all experiencing some level of anticipation. In this issue, we offer you brief summaries of relevant information on the legislation most directly impacting student services teams. This includes a variety of topics such as assessment and graduation, certified school counseling, the military compact, cyber-bullying, epinephrine medication, parent involvement for students with disabilities, and independent living. Concluding a lively legislative session and entering into the implementation phase, we are working to sort out the implementation requirements.

Other hot topics this summer, in no particular order, include the FERPA Amendment, Child Protection, Common Core State Standards, School Based Mental Health/Safe Schools/Emergency Management, Student Progression, the new Pancreatic Enzyme Rule, and the Interagency Workgroup. In this issue, you will find information from your state consultants addressing each of these topics with the passion that they consistently bring to their work and their service to you.

Speaking of our passionate team, we are here for you! We, as always, stand ready to assist you no matter how simple or complex your need may be. We seek to serve with an integrated and comprehensive approach. We hope to guide thinking and practice based on evidence of positive impact on students. We are strong believers in applying systemic, data-based planning and problem solving to inform ever-improving multi-tiered systems of support. Thanks for all that you do, season after season, as part of our expertise-rich student services network throughout the state!

As we start the process of wrapping up the 2012–2013 school year, congratulations to Florida’s student services professionals for another successful year of supporting students’ well-being and learning outcomes.

Cheers... with the metaphorical tall glass of cool lemonade... made straight from real lemons.

Happy Summer!
Mental Health in Schools Survey

The need for improving mental health services for children, including the expansion of school-based mental health services, has been a focus of state and national attention. A recently published supplement to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report indicates that mental illness is increasing in children and youth under 18 years of age (May 17, 2013 / Vol. 62 / No. 2). According to the report, 13–20 percent of children living in the United States experience a mental disorder in a given year; among children aged 12–17 years, suicide was the second leading cause of death in 2010.

The Student Support Services Project recently conducted a survey to determine how schools identify and serve students with mental health needs and the extent to which school-based mental health services (prevention, intervention, and crisis response) are implemented within a multi-tiered system of supports. The response rate was excellent, with 70 percent of districts responding to the survey. We are pleased to share with you some of the preliminary results of Florida’s Mental Health in Schools Survey:

♦ Students are primarily identified through parent or teacher referrals, with the Early Warning Systems reported as the second most common means of identification. Less than ten percent of schools use a universal screening system that targets mental health issues. Once identified, schools report using school-based intervention/problem-solving teams and a tiered support system to address mental health needs.

♦ Of the three broad areas of service delivery, respondents rated crisis response the highest followed by intervention; 76 percent of respondents rated districts as Very Good or Good at providing crisis response and 69 percent rated intervention services as Very Good or Good. Responses indicate gaps in prevention efforts; nearly 50 percent of respondents rated prevention services as less than adequate.

♦ The primary providers of school-based mental health services were school counselors, school psychologists, contracted mental health professionals, school social workers, and school nurses. The main services reported were counseling, consultation, and referral to community mental health services.

♦ The majority of districts identify improving student engagement and other protective factors as an intervention focus.

♦ Mental health prevention services and programs include school-wide/universal supports; positive behavior support; bullying, suicide, and substance abuse prevention programs; social skills training; early warning systems; school climate initiatives; and developmental guidance programs.

♦ Student services professionals are the primary providers and recipients of mental health training activities. Prevention training and awareness may expand to other district personnel, school administrators, and teachers.
Section 504 Tip

Develop one plan for an eligible student with a disability. An eligible student receives an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or a Section 504 plan but not both!

The U.S. Department of Education responded to the question of whether a district is responsible for developing both an IEP and a 504 plan for the same student with a categorical NO, stating that...“If a student is eligible under IDEA, he or she must have an IEP. Under the Section 504 regulations, one way to meet Section 504 requirements...is to implement an IEP” (Frequently Asked Questions About Section 504 and the Education of Children with Disabilities – Question #36).

Since a child’s entitlement under IDEA is to Free Appropriate Public Education and not to a particular disability label (Analysis of Comments and Changes section of 71 Fed. Reg. 46737), a student’s IEP must address the needs of the whole student. A district has no flexibility to provide services and accommodations under Section 504 when a student is IDEA-eligible (LRP SmartStart: Dual Eligibility Under IDEA and Section 504).

The Student Support Services Project is integrating the survey results, implications, and recommendations into a presentation format for dissemination and discussion. Thank you for collaborating in collecting this important information for the work you do to ensure that our systems of support are responsive to the mental health needs of students.
Senate Bill (SB) 284–School Emergencies


The enrolled bill establishes a process through which a private school may register to be notified when the public school district is notified about an emergency occurrence in the local area that threatens student safety.

