



What's Cookin'

in Exceptional Student Education and
Student Services in Volusia County Schools

November 2011
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What's on the Menu?

Message from the Director

It was bittersweet to wish Dr. Chris Colwell goodbye as he ended his last day with Volusia County Schools and prepared for new challenges at Stetson University. Bittersweet because he was such an advocate for VCS and for exceptional students, both disabled and gifted. Bittersweet because he will continue to be involved in education in our community.

However, exceptional students have gained an advocate in our newly appointed Deputy Superintendent of Instruction! Bambi Lockman comes to us from Tallahassee after serving as the Chief of the Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services since 2004. Prior to that, she was the Director of ESE and Student Services in Santa Rosa County where she "worked through" the teaching and administrative ranks. Her passion for serving exceptional students is recognized nationally—she is the President of the National Association of State Directors of Special Education.

I have attended various state meetings where she has been the lead and presented, participated in conference calls involving multiple topics with her, and received weekly updates from her. I am impressed with her knowledge of all topics regarding "every-ed" and I know that she is a perfect fit for the role she is assuming.

Please rest assured exceptional student education and student services will be the beneficiary of a passionate, talented, and knowledgeable leader.



Comfort Food

School Psychologist Update

The School Psychologists have been working diligently to train their schools on the electronic PST system (e-PST). At this writing, almost all of our district schools have been trained on this system. In the near future, schools will be instructed to solely use the electronic system when proceeding through the Problem Solving Team process. A special thanks to Joanus Finkelstein-Harper and to programmer Bev Labrie for their assistance as we've moved toward full implementation of this system!

In the spirit of collaboration and problem-solving, the School Psychologists have been working with our Transportation Department to proactively address bus behavior issues. Recently, many of our School Psychologists met at our 6 transportation terminals to help drivers with bus discipline strategies. These meetings will continue throughout this school year and beyond as we are committed to supporting our fellow Team Volusia members in their efforts to provide safe and orderly transportation services.

The School Psychologists are greatly appreciative of the work of Melissa Bisesi and Gail Waldon in their recent development/ updating of on-going progress monitoring (OPM) tools and decision rules. These decision rules will provide the foundation of data-based discussions that the School Psychologists have with teachers who are intervening with struggling readers. As importantly, these tools are critical to our success as we move forward as a district in developing a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) framework. More information about MTSS is forthcoming.

School Psychology Week has been designated as November 14-18 this year and will be recognized via a resolution at the November 8th School Board meeting. Please take a moment to thank your School Psychologists for all that they do to support the academic and behavioral success of our students. For excellent resources on many topics relevant to educators and parents, visit our website of the National Association of School Psychologists at www.nasponline.org.

Home Cookin'

ESE Parent Survey

The Florida Department of Education has released the data for the 2010-2011 ESE Parent Survey. This annual survey provides the state and districts with information regarding schools' efforts to facilitate parents' involvement in their children's education.

69% of Volusia County Schools' Preschool surveys met the state standard for facilitating parental involvement, exceeding the state target of 52%. For K-12, 64.9% of surveys met the state standard for facilitating parental involvement, exceeding the state target of 42%.

Survey results are reported to the United States Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, as part of Florida's Annual Performance Report and are posted on the Florida Department of Education website at www.fldoe.org/ese.

Breakfast of Champions

Do you like to visualize your ideas?

Then consider checking out **POPPLET!**

- Explore Ideas
- Organize Thoughts
- Collect Information
- Share
- Present Work



This web 2.0 app is available online for your computer, or as an iPad app. Create, work together and share your ideas with great visuals and creativity. If you have used Inspiration or Kidspiration in the past and love the programs, then this free (beta) program is definitely worth investigating. Tell your students about it, so they can use it online anywhere, at home or on their own mobile technology.



Cuttin' the Mustard

Spotlight on Spruce Creek High's Autism Awareness Club

Both disabled and non-disabled students at Spruce Creek High School participate as members or serve as officers in the Autism Awareness Club. The club sponsors include teachers Bethany McClelland and Michelle Undercoffler, as well as Phil Miller, a speech clinician.

The Autism Awareness Club meets regularly during lunch and participates in a variety of activities both at school and off-campus. The lunch meetings provide a unique opportunity for students with autism to develop social skills with their disabled and non-disabled peers in a safe, supervised setting. When students are not participating in a planned activity, they are chatting and eating lunch, or playing ping pong, board games, or X-box.

