

# Exceptional Student Education (ESE) Services – Individual Education Plan Process

Internal Audit Report

June 30, 2021



**Orange County  
Public Schools**

Internal Audit

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Why We Did This Audit

This audit was requested by the School Board. Our objectives were to analyze and evaluate current practices regarding the district’s Exceptional Student Education (ESE) Individual Education Plan (IEP) process and determine opportunities for improvement.

### Observations and Conclusion

Audit Results at a Glance			
	Risk/Impact Rating		
Results and Observations	Significant	Moderate	Minor
IA - Internal Audit or M - Management	IA - 1	-	-
D - Deficiency or O - Opportunity	D - 1	-	-

Our review of the ESE IEP process revealed the following:

- The ESE Policy and Procedures (ESE P&P) department has an effective process to monitor and track compliance for all aspects of the IEP for ESE students and Education Plan (EP) for gifted students.
- Interviews with 40 school staffing specialists revealed they are provided training and written guidance and are aware of the compliance policies and IEP procedures.
- Survey responses received from 149 district and school staffing specialists indicate they are overwhelmed with the duties required to complete their assignments and that the processes are tedious, time-consuming and redundant.

- OCPS has significantly more complaints filed against it with the Florida Department Education (FLDOE) than similar size districts and most complaints relate to IEPs.

Our analysis identified several contributing factors to the high complaint rate, namely:

- Unclear local complaint resolution process
- High turnover of school staffing specialists
- Redundant paperwork
- Extra duties that consume time

### Results and Recommendations

We recommend:

- Intense focus on dispute resolution and aggressive promotion and communication of this function
- Streamlined reporting to eliminate redundant paperwork and automate when possible
- Reduce or eliminate assigning other duties to school staffing specialists
- Increase the number of district staffing specialists or restructure their duties with a goal of providing them more time to support school staffing specialists
- Evaluate the detailed survey responses for additional opportunities for improvement

This report has been discussed with management and they have prepared their response which follows.

**DEFINITIONS:**

**Risk / Impact Ratings**

Minor	Low risk with a financial impact of less than one percent and/or an isolated occurrence limited to local processes (low impact and low likelihood)
Moderate	Slight to moderate risk with a financial impact between one and five percent and/or a noticeable issue that may extend beyond local processes (low impact and high likelihood or high impact and low likelihood)
Significant	High risk with a financial impact greater than five percent and/or a significant issue that occurs in multiple processes and/ or noncompliance with Florida Statutes and School Board Policies (high impact and high likelihood)

*We rate risk/ impact as:*

- *Minor*
- *Moderate*
- *Significant*

**Observations Categories**

Opportunity	A process that falls short of best practices or does not result in optimal productivity or efficient use of resources
Deficiency	A shortcoming in controls or processes that reduces the likelihood of achieving goals related to operations, reporting and compliance

*We categorize our observations as opportunities or deficiencies.*

**Criteria for Observations Sourced to Management**

- Internal audit was informed of the issue prior to starting detailed testing
- Management identified, evaluated, and communicated the issue to appropriate levels of the district
- Management has begun corrective action with clear, actionable plans and targeted completion dates

None of the observations resulting from this audit were sourced to management.

**BACKGROUND:**

The Exceptional Student Education (ESE) department is a division of Teaching and Learning dedicated to students with special needs. ESE students registered with Orange County Public Schools represented about 19% of the district’s 206,000 students in fiscal year FY2020-21.

In Florida, children with disabilities who need specially designed instruction and related services are called exceptional students. The special help they are given at school is called exceptional student education. The purpose of ESE is to help each child with a disability progress in school and prepare for life after school. ESE services include specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of the child. ESE services may also include technology devices, therapy, special transportation, or other supports.

A team of people, including the student’s parents, makes decisions about the student’s needs and ESE services. The decisions reached are documented in the student’s Individual Education Plan (IEP) or the student’s Education Plan for gifted students (EP). The process of evaluating student needs and making decisions about ESE services is based on the requirements of the Federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and regulated by the State of Florida, Department of Education. Table 1 displays the characteristics of the ESE population during the 2020-2021 school year. Please see Appendix IV for a flowchart of the district’s IEP process.

**Table 1: ESE Student Population – FY 2020-2021**

<b>ESE Students</b>	<b>OCPS Schools</b>	<b>Charter Schools</b>	<b>Total</b>
Students with Disabilities	20,163	5,894	26,057
Gifted Students	11,619	1,648	13,267
<b>Total ESE Students</b>	<b>31,782</b>	<b>7,542</b>	39,324

Source: ESE School Board Work Session – January, 2021

The School Board requested this audit as a result of concerns from the community regarding the ESE IEP process coupled with the number of complaints filed with the State of Florida over the past several years.

The State of Florida provides detailed instructions in the ESE/FEFP (Florida Education Finance Program) Matrix of Services Handbook on how the IEP process should be implemented. The Florida Department

*ESE serves students with special needs.*

*Approximately 19% of district students were ESE in the 2020-2021 school year.*

*A team makes decisions about student needs and ESE services which are documented in the student’s Individual Education Plan (IEP).*

of Education (FLDOE), Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services (BEES), developed the handbook to provide districts, schools, and teachers with information about the Matrix of Services required for students with exceptionalities. The district developed its own Exceptional Student Education Policies and Procedures, which were approved by the FLDOE, to implement state and federal requirements.

If a parent has concerns with the district regarding their student's exceptional education, they should have several options available to them, including resolution at the school level or at the district level or by seeking administrative remedies (mediation, state complaint, and due process hearings).

### **OBJECTIVES, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY:**

#### **Objectives**

Our objectives were to analyze and evaluate current practices regarding the district's Exceptional Student Education (ESE) Individual Education Plan (IEP) process and determine opportunities for improvement.

#### **Scope**

The scope of the audit included transactions and activities from July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2021.

#### **Methodology**

Our audit methodology included:

- Reviewing information on the ESE Department's website;
- Reviewing the Orange ESE Monitoring and Assistance report from FLDOE
- Reviewing information on the Florida DOE website;
- Reviewing information on the District IEP Policies and Procedures
- Conducting detailed school staffing interviews with 40 selected schools in order to determine whether the district and schools:
  - have established consistent processes and procedures and followed them,
  - complied with applicable FLDOE's Matrix of Services for the IEP process,
  - prepared monitoring and compliance reports, and

*The district's ESE Policies and Procedures are approved by the FLDOE.*

*We evaluated activities from July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2021.*

*We interviewed school staffing specialists at 40 schools.*

- maintained supporting documentation
- Surveying all district staffing specialists and school staffing specialists and analyzing the survey results
- Interviewing ESE Management
- Examining and analyzing school staffing specialist turnover rates
- Reviewing the ESE Transition Department's grade 9-12 student enrollment acceptance process and Florida Diagnostic & Learning Resources System/Florida Inclusion Network (FDLRS/FIN) Child Find reporting, both of which identify pre-school children with special needs and refer them to the appropriate agency within Orange County
- Reviewing the current guidance and procedures for staff and for parents, documenting the sequence of steps around the IEP process, analyzing the complaint statistics and trends of these complaints from the FDOE, and reviewing and documenting the business process surrounding the IEP support team.

