With this third edition of the Student Support Services newsletter, we are pleased to provide you with information addressing the issues that effect Florida public schools. We encourage your participation by letting us know of innovative practices in your district.

We remind you that our offices have moved and our contact information has changed. You will find our new contact information on page four.

We welcome your comments and suggestions.

Your Student Support Services Team
Be Careful of the 504 "Mine Fields"

Common Errors: 504 Accommodation Plan
- Using a predetermined checklist and checking accommodations that are not necessary
- Failing to match accommodations with student needs
- Failing to provide copies and an explanation of the 504 Accommodation Plan to everyone responsible for implementation
- Failing to conduct timely evaluations
- Writing vague plans
- Providing minimal or no monitoring of the implementation plan
- Failing to get school administration involved with monitoring of the implementation plan

Common Errors: Identification And Eligibility Decisions:
- Ignoring the physical/mental impairment requirement
- Ignoring the substantial limitation requirement
- Considering services for students under prong 2 or 3
- Basing eligibility on anticipation of future needs
- Failing to review or dismiss appropriately
- Basing eligibility solely on a medical diagnosis with no substantial impairment

Other Common Errors
- Failing to inform all staff of needed accommodations
- Failing to provide a foundation of 504 information to school personnel
- Assuming that a student who is a struggling learning must qualify for 504

Please submit questions to Bettye Hyle via e-mail at bhyle@usf.edu. Our office will select questions for our future newsletter editions. We look forward to hearing from you.

Building Capacity:

Professional Development & Problem Solving/RtI

Successful implementation of a problem-solving/response to intervention approach will require ongoing professional development that effectively translates research and policy into practice. The need for professional development is especially crucial to establishing consensus in the beginning stages of problem-solving/RtI. Ongoing professional development will impact the quality and sustainability of implementation efforts. Some of the relevant areas essential to effective implementation and improved student outcomes include:
- Collaborative decision making using a problem solving process
- Effective use of data, including data gathered through progress monitoring, in making instructional decisions
- Collaborative delivery of instruction and interventions
- Research-based instructional practices and interventions
- Opportunities for guided practice

The critical role of student services in effectively implementing a multi-tiered delivery system will require building new skills and applying old skills in new ways. There are a number of training formats that can be individualized to meet the varying skill levels and professional development needs of district staff:
- Webinars, video conferences & podcasts
- Online courses & forums
- Learning Communities Workshops
- Statewide & national conferences (RTI Innovations Conference)
- Annotated bibliography

(Continued pg. 3.)
Building Capacity: Professional Development & Problem Solving/RtI (continued)


Some national sites that provide additional resources appropriate for facilitating professional development include the [RTI Action Network](http://www.rtinetwork.org/), National Center on Response to Intervention, National Association of State Directors of Special Education, National Research Center on Learning Disabilities, and [Center on Instruction](http://www.centeroninstruction.org/). The [Iris Center](http://www.iriscenter.org/) and [The RTI Corner](http://www.rticorner.org/). The November 2006 issue of Focus on Results provides professional development recommendations for RtI implementation and addresses delivery models and the differential in-service professional development content applicable to policy makers, administrators, instructional and related services staff.

Changes to FCAT Concordant Scores for High School Graduation

The Florida Department of Education updated a concordance study to help ensure that ACT/SAT scores continue to serve as equivalent measures of the current level of performance expected on the Grade 10 FCAT.

Upon review, the Department found that the most precise alignment to the Grade 10 FCAT did require a change from concordant scores that were in effect prior to November 30, 2009. In the case of the SAT, the changes resulted from the revised content of the SAT and from a more recent and much larger sample of students. With regard to the ACT, where no content changes have been made, the changes appear to result from the more recent and larger sample of students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>New FCAT Concordant Scores for 2011 Graduates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Concordant Score Requirements Beginning November 30, 2009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>READING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FCAT-DSS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FCAT-SSS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The new FCAT Concordant Scores are in effect beginning with students scheduled to graduate in 2011 (prior to the fall semester). Most of these students are currently enrolled in grade 11 and have sufficient time to participate in SAT or ACT testing, if needed. The Department provides a resource, “FCAT Graduation Requirements,” to assist school districts to provide information and guidance to students who have yet to meet the graduation testing requirement. This document is available at [http://fcat.fldoe.org/pdf/fcatpass.pdf](http://fcat.fldoe.org/pdf/fcatpass.pdf).

All students who have not passed one or more sections of the Grade 10 FCAT may participate in every retake opportunity until a passing score is achieved. There is no statutory limit on the number of times a student can return to retake the FCAT. To be eligible to use a concordant score for high school graduation, Florida Statute still requires students to have taken and failed to pass the Grade 10 FCAT at least three times.

Major Area of Interest (MAI) Graduation Requirement

In 2006, legislation created new graduation requirements for students entering their first year of high school beginning in 2007-2008 [Section 1003.428, Florida Statutes, General requirements for high school graduation; revised]. Section 1003.428 (2)(b)1, Florida Statutes, requires students to earn 24 credits to include:

four credits in a Major Area of Interest, such as sequential courses in a career and technical program, fine and performing arts, or academic content area, selected by the student as part of the education plan required by s. 1003.4156. Students may revise Major Areas of Interest each year as part of annual course registration processes and should update their education plan to reflect such revisions.

Students who pursue this graduation option, including students who transfer to a Florida public school prior to grade 11, must earn four credits in one or more MAIs in order to satisfy graduation requirements for the 2010-2011 school year. Students are not required to complete four credits in the same MAI. However, those students who complete four credits in the same MAI may earn a standard diploma designation reflecting an MAI as specified in Section 1003.4285(1), Florida Statutes.


Upcoming Events

Talented 20 Program—Submission of data to identify the students of the class of 2010 who rank in the top 20 percent of their graduating class and may be eligible for the Talented 20 Program begins February 4 through March 8, 2010.

National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) National Convention, Hyatt Regency, Chicago, IL
March 1-6, 2010

Medicaid & Schools -- A Dynamic Partnership--The University of South Florida, Student Support Services, in conjunction with the Agency for Health Care Administration will sponsor a statewide meeting May 5-7, 2010, at the Downtown Tampa Embassy Suites. This meeting is designed for school district personnel who are actively involved or interested in implementing/administering the Medicaid program in schools including the Medicaid Certified School Match Program (MCSMP) and School District Administrative Claiming (SDAC). More information will be announced.