According to Zach Hall, a student in Mrs. McClelland's modified VE class and the club's co-treasurer, "The Autism Club is AWESOME and COOL and GOOD and GREAT! I love having a place to go at lunch, it makes me feel included." Some of his co-treasurer duties include counting the funds and submitting records to the school bookkeeper. He also planned the menu for a special club lunch and shopped for some of the items including chips, drinks, and cookies.

The group recently earned \$600 through a lollipop fundraiser. The students wrote messages and quotes about autism and attached them to the lollipops before distributing them to customers outside Wal-mart in exchange for donations.

The students also participated in Homecoming Week activities. The club formed a team and competed in the school's Field Night which included a tug-of-war, "Dizzy Dash," a 5-legged-race, and others contests organized by the student government association. The highlight of the week for some club members may have been attending a Homecoming Dance for the first time.

Future club activities are planned to include tie-dying T-shirts and fundraising for a local walk-a-thon. The students have designed the logos that will appear on the front and back of the club T-shirts, and during a meeting, they will tie-dye shirts to both wear and sell as fundraisers. On November 19, at Port Orange City Center, club members will walk together for the Volusia County Walk Now for Autism Speaks.

Mrs. McClelland enjoys sponsoring the club with her colleagues. "I am excited to be a part of a club that is so meaningful to such a variety of students. My love for people touched by autism started when I was given the opportunity to interact with students when I was in school. It is wonderful to watch the amazing impact the club has on so many different people!"



Field Night



Lunch Meeting

Knead Some Answers?

Speech-Language Pathology 'Best Job for Working Parents' by Money Magazine

The career of Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP) was recently chosen number 1 by Money Magazine as the "Best Job in America for Working Parents" and the 14th "Best Job for Saving the World". Speech-Language Pathologists diagnose and treat communication disorders for people of all ages, from babies to the elderly, but about half of all SLPs work in the schools. For students struggling academically because of a language impairment, SLPs may focus on skills and strategies to help those students become successful in their classroom. Communication is a basic human need and helping people unlock that ability can be extremely rewarding. Hear from some of our Volusia County Schools SLPs in their own words:

Carolyn Renfro, SLP at Atlantic High and New Smyrna Beach: "The best part is working with the non-verbal students and watching them reach a point where they can communicate". Carolyn has been a public school SLP for 16 years.

Christina Mechtel, SLP at Read-Pattillo and Coronado: "I enjoy helping others communicate appropriately. I feel like I make a difference in children's lives." Christina just finished her Master's degree and is working on national certification by the American Speech-Language Hearing Association (ASHA).

KC VanGilder, SLP at McInnis: "I love that children make progress and then can be successful in their classroom without my services. I love to see that I can start with a student that can only say a "b" sound correctly and then he actually starts talking!" KC came to Volusia County Schools from West Virginia in 2006 and says the last 6 years working in Volusia County have been the best of her professional career.

Sallie Miranda, SLP at Woodward: "When I see how their communication excels from pre-k, through kindergarten, 1st, 2nd, etc and then they are successful in their classroom, it is awesome!" Sallie has been an SLP for 15 years.

More universities are offering distance learning and "bridge" programs for people who have a bachelor's degree in an educational field to enable more people to access graduate studies in Communication Disorders. Speech-Language Pathology is recognized by the state as a critical shortage area and qualifies for state financial aid programs. For more information about a rewarding career as a Speech-Language Pathologist in Volusia County Schools, contact Pat Kicklighter, extension 20478 or Cynthia Sears, extension 53721.

Recipe for Success

Compliance Update

Now that the next round of IEP season is upon us, here are some gentle reminders...

TRANSPORTATION: TRANSPORTATION is now selected **only** for students who live within the 2 mile walk zone and have a documented need for transportation services.

The documentation is written in the Cover Page Special Factors Additional Information Comments section. *If this is the **first interim IEP since last year** and the student has **TRANSPORTATION** listed as a Related Service when you open the Support Services page, **delete it**.

Please refer to pages 100, 104 and 105 in the IEP Handbook for further essential Transportation information.

PLEPS: Are you writing Present Levels of Performance? Make sure to use the **Present Levels Considerations Guides** each time to ensure essential data is included in the student's IEP. The guides are part of the IEP Handbook (p. 143-179).

COVER PAGE SIGNATURES: The following attendees need to sign the Cover Page and write their credentials next to their signature when present at an IEP meeting: OT, PT, SLP, School Psychologist, Social Worker, Nursing, Behavior Specialist

LOCKING IEP'S: Lock your IEP's after the participating attendees sign the Cover Page.