We conducted this audit in accordance with the *International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing* of the Institute of Internal Auditors and included such procedures as deemed necessary to provide reasonable assurance regarding the audit objective. Internal Auditing is an independent, objective assurance and consulting activity designed to add value and improve an organization's operations. It helps an organization accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control, and governance processes.

We are required to note any material deficiencies in accordance with Florida Statutes, School Board Policy and sound business practices. No material deficiencies were noted in this audit. We also offer suggestions to improve controls or operational efficiency and effectiveness.

**COMMENDATION:**

The stated mission of the ESE Policy and Procedures (ESE P&P) department is "to ensure that all entities within OCPS comply with local policies, and state and federal law for students with disabilities (SWD). ESE P&P assists schools in the areas of compliance, eligibility procedures, IEP development and review, placement information, FTE concerns and parent participation."

*We surveyed all district and school staffing specialists.*

*We conducted this audit in accordance with the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing.*

*We noted no material deficiencies.*

The results of our audit indicate that ESE P&P department's use of the Exceptional Education Procedures Monitoring Report<sup>1</sup> is effective. This monitoring report captures compliance indicators as prescribed by the FLDOE and also identifies findings and potential findings if items noted on the report are not addressed. This report is sent to the principal and staffing specialist of each school on a monthly basis and serves as a reminder of areas that require attention. We commend the ESE P&P department on this report as it provides schools with concise, timely information regarding areas of compliance with the FLDOE ESE Matrix of Services.

**RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**Overall Conclusion**

Our overall conclusion is that the district ESE Policy and Procedures (ESE P&P) department has established effective monitoring and compliance procedures over the IEP Process. District staffing specialists provide training and assistance to school staffing specialists on how to remain compliant with requirements of the IEP process for ESE and EP students. School staffing specialists demonstrated a good understanding of those procedures during our interviews.

However, the district has experienced a significant number of complaints around its ESE program which we have analyzed and noted contributing factors that should be addressed by management. These are included in the next section of this report.

**FLDOE Complaints *(Significant Impact)***

**Complaint Data**

In FY2019-2020 and FY2020-2021, the district's ESE program experienced significantly more complaints filed with FLDOE than similar sized districts in the State of Florida.

*The Exceptional Education Procedures Monitoring Report is an effective tool.*

*ESE P&P monitoring procedures are effective.*

*School staffing specialists demonstrated a good understanding of procedures.*

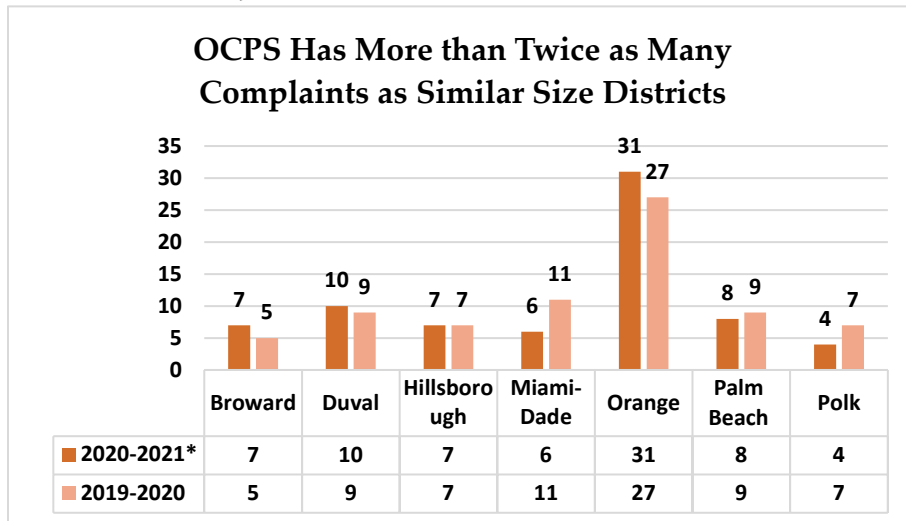
*OCPS has experienced significantly more complaints than similar size school districts over the past two years.*

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<sup>1</sup> See example in Appendix I



Chart 1: State Complaints: Size A-Like Districts

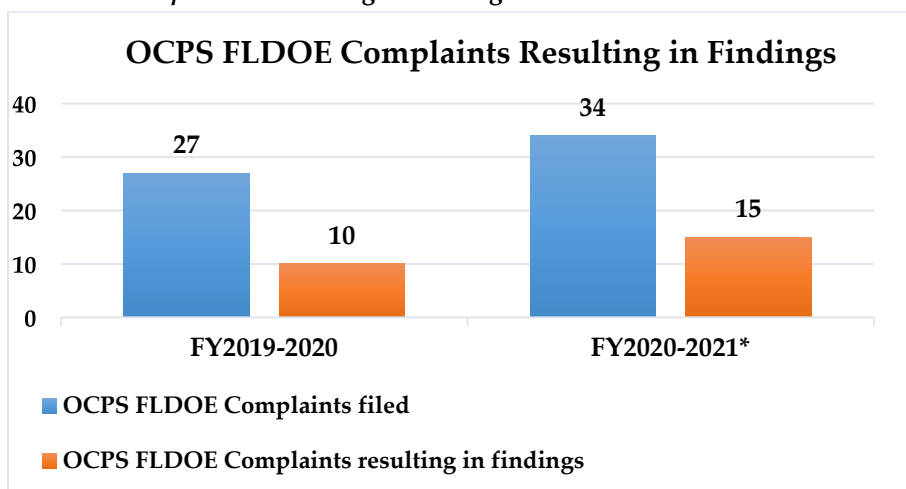


Source: FLDOE

\*As of 4/30/2021

Less than half of complaints resulted in findings of non-compliance. The district ESE office resolved 18% of the complaints in 2019-2020 and 23% of the complaints in 2020-2021 before they went through the state investigation process. According to FLDOE, and as depicted in the chart below, 10 of the 27 (37%) complaints filed in FY 2019-2020 and 15 of the 34 (44%) complaints filed in FY 2020-2021 resulted in findings by the FLDOE.