The bill also authorizes both public and private schools to purchase epinephrine auto-injectors from a wholesale distributor, as defined in section 499.003, Florida Statutes (F.S.); permits storage of epinephrine auto-injectors in a locked, secure location on campus for use when any student has a life-threatening allergic reaction (anaphylaxis); directs schools/districts that choose to purchase and maintain a supply of epinephrine auto-injectors to adopt a protocol by a licensed physician; allows an authorized student to self-administer an epinephrine auto-injector purchased by the school/district; requires training of school personnel to recognize when a student is having an anaphylactic reaction; allows trained school personnel to administer an epinephrine auto-injector without parent authorization; removes school employees’ liability arising from administration of an epinephrine auto-injector unless done in a willful or wanton manner; and removes liability from the physician who developed the protocol. These provisions take effect on July 1, 2013.

SB 1036–Independent Living

The 2013 Florida Legislature approved SB 1036, “Nancy C. Detert Common Sense and Compassion Independent Living Act.” The new law gives young adults the option to remain in foster care until the age of 21 in order to finish high school, earn a GED, pursue post-secondary education, or begin a career. The bill strengthens the role of foster parents, restructures the Road-to-Independence Program, and empowers caregivers to provide high-quality, nurturing parenting for children in foster care.

House Bill (HB) 801–Certified School Counselors

The 2013 Florida Legislature approved HB 801. The new law replaces the term “guidance counselor” with the term “certified school counselor” to reflect the evolution of the school counseling profession and the current requirement that persons employed as school counselors be certified as set forth by laws and State Board of Education rules.


The State Board of Education approved Rule 6A-6.0252, F.A.C., which became effective on May 5, 2013. The approved Rule is published on the Florida Administrative Register website at [https://www.flrules.org/gateway/ruleNo.asp?id=6A-6.0252](https://www.flrules.org/gateway/ruleNo.asp?id=6A-6.0252). This new Rule defines Emergency Care Plan (ECP), Individualized Health Care Plan (IHP), Pancreatic Insufficiency, and Self-Administration to implement ss. 1002.20 (3)(k) and 1006.062(4), F.S., to allow for students with cystic fibrosis to
carry and self-administer their prescribed pancreatic enzyme supplement while in school, participating in school-sponsored activities, or in transit to or from school or school-sponsored activities if the school has been provided with authorization from the student’s parent and the prescribing practitioner.

**FERPA and the Child Welfare System**

The Uninterrupted Scholars Act (USA) s. 3472 (USA), is intended to facilitate the availability of certain student education records to child welfare workers.

The measure helps to ensure that school records, including IEPs, are transferred quickly when children wind up in a different school due to a foster care placement.

The bill amends the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) to eliminate inadvertent obstacles to information-sharing between education and child welfare agencies. The USA allows education agencies to release student education records to child welfare caseworkers or other representatives of a state or local child welfare agency or tribal organization without obtaining parent consent. It also eliminates the requirement that the education agency provide duplicative notice regarding the release of education records to parents already receiving notice from the court.


Department of Education and Department of Children and Families staff are developing strategies to support effective implementation at the local level.

**Florida’s Children and Youth Cabinet**

For a number of years, state agencies have worked together at the local and state levels under an interagency agreement to coordinate services for children served by more than one agency. As the most recent agreement had expired, Florida’s Children and Youth Cabinet Multi-System Children and Youth Workgroup began work on a new more comprehensive and systematic interagency agreement, which would require reporting to the Cabinet. The new Interagency Agreement to Coordinate Services for Children Served by More than One Agency was signed by the agency leads at the Florida Children and Youth Cabinet meeting October 31, 2012, and continues until July 1, 2017.

The Florida agencies who signed the agreement are:

- Agency for Health Care Administration
- Agency for Persons with Disabilities
- Department of Children and Families
- Department of Juvenile Justice
- Department of Education
- Department of Health
- Guardian Ad Litem Program
- Office of Early Learning

Local-, regional-, and state-level interagency teams provide the service structure of the agreement. The Local review teams are intended to resolve most of the case-specific issues that cannot be appropriately addressed within the regular service system. However, if the local team cannot resolve an issue, they must refer the case to the regional review team.
If the regional team cannot resolve the issue, they must refer the case to the state review team. The local and regional review teams must meet monthly and report to the state team the number and type of cases that are referred and resolved. The state review team must meet quarterly and report to the Cabinet the total number and type of cases referred from the local and regional teams. The Department of Children and Families serves as the lead agency for the first year of the Agreement.