An IEP cannot be changed after the committee signs the document.

SERVICE TRACKING: The VCS Service Tracking program is up and running. Service providers need to have the current IEP locked so they can enter their Medicaid session data. (Another reason to lock the IEP after the attendees sign the document)

INTERIM IEPs:

Clicking Interim IEP does NOT unlock an IEP!

- It creates an **IEP** that needs to be addressed.
- This is a legal document created and reviewed by the required IEP committee members.
- All required IEP committee members must be in attendance.
- All IEP components/pages must be reviewed by the IEP committee.
- All signature lines should be completed if not signed by attending member. (i.e. "did not attend", "attended, left prior to the end of the meeting", "excused").

Tasty Treats

Disability History and Awareness Weeks

Congratulations to Aria Haire, Forest Lake Elementary and Jennifer Hughes, River Springs Middle! They are the winners of this year's DHAW contest. Each submitted an outstanding plan outlining activities that took place on their school campuses during the first 2 weeks of October...in celebration of Disability History and Awareness Weeks, October 3-14! Each teacher was awarded a \$50.00 gift card purchased with monies donated by our local *Council for Exceptional Children* (CEC) chapter 563! Again, congratulations and thank you for all of your hard work!



Linda Davidson and Shari Hill, FDLRS, delivered the prizes to the winners!

Bringin' Home the Bacon

Elementary Update

READING : Support Facilitation teachers have been trained in new programs this year! We are excited to have: **REWARDS** and **MAKING CONNECTIONS** as additional interventions for identified students. Early Interventions in Reading pilot schools continue to expand the Early Interventions in Reading program for their Separate Class students.

MATH: Beginning in 2012-2013 **all** fifth grade students will be taking the Math portion of the FCAT on the computer. This year fourth grade students have the option of using the computer for math responses in order to prepare them for next year. Teachers of fourth grade students with disabilities are encouraged to have their students participate in this activity.

SCIENCE: Elementary VE teachers are now able to access the Fusion Science online. Please contact your Program Specialist with any questions or concerns.

Teachers, remember to access information regarding curriculum through the Content Area contact at your school. As always please email your ESE Program Specialist with questions or concerns.

Boiling Over

SCERTS© Update

For the second year, Volusia County has selected four schools to participate in a national study on the implementation of the SCERTS© Model. SCERTS© is a curricular-based assessment and intervention for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) (Prizant, Wetherby, Rubin, Laurent, & Rydell, 2006). The curriculum targets individualized intervention goals and objectives for students in the domains of social communication (SC) and emotional regulation (ER). In addition, goals and objectives in the domain of transactional supports (TS) are targeted for the teaching staff and peers to support learning in the classroom. School-based teams in the experimental condition will attend an initial 3-day training and participate in weekly mentoring and monthly consultations throughout the school year. Distance learning will be utilized through webcams and videoconferencing for consultation. The intervention will consist of a 9-month (school-year) test of the curriculum.

Of the four schools participating, Edgewater Public and Sugar Mill Elementary are in the SCERTS© condition and staff were trained in early October. Champion Elementary and DeBary Elementary are participating as the control group sites. The district benefits from the training and continued coaching support from national experts, as well as the financial support provided by the grant. District ESE staff benefit from being 'coached as coaches' and the opportunity to work closely with teachers and families of children on the Autism Spectrum in an exciting state-of-the-art research study that should benefit all students with ASD.

It's Sizzlin' Hot

Transition Update

With a fresh start to the new school year well underway, let's remember to include transition assessment data on all of our students in the transition planning process and IEP development (transition service areas, measurable post-secondary goals, agency involvement).

We recommend CHOICES (fichoices.org) as a transition assessment tool. Once students have registered on CHOICES they can take assessments, research careers, practice interview skills, create/update resumes, cover letters, thank you letters and portfolios. If you need assistance with utilizing CHOICES, please contact Cathy Galotti, east side schools and Fred Zollinger, west side schools.

Remember to include data obtained from transition assessments in the Present Levels of Educational Performance (PLEP). There is a template available in the drop downs for PLEPs that reads: *Based on the following current transition assessment(s) data: _____, the student shows aptitude in the following areas: _____*. Select this template and include data from your assessments.