Chart 2: Complaints Resulting in Findings



Source: FLDOE and ESE Department

\* As of June 28, 2021

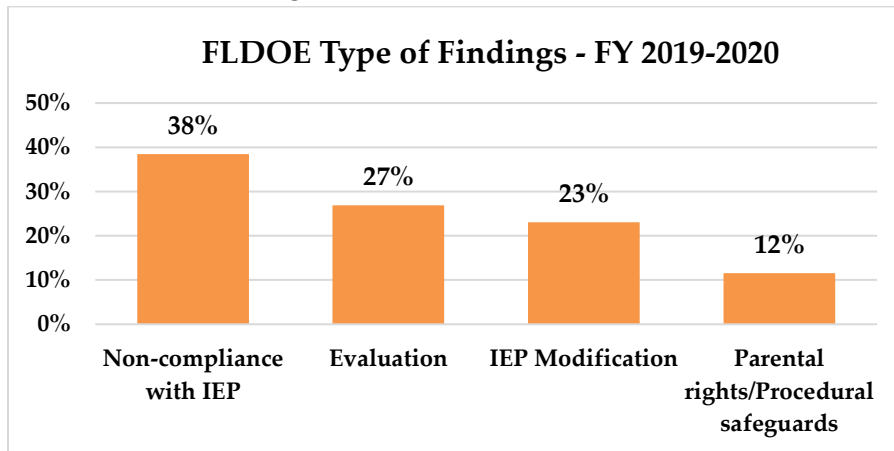
Most findings relate to the IEP process as noted in the following charts.

*OCPS had more than twice as many complaints as similar size districts over the past two years.*

*Less than half of complaints resulted in findings.*

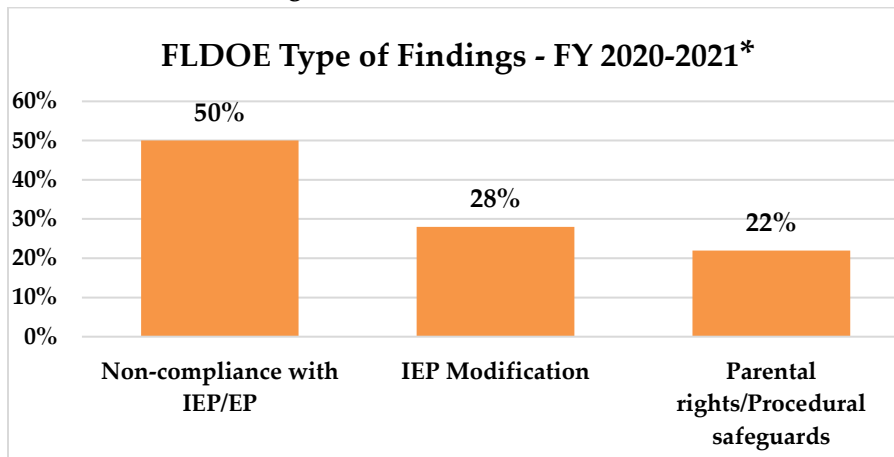
*Ten of 27 complaints filed in 2019-2020 resulted in findings while 15 of 34 complaints in 2020-2021 resulted in findings.*

Chart 3: FLDOE Findings FY 2019-2020



Source: Internal Audit analysis of FLDOE complaints

Chart 4: FLDOE Findings FY 2020-21



Source: Internal Audit analysis of FLDOE complaints

\*As of June 28, 2021

In FY2019-2020, 38% and FY2020-2021, 50% of the findings by the State were related to non-compliance with the IEP.

### Evaluation

Based on information we obtained from staffing specialist surveys, reports from the FLDOE, reports from ESE management, and reports from Human Resources, we have identified what we believe are contributing factors to the district's high complaint rate. We discuss each factor in the next section.

*Most complaints relate to the IEP process.*

*We identified contributing factors to the district's high complaint rate.*

Ineffective Local Complaint Resolution Process:

During the audit period, if a parent was not happy with the results of an IEP meeting, they could complete a local complaint form and return to the school staffing specialist. This process can create an uncomfortable situation for the parent because the form is given directly back to the school where the parent is filing a complaint.

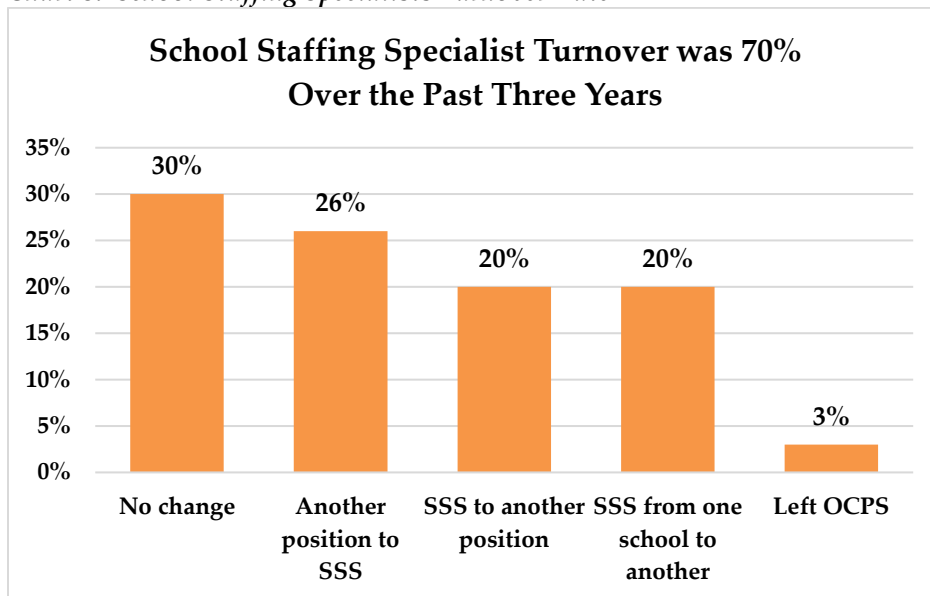
Additionally, guidance for parents on how to file a complaint with the district office was not readily available and what was available was unclear. The district’s website during this past year directed parents how to contact the state with complaints, but provided no clear direction on how a parent could address a complaint at the district level. As a result, some parents have been filing with the state before exploring resolution of their concerns at the district level simply because it is easier.

An easier to access and more proactive approach is necessary and management has acknowledged this.

Turnover of School Staffing Specialists (SSS):

The district experiences a high turnover of SSS. Between 2018 and 2020 70% of SSS changed jobs. This means they moved from instructional positions to SSS or back, from school to school, or were new hires or resigned from the district.

*Chart 5: School Staffing Specialists Turnover Rate*



Source: OCPS Human Resources Data and Internal Audit Analysis

*Parents were asked to submit complaint forms to the school where they had the complaint.*

*The website made it easier for parents to find information on how to file a complaint with the state than with the district.*

*Between 2018 and 2020 70% of SSS changed schools or positions.*

Thirteen percent (13%) of SSS responding to our survey report having less than one year of experience. (See Appendix III.) We compared SSS changes to FLDOE complaints in fiscal years 2019 and 2020 and noted that 41% of complaints filed with the FLDOE occurred in the year of a change in SSS.