**Florida’s Child Protection Transformation**

Florida’s Child Protection Transformation project is intended to enhance child safety, well-being, and permanency by transforming the purpose and practice of the hotline, investigations, and case management. The Abuse Hotline is incorporating a safety decision-making methodology that includes six domains: extent of the maltreatment, circumstances surrounding the maltreatment, child functioning, adult functioning, general parenting, and parenting discipline. The Florida Safe Families Network (FSFN) is being redesigned to support data integration and information sharing with other state and local agencies, such as school districts, Early Learning Coalitions, the Agency for Health Care Administration, Juvenile Justice, Guardian Ad Litem, and the courts. This transformation will dramatically improve the child protection system and provide a framework for investigators to make the critical, real-time decisions necessary to save children’s lives.

Let’s Rock this Common Core State Standard Implementation!

If you haven’t already begun to chant “Common Core State Standards” in your sleep, you may soon find that it is an inevitable side effect of being a Florida-based educator these days. If you are operating with accurate information, you probably feel positive about the essence and intent of the standards and how they fit within the multi-tiered system of supports that you’ve been working to build for years. The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) are causing both controversy and excitement! A few important truths to remember about the standards are:

- They were developed by educators for educators across the nation.
- They aim to prepare all students to be able to compete for college and career readiness.
- They focus on critical thinking and analysis.
They emphasize student engagement and universal design for learning principles.

They include fewer standards that require deeper levels of mastery.

They represent WHAT to teach, not HOW to teach.

Your partners here on the Student Support Services team have been getting comfortable with our understanding of the major shifts represented by the CCSS in mathematics, English/language arts, and literacy.

The main shifts in mathematics include the following:

- A narrow and deep focus area for each grade level
- Coherence within and across grade levels to build on previous learning
- Rigor that is characterized by conceptual understanding, procedural skills, and applications in real-world contexts

The discussion around the eight Mathematical Practices, also known as habits of mind, cannot be underplayed! These practices are powerful when paired with the content of the standards. They are:

- Making sense and persevering
- Reasoning
- Constructing arguments and critiques
- Using models for application
- Using strategic tools
- Paying attention to detail and precision
- Shifting perspectives to see complex structures
- Using patterns for reasoning, processing, detailing, and evaluating

The major shifts in English/language arts and literacy include the following:

- Reading and learning from literary non-fiction in balance with fiction
- Using evidence from text via deep reading for understanding
- Reading and learning from increasingly complex texts and mastering academic vocabulary

One of the most frequently discussed shifts in literacy is Text Complexity, to which vocabulary and syntax are huge contributors. Text complexity is the set of features in a given passage that places demands upon the reader to understand the author’s message. Besides the language aspects, other features of text complexity include the following:

- Text structure (organizational patterns such as cause/effect)
- Levels of meaning (e.g., themes, topics)
- Knowledge demands, such as discipline-specific information and cultural elements

The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) has shared both the process and tools they will use to determine text complexity for assessment purposes. The tools are located on the following websites:

- Quantitative Measures:
  - Lexile Framework for Reading
  - Reading Maturity
  - SourceRater

- Qualitative Measures:
  - Literary Complexity Analysis Worksheet
  - Informational Complexity Analysis Worksheet
It is helpful to identify these key shifts and practices and necessary to learn about them in more depth to contribute meaningfully to the successful implementation of CCSS. You can access more information at the [FDOE-CCSS website](#) and the official [CCSS website](#).

As student services personnel, you have unique and critical skills to support the implementation of CCSS. This implementation cannot be successful if attempted by teachers in isolation and without the supports to meet the needs of the full range of learners. For information about your role in this implementation, we offer you the following resources for consideration and potential use with your colleagues—

**CCSS: Role of Student Service Personnel Action Brief** (PDF)

Implementing Common Core State Standards (CCSS) within a System of Supports (Online Video)

RtI Action Network:
Implementing CCSS for Students with Learning Disabilities (Webinar), by Drs. Margaret McLaughlin, Louisa Moats, and George Batsche

We sincerely hope that these ideas and resources lead to study, reflection, dialogue, and strategic planning around how you and your team can rock this implementation. Please let us know how it’s going and how we can support you along the way. Meanwhile, you may hear us faintly chanting... “Common Core State Standards!”
Medicaid Parental Consent—OSERS
(Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services)

OSERS instituted a new parental consent rule for school districts seeking to access students’ public benefits or insurance. Please go to http://www2.ed.gov/policy/speced/reg/idea/part-b/part-b-parental-consent.html for further information. This rule changes the IDEA language to require districts to obtain one-time signed parental consent and distribute written notification initially, then annually, rather than obtaining consent each time benefits are accessed. This rule will be enforced starting July 1, 2013.

OSERS has not yet provided model language; however, the suggested language contained in the FDOE 2009 memo (DPS-2009-090) will still suffice for one-time signed consent. It reads:

I authorize the School District of ____________, Florida to release and exchange my child’s confidential information to agencies of the State of Florida which would allow ____________ Schools to verify Medicaid eligibility, bill Medicaid for reimbursable Certified School Match services referenced on my child’s individual educational plan (IEP), and receive Medicaid reimbursement for Exceptional Student Education (ESE) services it provides to my child while at school. I understand that my child will continue to receive services referenced on his/her IEP whether or not I give consent.