Mark your calendars for this year's Transition Fair which will be held on Thursday, March 8, 2012 at Atlantic High School. The Transition Fair is held from 3:30 to 6:00. Attending the Transition Fair will be 25 – 30 agencies to talk to teachers, administrators, students and families about the services they have to offer. The Transition Fair offers a great opportunity for face-to-face meeting of agency contacts.

Finger Lickin' Good

Checking for Student Understanding

Throughout the day teachers need to continuously assess that students are learning. Below are examples of ways to check student understanding:

- Question Strips/Index Cards: At critical points in a lesson, ask students to paraphrase the main concept. Scan the responses and adjust the lesson if necessary.
- Traffic Light: Students use red, yellow and green cards to visually cue teachers if they are having difficulty with an assignment.
- Whiteboards: Students respond to a question or prompt on a whiteboard and display boards simultaneously for you to see.
- Exit Ticket: Before leaving class, students write one thing they learned and one question they have about the lesson. This can be used to adjust the next day's lesson.

Source: Implementing the Framework for Teaching in Enhancing Professional Practice; Danielson, 2009.

Spice It Up

School Social Worker Update

Volusia county ranks 17th of the 100,000 military children in Florida (approximately 1,154 children). The majority of Volusia county military population consists of Army and Navy active duty, Army National Guard, and Army Reserve. Guard and Reserve families have different needs than traditional military families, as they are geographically dispersed from other military families/services.

Deployment can be stressful and challenging for children and families, particularly with ambiguity and uncertainty, role strain, financial stress, anxiety about loved one's safety, problems in communication, and loss of closeness/intimacy. Changes start **before** the family member departs and children may not process this right away. Reintegration presents its own challenges also, as there are adjustment issues for the military member and family members, which may be further complicated by emotional problems or physical injury. Problems of reintegration can continue for very long periods of time. Multiple deployments increase stress on families. Strategies that help military families through the deployment/reintegration process include communication pre, during, and after employment; social support from family friends; maintaining normal routines; reducing/eliminating media violence exposure; and allowing children to "warm up" and adjust to the returning parent. Refer to "Helping Children Cope with the Challenges of War and Terrorism" at www.7-dippity.com/other/op_hcc.html.

The Interstate Compact provides uniform policy between participating states to resolve challenges military children face moving between school systems, including minimizing school disruption for military children during transition and deployment. The Articles of the Compact address enrollment (educational records, immunizations, and kindergarten and first grade entrance age), placement and attendance (course and educational program support, special education services, placement flexibility, and absences related to deployment activities), eligibility (enrollment and extracurricular participation), and graduation. For more information or assistance, refer to the website www.Fldoe.org/military or contact the School Liaison Officer for North Florida at (904) 778-2236 or by email at dawn.m.mills@navy.mil.

Eligibility under the Compact includes children of active duty members of the uniformed services, National Guard and Reserve on active duty orders, and members or veterans who are medically discharged or retired for one year. **If your family meets eligibility, please contact your school's registrar to update school records**, in order to assist in appropriate identification of students and provide supports to your family.

Easy as Pie

Bullying Update

Bullying is not just for Kids! Bullying prevention is an international focus and one where with community participation and commitment can create a safe, civil and respectful existence for both adults and children. School communities often struggle to create this bully-free environment because of time constraints, non-commitment, resistance or denial of the issue. Some steps for organizing your school community in the fight against bullying and harassment **at every level** may be to:

- Work together as a staff to create a code of conduct for staff and students. Which methods of discipline, building motivation, and feedback are acceptable? Which cross the line into bullying? When staff discuss and agree on these standards, adult and child bullies are less likely to believe that their practices are supported by their peers.

- Make sure administrators know about incidents and patterns of adult or child bullying. As with sexual harassment, there should be clear definitions of unacceptable behaviors, ways to report, and protection from reprisals for good faith reporting. A code of silence will not serve our students any better than the code of silence that used to surround sexual, racial, gender or disability harassment. It may be important for staff to report teacher-teacher, adult-adult or student-student bullying as a group to reduce vulnerability to reprisals by ALL who bully.

- Work out ways all staff can let each other know when they see anyone have a momentary lapse into angry or otherwise hurtful behavior toward students. Sometimes these ways will be based on a code phrase or other signal.

- Survey staff and students periodically about school climate. Include questions about whether staff are treating students respectfully and students are treating staff respectfully. Look also for bullying from administrator to staff (and vice versa), school board and community toward staff (and vice versa), and staff toward each other.