*Thirteen percent of SSS responding to our survey had less than one year of experience.*

**Table 2: Analysis of Complaints vs. SSS Turnover**

<b>41% of Complaints Occurred in the Year of a Change in SSS</b>	
Complaints at schools with changes in SSS - FY19 & FY20	20
Total complaints filed with FDLOE in FY19 & FY20	49
Percentage of complaints filed that may be tied to SSS changes	41%

Source: ESE Complaint Data and HR Position Change Data

*Forty-one percent of complaints filed in the past two years occurred in the year of a change in SSS.*

**Redundant Documentation:**

A large percentage of the specialists’ survey responses reported redundant paperwork and suggest that a more streamlined and/or automated process would provide them with more time for their staffing specialist responsibilities. The risk of errors decreases when we reduce the number of times data is recorded.

*Redundant paperwork is inefficient and creates opportunities for errors.*

**Table 3: Analysis of Document Process**

<b>Redundant Data Entry</b>					
Content Required on Each Document	Documents Prepared for Eligibility Meeting				
	Conference/Meeting Notes	WSGA* (7-page document)	Consideration of Exclusionary Factors (5-page document)	Eligibility Document	Prior Written Notice
Notes from Eligibility Meeting	X	X			X
Assessment for Language Results	X	X			X
Assessment for Social History	X	X			X
Assessment for Psychological Evaluation	X	X			X
Consideration of Exclusionary Factors with determination supporting documentation		X	X		X
Eligibility Determination with signature of team	X	X		X	X

Source: School staffing specialists

\*Written Summary of Group Analysis

*Documentation redundancy exists throughout the process.*

Workload and Demands on SSS:

The work of a school staffing specialist involves volumes of paperwork, with accuracy and completeness necessary to ensure compliance. An overwhelming majority of school staffing specialists (91%) report that they are assigned tasks outside of their staffing specialist duties and this affects their ability to focus on and accurately complete the compliance paperwork required in the IEP process. (See Appendix III.) Examples of the types of duties school staffing specialists report being assigned include:

- ESOL Compliance responsibilities
- Lunch duty
- Proctoring exams
- Substituting in classrooms
- Covering for absent administrative staff
- Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) reporting

Many of them suggest that assistance with clerical tasks such as taking meeting minutes and scheduling meetings would be very helpful.

Workload and Demands on DSS:

District staffing specialists assist and support school staffing specialists throughout the district. Each DSS is assigned a minimum of seven schools that they must assist. Survey results revealed that they have difficulties with time management and insufficient time to adequately support school staffing specialists, especially new ones (due to the high SSS turnover discussed previously).

**Survey Procedure and Results**

We sent surveys to all 214 district and school staffing specialists and received 149 responses for a 70% response rate. We received responses from 131 school staffing specialists and 18 district staffing specialists. We asked 11 questions centered on their work environment and responsibilities. (See Appendix II for a list of the survey questions.)

In addition to information about how long staffing specialists have been in their positions, the survey asked about aspects of the job that are most enjoyable (helping families by a wide margin), difficult IEP meetings, and job challenges. District staffing specialists have significantly more experience in their positions than school staffing

*Ninety-one percent (91%) of SSS report being assigned tasks outside their staffing specialist duties.*

*Clerical support in scheduling meetings and taking minutes may help.*

*District staffing specialists support multiple schools.*

*Seventy percent (70%) of SSS and DSS responded to the survey.*

specialists (as might be expected). Eighty-three percent (83%) of DSS have been in their positions more than 10 years.

The results indicate frustration with the workload and other assigned duties for both types of staffing specialists. Ninety-one percent (91%) of SSS report being required to perform duties outside their staffing specialist responsibilities and 59% of DSS report the same. Many staffing specialists commented that they work many more hours than their duty day requires in order to complete their work and have been doing so for some time.

We provided redacted detailed survey responses to ESE management. An overview of selected survey responses can be seen in Appendix III.

### **Recommendations**

1. Provide an intensive focus on dispute resolution. Advertise and promote the contact information for this dedicated staff member through a variety of media (OCPS website, school website, social media, flyers, emails, hotline number, etc.) and at all parent training sessions and evaluation/IEP meetings.
2. Streamline reporting and compliance requirements by eliminating redundant paperwork and automating wherever possible.
3. Work with principals to eliminate (or at least reduce) assignment of other duties to school staffing specialists.
4. Hire additional district staffing specialists to reduce the workload or re-structure their duties by putting a team together that focuses on compliance paperwork and training on state requirements. The goal being to get DSS in the field more to support the SSS.
5. ESE management should evaluate survey responses for additional insight into opportunities to improve processes. The staffing specialists provided specific suggestions that could be of value in creating a positive and productive work environment and help reduce complaints.

We wish to thank the staff and management of the ESE Department, many school principals and staffing specialists, and the HR department for their cooperation and assistance in this audit.

*Many staffing specialists report working many more hours than their duty day to complete their work.*

### *Recommendations:*

- *Dispute resolution*
- *Streamline processes*
- *Reduce or eliminate extra duties*
- *Provide more time for DSS to assist SSS*
- *Look to survey results for further opportunities for improvement.*

# Appendix I

## Orange County Public Schools Exceptional Student Education Policy & Procedures Monitoring Report

School:  
School Staffing Specialist:

Date:  
Principal:  
District Staffing Specialist:

Compliance Rating/Level:

Compliance Indicators:	Findings:
<b>Indicator 11/60 Day Timeline *</b>	There is (are) ___ pending evaluation(s) and ___ past due evaluation(s).

**All exceptional education students must have a current evaluation (reevaluation), a current plan and a current Matrix. All data must be entered on Skyward. If left unresolved, they will impact funding for Survey 2, Survey 3 and Survey 5.**

Compliance Indicators:	Findings:
<b>Skyward/State Reporting *</b>	Date Reviewed: All data correctly entered on Skyward. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No All ESE State Reporting errors have been addressed. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>IEPs *</b>	There is (are) ___ expired IEP(s). There is (are) ___ IEP(s) projected to expire in the next 30 days.
<b>EPs *</b>	There is (are) ___ expired EP(s). There is (are) ___ EP(s) projected to expire in the next 30 days.
<b>Matrices *</b>	There is (are) ___ matrix errors.
<b>Developmentally Delayed and Reevaluations *</b>	There is (are) ___ overdue DD reevaluation(s). There is (are) ___ DD(s) projected to expire by in the next 30 days. There is (are) ___ overdue reevaluation(s). There is (are) ___ reevaluation(s) projected to expire by the end of the month.
<b>Quality IEP/TIEP Indicators Met</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
<b>IEP Progress Report Indicator Met</b>	Identify students using initials only. ____ ____ <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
<b>PEER</b>	Identify students using initials only. ____ ____ The appropriate documents are uploaded <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
<b>IEP Conference Notes Indicators Met</b>	Identify students using initials only. ____ ____ <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
<b>ESE Policy &amp; Procedures Trainings *</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A

<b>Discipline/OSS Review</b>	___ over 10 days* ___ 10 days (SSS notify administrator that the Out of School suspension limit has been reached).* ___ 8 - 9 days (Manifestation Determination, SSS alerts administration).* ___ 5 - 7 days (Review data to determine if a Behavior Intervention Plan is needed-and/or ensure interventions are implemented and documented). ___ 3 - 4 days (Continue to monitor and begin data collecting).
<b>ESE students (and students for which a consent for evaluation has been obtained) may not be suspended more than 10 days per school year.</b>	