The new rule mandates that written notification be provided to parents before accessing benefits for the first time and annually thereafter. This notification should advise the parent:

♦ IEP/IFSP services must be provided at no cost to the parent or student
♦ Consent may be withdrawn at any time
♦ Services listed in the IEP/IFSP must be provided whether or not parents give consent to bill Medicaid
♦ Annual written notification of parental rights regarding this consent must be provided by the school district
♦ Copies of records disclosed as a result of authorization to bill are available to parents upon request

Since Florida had already instituted one-time consent, the only change that should result for Florida school districts is the need to provide parents with annual written notification of rights. The rule is silent on how districts may provide this notice. A district is free to choose its own method(s)—i.e., by mail, student handbook, in person, or a combination thereof.
Upcoming Events

♦ The Florida Department of Education (FDOE) Office of Healthy Schools Summer Academy, Orlando, June 18 & 19, 2013. This Summer Academy is designed for district coordinators of physical education and health education, as well as lead teachers. More information and registration are located at http://www.fldoe.org/bii/CSHP/.


♦ The 45th National Association of School Nurses (NASN) Conference, Orlando, June 27–30th, 2013. “Advocacy, Access, Achievement: Leading the Way” is the theme for this NASN Conference. More information and conference registration are located at http://schoolnursenet.nasn.org/NASN2013/General_Information. The Florida Association of School Nurses (FASN) is offering a limited number of scholarships to FASN members. Visit FASN for more information.

Upcoming Professional Development

There are several opportunities for professional development this summer for school counselors:

♦ June 15, 2013: Building Your School Counseling Toolbox FSCA 2013 Summer Drive-In (Ft. Lauderdale)

♦ June 15, 2013: Feeding The Flame: School Counselor Leadership, Collaboration and Accountability (Orlando)

♦ June 15, 2013: From Idea to Reality: Starting and Running Effective Small Groups in Any School (Jacksonville)

Highlights from the Field

The Pinellas County School District is on the avant-garde of the problem solving/response to intervention (PS/RtI) movement. While goals and strategies have been created and communicated to educators at all levels of the district, significant challenges still exist with respect to implementing a complete three-tiered structure with universal screening, the application of specific interventions for specific students, and progress monitoring.

Currently, the data required for educators to make good data-driven decisions reside in multiple software programs and not in a single, central location. Further, analytical tools exist only for the data that are native to that software system. Thus, staff cannot analyze Electronic Data Systems’ (EDS) Common Assessment data side-by-side with Florida Assessments for Instruction in Reading (FAIR) test results or student discipline information.

The result of having disconnected data is that we have an incomplete view of the child, both past and present. This can lead to applying interventions
that have already proven ineffective for the child or that can produce student improvement, but not at a rate that would allow the child to catch up with her peers.

For someone to merge data from multiple sources requires an inordinate amount of time. To analyze or graph the data so as to have a visual representation of student progress requires even more time, as well as skill in statistics. A team of student services staff in Pinellas County has been working with Focus to consolidate as much information as possible about a child in a single location for teachers and administrators. We are also working to create tools that will allow teachers and administrators to track the progress of a student or group of students and determine which interventions are successful in different environments. Creating these tools will not only save schools thousands of hours, but will also identify which interventions are most successful for specific subgroups of students.

It is our hope that once this is in place in Focus, we will have all the information we need and can therefore invest only in solutions that are effective at improving student achievement. We will keep you updated as this project proceeds.

Donna Sicilian, LCSW, EdS
Executive Director, Student Services

The Palm Beach County School District hosted its Fifth Annual Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU’s) Recruitment and Admissions Tour. By the time recruiters from the 12 participating HBCUs closed up shop and headed home, they had awarded 85 full and partial scholarships and 557 admissions to students who attended the tour. The following colleges, universities and district high schools participated in the tour January 15–17.

Colleges/Universities

♦ Alabama State University
♦ Bethune-Cookman University
♦ Central State University
♦ Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU)
♦ Florida-Memorial University
♦ Howard University
♦ North Carolina A&T University
♦ Shaw University
♦ South Carolina State University
♦ Talladega College
♦ Tuskegee University

High Schools

♦ Atlantic High School
♦ Boynton Beach High School
♦ Forest Hill High School
♦ Glades Central High School
♦ John I. Leonard High School
♦ Lake Worth High School
♦ Pahokee High School
♦ Palm Beach Lakes High School
♦ Santaluces High School

The event is one of several initiatives supported by the District’s School Counseling and Graduation Support Team.

Eunice Greenfield
High School Counseling Specialist