Retrieved from *Stop Bullying Now* at <http://www.stopbullyingnow.com/bullying%20by%20teachers.htm>

Stirrin' the Pot

Hospital/Homebound Update

Hospital/Homebound (H/H) has made some wonderful changes over the last two years. The educational services are provided in two formats, one-on-one instruction and on-line virtual education partnered with k12/Aventa. Last year, H/H served approximately 421 Volusia County students. This year, the program has served 161 students and counting. Of these students 75 are currently using the on-line virtual education program.

H/H is in their 2nd year of implementing the on-line virtual education program. The program offers regular, honors and advanced placement curriculum as well as a variety of electives. This is a great experience for students who have never taken a virtual class especially since the legislation has passed a rule that all students entering 9th grade this SY 11-12 will be required to take an on-line virtual education class before they graduate. Since students circulate through the H/H program, the curriculum is individualized to meet their needs. Students can access their classes 24/7 in a virtual environment. The on-line virtual program can meet the needs of students who learn more productively on their own time and in their own space.

Another change this year is that upon entry to the H/H program the student and parent are provided an orientation. If the student is using the on-line virtual education program, the orientation is provided by one of the H/H staff members. At the orientation the student is registered and provided an overview of the program. The expectations and requirements to be successful on the on-line virtual education program are reviewed as well. This also offers the student and parent an opportunity to ask questions before they get started. Students who receive one-to-one instruction will be provided orientation by that teacher. We are very excited with the changes in the program and are looking forward to another productive year in the Hospital/Homebound program.

Kick It Up a Notch

OPM Update

Since our last *What's Cookin'* issue, we received some new directives from the state regarding FAIR data. This information has caused us to re-create our Decision Rules that teachers will be using. We have also updated our OPM Reference packet, updated resources on our website, and we are working to complete the new monitoring forms for high frequency words. New updates will require new professional development, so please be sure to see Melissa Bisesi or Gail Waldon for the most up to date information.



FDLRS has moved to a new location!

Hurst Service Center
1340 Wright Street, Holly Hill
386-258-4684

Some Like It Hot

Gifted Update

Perhaps you are wondering who that "new" teacher is at your high school. She seems friendly and approachable, but you are not sure who she is. She might be the new high school gifted consultation teacher assigned to the school. Beginning this fall, four gifted-experienced teachers were chosen to serve our high schools. They are: Beverly Bobiak, serving Deltona High and University High; Cindy Garber, serving New Smyrna Beach High and Spruce Creek High; Brisca Irvin, serving DeLand High and Pine Ridge High; Mary Jackson, serving Atlantic, Mainland and Seabreeze. These teachers will act as a liaison between students, classroom teachers and parents in supporting the gifted learners at these schools. Interestingly, national research indicates that gifted learners are 3% of the population and 20% of the drop-out rate. Our high school gifted consultation teachers are at our schools to assure that Volusia's gifted students do not fall into those statistics.

Gifted students learn best when they see beyond the usual and make connections to extended learning opportunities of their own interests and/or strengths. Although programs like our International Baccalaureate programs, academies, dual enrollment and Advanced Placement classes are where you will find many gifted learners, even those settings do not always provide the approach that best suits these learners. The consultation teachers are there to support the classroom teacher and student in building a bridge to success. It is fair to say that the gifted program at high school is a drop-out prevention program.

So, if you see a new face at your high school, take a second look. You may have just met your new gifted consultation teacher.

Sweet Celebrations

Trauma Informed Care

Trauma Informed Care was a focus at the 2011 Health and Human Services Summit held on September 30, 2011 at the Ocean Center in Daytona Beach. More than 80 stakeholders from the community attended the two hour introductory training session. As a result of increasing demand, an additional two sessions are being planned for early December.

In addition to the events hosted by the Circuit 7 Workgroup, SEDNET has provided Trauma Informed Care Training for approximately 350 participants from local school systems and community stakeholders. SEDNET is excited to have provided this training for the St. Johns Adult and Juvenile Drug Courts on October 28, 2011.

The Main Course



The School District of Volusia County
Mr. Stan Schmidt, Chairman
Dr. Al Williams, Vice-Chairman
Ms. Judy Conte
Ms. Candice Lankford
Mrs. Diane Smith



Dr. Margaret A. Smith, Superintendent
Ms. Bambi Lockman, Deputy Superintendent, Instructional Services
Dr. Barbara Bush, Director, Exceptional Student Education and Student Services