**Orange County Public Schools  
 Exceptional Student Education Policy & Procedures  
 Monitoring Report**

School:  
 School Staffing Specialist:

Date:  
 Principal:  
 District Staffing Specialist:

Compliance Indicator:	Findings:			
<b>SSS Meeting Type Review Paper Work Reviewed and Processed</b>	<b>Scheduled</b>	<b>Reviewed</b>	<b>Processed</b>	
	___	___	___	Initial Eligibilities
	___	___	___	Amendments
	___	___	___	Reevaluations
	___	___	___	Annual Reviews
	___	___	___	Dismissals
	___	___	___	Transfers
	___	___	___	Consent for Initial Evaluations
	___	___	___	Other
	Approved for Processing: ___ within 3 weeks ___ Late (more than 3 weeks) Provide explanation. ___ Returned			



**Orange County Public Schools  
Exceptional Student Education Policy & Procedures  
Monitoring Report**

School:  
School Staffing Specialist:

Date:  
Principal:  
District Staffing Specialist:

Comments:

ESE Compliance Level / Rating for this report:

- Red: There are repeated patterns of non-compliance. The DSS has provided the SSS guidance on correcting the areas of non-compliance. The SSS has not corrected the areas or issues of non-compliance after being coached/informed on several (three) attempts.
  
- Yellow: There are areas of non-compliance that have not been addressed. The SSS has provided documentation to the DSS that some of the areas have been or are being addressed. The DSS has provided the SSS guidance on correcting the other areas of non-compliance. The SSS agreed to correct the areas or issues of non-compliance.
  
- Green: There are no areas of non-compliance.
  
- Yes  No This report was reviewed with the School Staffing Specialist/LEA Representative.

Date Reviewed:

District Staffing Specialist: \_\_\_\_\_

**Orange County Public Schools  
Exceptional Student Education Policy & Procedures  
Monitoring Report**

School: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
School Staffing Specialist: \_\_\_\_\_ Principal: \_\_\_\_\_  
District Staffing Specialist: \_\_\_\_\_

Compliance Procedures Defined:

**Indicator 11/60 Day Timeline**

- Consents for initial evaluations reviewed and correctly entered on SharePoint.
- Check the Completion status of evaluations.

**Skyward/State Reporting**

- Skyward data accurately reflects the ESE information for students enrolled in the school.
- Skyward is updated whenever changes are made per IEP meetings (within 3 school days).
- ESE State Reporting errors are monitored and corrected in Skyward daily.

**IEPs**

- Annual reviews must be completed on or before the annual review date.
- Transfer IEPs must be completed for students transferring to OCPS within 2 to 4 weeks

**EPs**

- EP reviews must be completed on or before the 3 year review date.
- Transfer EPs must be completed for students transferring to OCPS within 2 to 4 weeks.

**Matrices**

- Matrices must be completed annually and must match the current IEP.
- If services change as a result of IEP team decision, a new Matrix must be completed.
- Gifted EP Matrices must be less than three years old.

**Developmentally Delayed**

- All DD students must be reevaluated and dismissed from DD prior to their 6<sup>th</sup> birthday.
- At this dismissal staffing, a student may be staffed into another program.
- DD Reevaluation meetings must occur by the Friday prior to FTE week.

**Reevaluations**

- Students must be reevaluated every 3 years.
- Review the student's cumulative folder to verify the status of the reevaluation.

**Quality IEP/TIEP Indicators Met**

- Randomly selected IEPs complete the QIEP/QTIEP protocol.

**IEP Progress Report Indicator Met**

- Review IEP progress reports for two randomly selected students.

**PEER**

- Appropriate documents are uploaded (Signed Meeting Notice, Signed Meeting Participants, Teacher/Service Provider Input Form, Behavior Intervention Plan, Individual Health Care Plan, Communication Plan).
- Review uploads for two randomly selected students.

**IEP Conference Notes Indicator Met**

- Review IEP conference notes for two randomly selected students.

**ESE Policy & Procedures Trainings**

- The SSS/LEA Representative attended the District-wide/Learning Community Trainings.

**SSS Meeting Type Review / Paper Work Reviewed and Processed**

- Scheduled: SSS/LEA Representative has provided a count of meetings that are scheduled for the full calendar month
- Reviewed: Packets have been provided and reviewed by the DSS within 3 weeks of the meeting date
- Processed: Meeting Procedures were followed or Corrected

**Discipline/OSS Review**

- Review OSS days on EDW for all ESE students.
- Indicate status of meetings to address behavior and services
- Manifestation Determination must be conducted before 10<sup>th</sup> day of OSS.

## **Appendix II**

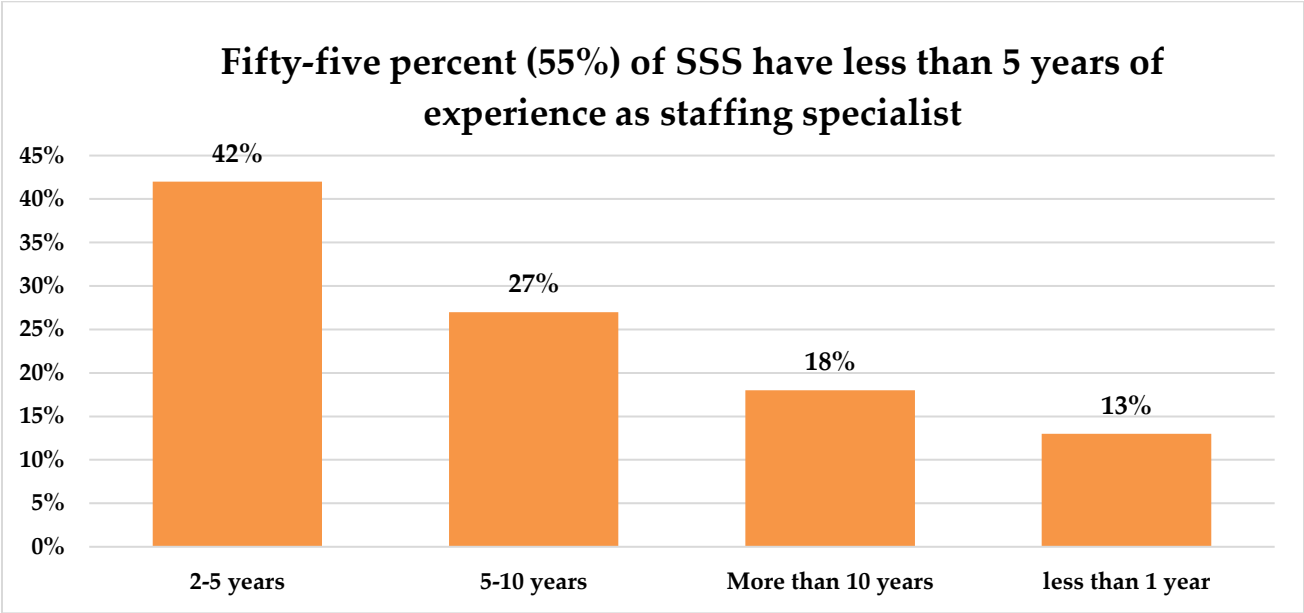
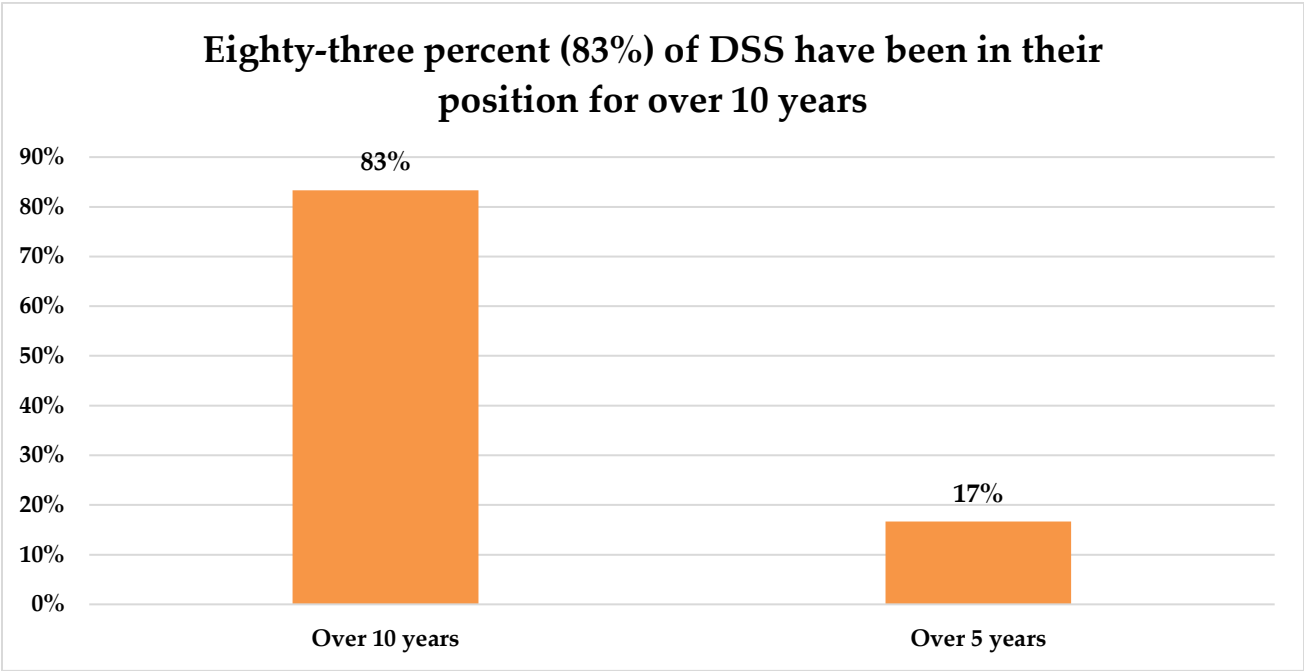
### **ESE Staffing Specialist Survey Questions**

1. What is your school type (elementary, middle high or other)?
2. How long have you been a staffing specialist?
3. What do you enjoy most about this position?
4. What do you consider to be the most difficult part about this position?
5. Do you have support you need from your school administrative staff?
6. Do you have the support you need from your District ESE support staff?
7. Where/How did you receive training for the staffing specialist position?
8. Do you have written procedures that you can follow?
9. Have you ever encountered a difficult IEP meeting? If so, what were the results?
10. Do you perform other duties other than those of a staffing specialist?
11. If you could change anything about this position, what would it be?

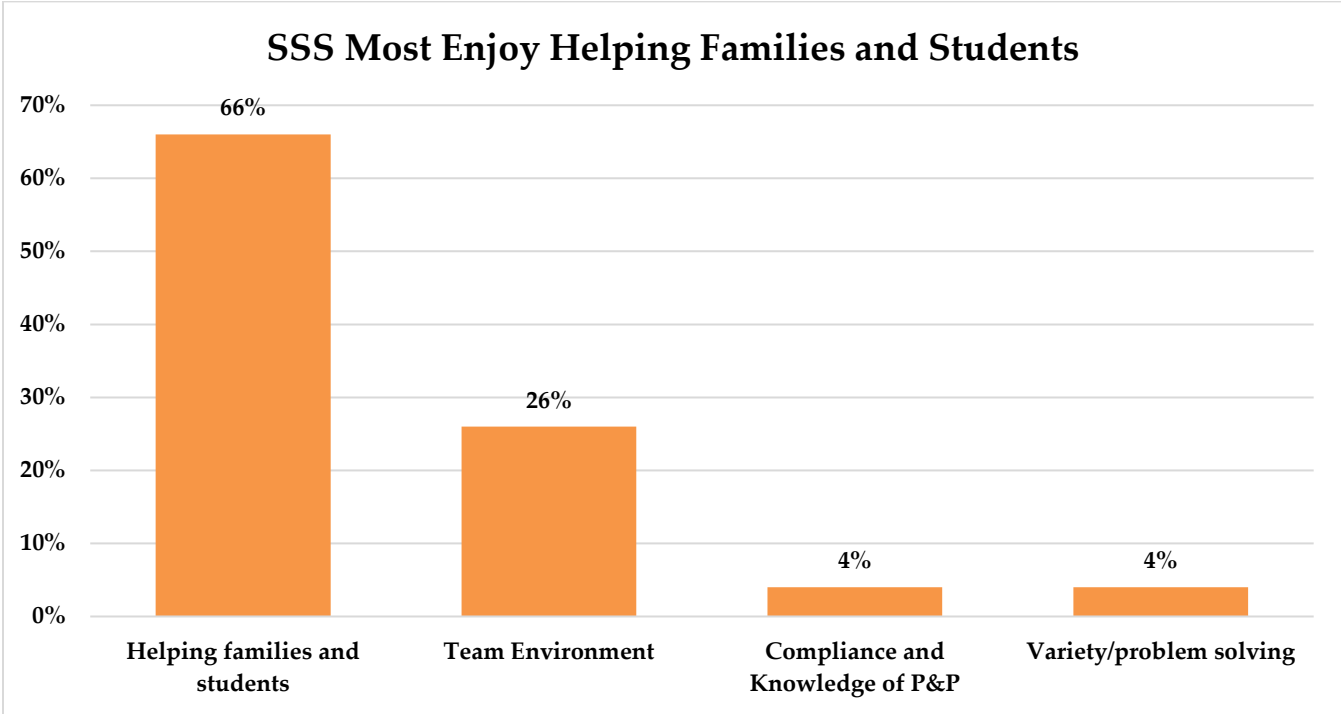
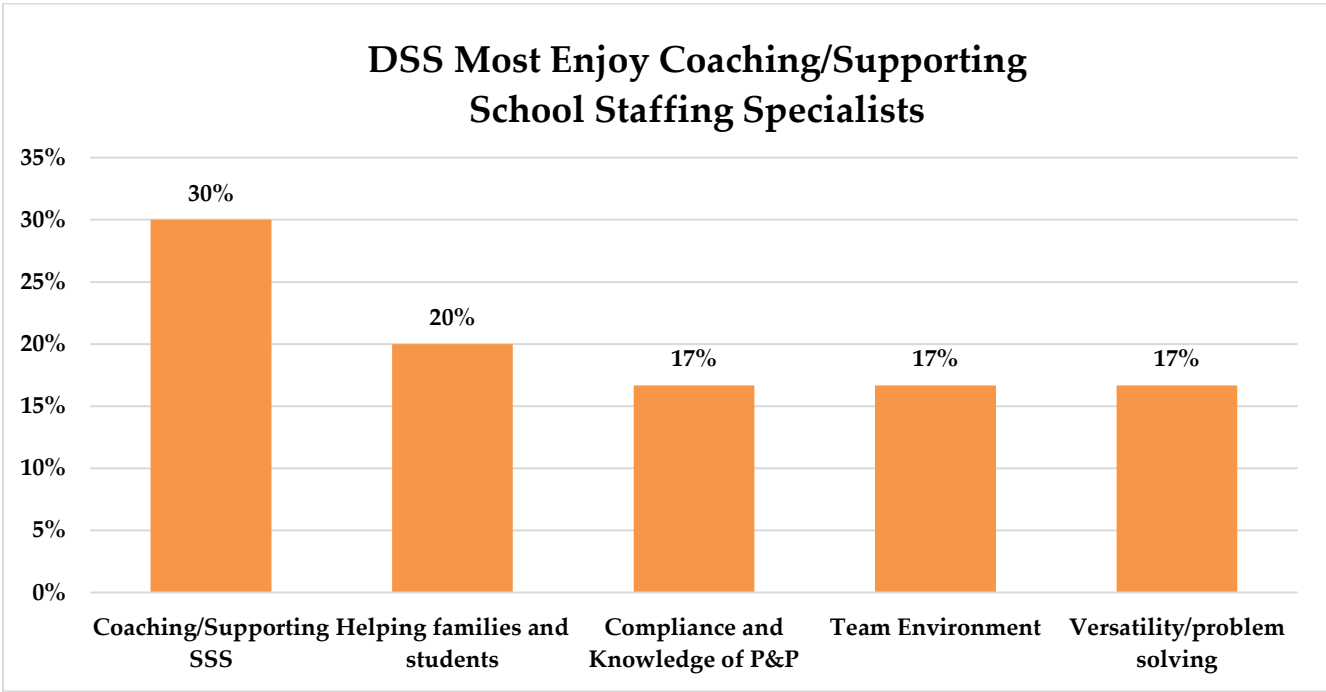
Appendix III

### District and School Staffing Specialists Selected Survey Results

How long have you been a staffing specialist?

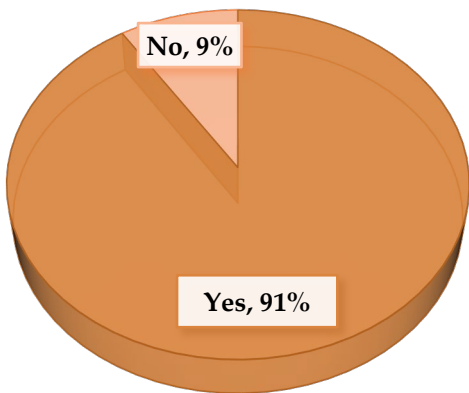


What do you enjoy most about your job?

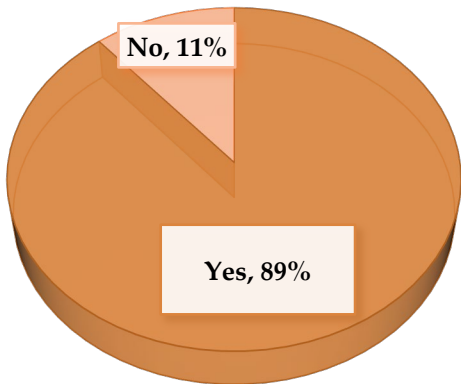


Have you encountered a difficult IEP meeting?

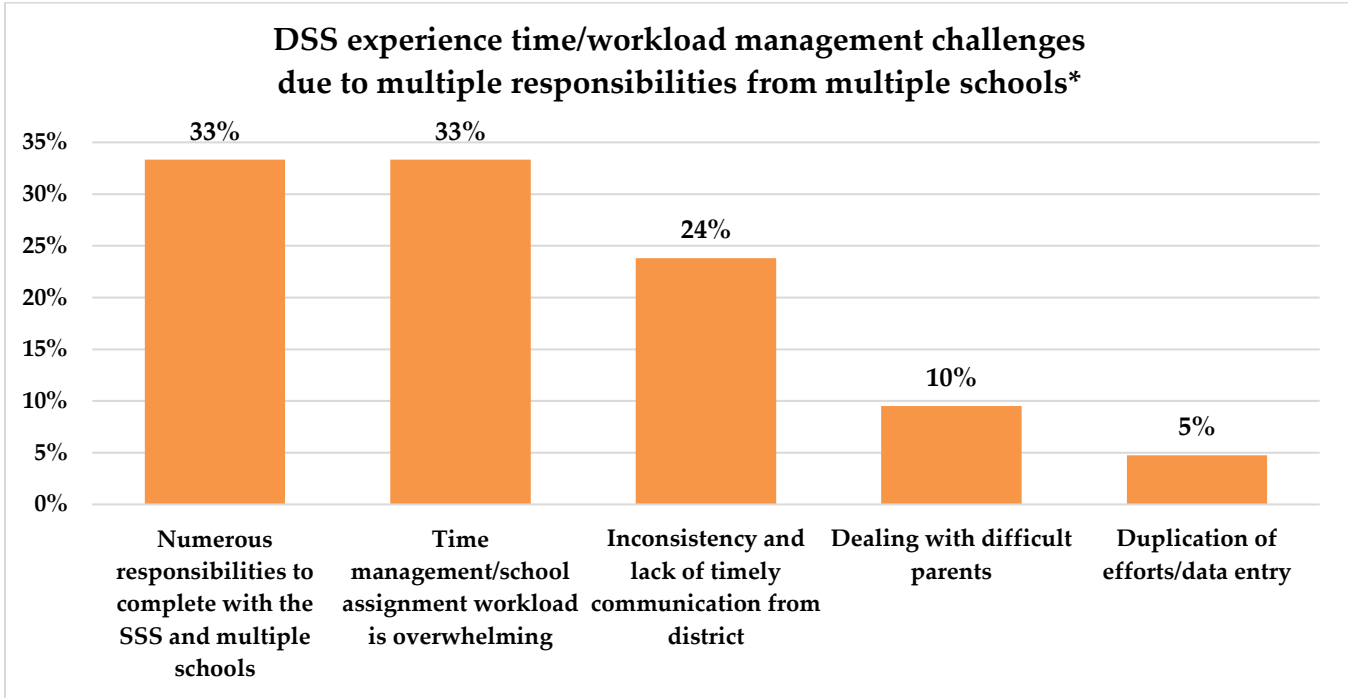
Ninety-One Percent (91%) of School Staffing Specialists Have Had A Difficult IEP Meeting



Eighty-Nine Percent (89%) of District Staffing Specialists Have Had A Difficult IEP Meeting

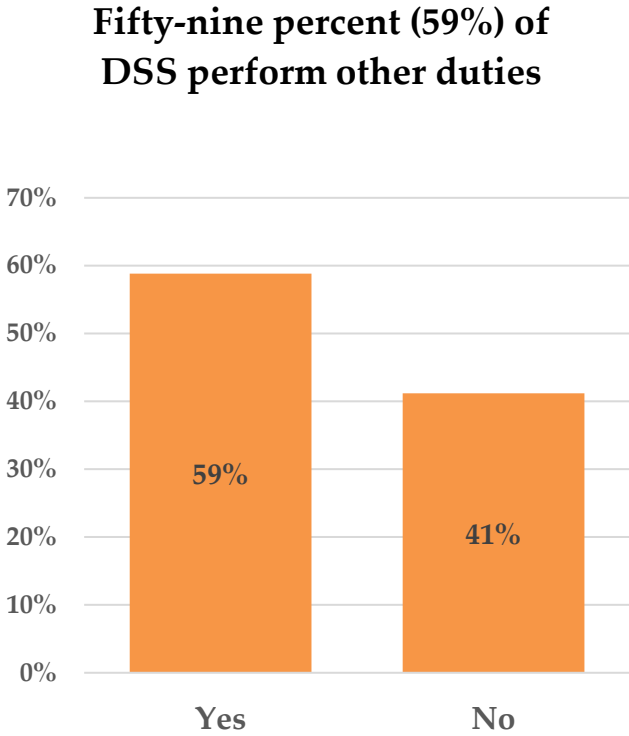
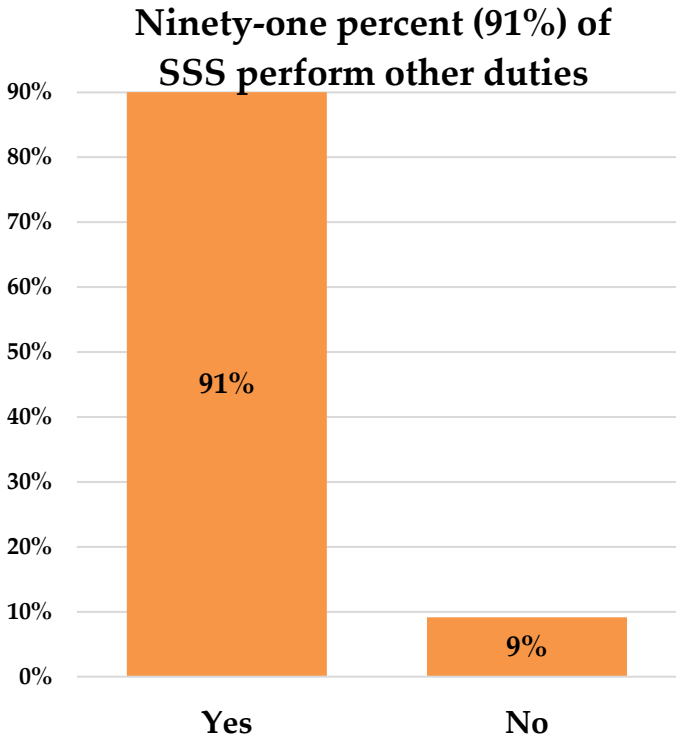


What do you consider to be the most difficult part of your job?



\*Percentages will not equal 100% because some DSS' provided more than one comment in their response

**Do you perform duties other than those of a staffing specialist?**





<b>Department / School Name</b>	<b>ESE</b>
<b>Administrator / Department Head</b>	<b>Ian Gesundheit</b>
<b>Cabinet Official / Area Superintendent</b>	<b>Susan Abbe</b>

<b>Audit Result / Recommendation</b>	<b>Management Response Acknowledgement/ Agreement of Condition</b>	<b>Responsible Person (Name &amp; Title) And Target Completion Date (MM/YYYY)</b>	<b>Management's Action Plan</b>
Intense focus on dispute resolution and aggressive promotion and communication of this function	In FY2019-2020 and FY2020-2021, the district's ESE program experienced significantly more complaints filed with FLDOE than similar sized districts in the State of Florida.	Elizabeth Prince, Principal on Assignment Terranasha Young, Senior Administrator 09/2021	The former website made it easy for parents to find information on how to file a complaint with the state rather than with the district. The Team will redesign the web site to provide parents with options to file a complaint with the district prior to filing with the state. A Senior Administrator and Program Specialist were hired this summer to focus on parent outreach and improve parent relations.
Streamlined reporting to eliminate redundant paperwork and automate when possible	Redundant paperwork is inefficient and creates opportunities for errors.  Redundancy exists throughout the process.	Elizabeth Prince – Principal on Assignment Tajuana Lee Wenzel-Director 3 School Staffing Specialists 12/2021	The ESE Team will evaluate the areas deemed redundant and determine if it is a district or state requirement. If areas identified are a district mandate, we will reevaluate if it is necessary to keep. In addition, we will convene a small task force of school staffing specialists to assist with areas that could be automated and then work with district IT to evaluate if our systems can manage the automation.





Reduce or eliminate assigning other duties to school staffing specialists	Ninety-one percent (91%) of SSS report being assigned tasks outside their staffing specialist duties.	School Principals 08/2021	A memo was sent in the Deputy Superintendent's weekly newsletter asking principals to limit the extra duties assigned to school staffing specialists and to consider offering clerical support in scheduling meetings and taking minutes.
Increase the number of district staffing specialists or restructure their duties with a goal of providing them more time to support school staffing specialists	District staffing specialists (DSS) assist and support school staffing specialists throughout the district. Each DSS is assigned a minimum of seven schools to assist.	Susan Abbe-Associate Superintendent Ian Gesundheit-Executive Director 12/2021	The team will review the formula used to allocate staffing specialist positions at the school. Currently it is a percentage of students with a 255 or 254 matrix. We will explore the formula using a percentage of all ESE matrix numbers.
Evaluate the detailed survey responses for additional opportunities for improvement	A 70% response rate was achieved from the school and district staffing specialist's survey. Twelve questions centered on their work environment and responsibilities.	Beth Prince, Principal on Assignment Jennifer Clark, Senior Administrator 10/2021	The team will read survey responses to identify trends and patterns and address as appropriate.