



## Report of the Task Force on Instructional Practices for Students with Severe Multiple Disabilities

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 Sarasota County Public Schools  
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## History of the Task Force

In March 2009, Superintendent Lori White charged Executive Director Sonia Figaredo-Alberts with creating and facilitating the “Task Force on Instructional Practices for Students with Severe Multiple Disabilities.”



## ESE Task Force Members

The following stakeholders included parents of students with disabilities; ESE paraprofessionals; ESE teachers; district specialists from Human Resources, Professional Development and Pupil Support Services; as well as USF staff, with relevant expertise.


- Julie Zarling- Recording Admin. Assistant
- Teresa Johnson – Parent
- Susan Dumas – Parent
- Jamie White – Nurse, PSS
- Jamie Mastro –Teacher, PSS
- Victoria Sillio-Gross – Specialist, PSS
- Doreen Pender – Specialist, PSS
- Ben Muster – Psychologist, PSS
- Cindy McKinney – Specialist, PSS
- Donna Marquis-Cox – Teacher, PSS
- MaryLisa Millbourn – SLP, Oak Park School
- Brian Rauh – Teacher, Oak Park School
- Christine Klopfer – Teacher, Laurel Nokomis
- Sylvia Diehl – Asst. Professor, USF
- Laura Kingsley – Principal, Fruitville Elementary
- Doug Berger, Supervisor, Professional Development
- Roy Sprinkle – Director, Human Resources
- Sonia Figaredo-Alberts, Executive Director, PSS
- Stephanie Burger-Social Worker, PSS

## Purpose



The Task Force reaffirmed collaborative partnerships between the District and the community by addressing policies and curricula that relate to delivery of instruction and services for students with disabilities.

## Purpose




Specific goals of the Task Force were to:

- Review existing procedures and determine relevance to educational practices
- Review systems and protocols
- Review teacher and paraprofessional training methods and resources

## Task Force Meetings

Members of the Task Force met on April 1, April 15, April 22, April 29, May 6, May 13, and May 20, 2009. Meetings were open to the public.



## Mission Statement

Members reached consensus on the following:

*"We affirm and celebrate the diversity of all students by committing to:*

- *cultivating and fostering parent/staff relationships;*
- *supporting and promoting academic achievement;*
- *building citizenship and readiness for work – the global community for students with individualized learning styles."*

## Areas of Focus

Task force members examined:

- Sunshine State Standards in Reading and Mathematics
- ESE Curriculum/Access Points
- Instructional methodologies
- Federal, state, district criteria for eligibility
- Behavior policies (techniques, methodologies)
- Secondary transition and compliance

## Areas of Focus (cont'd)

- Medical needs in an educational setting
- Role of the school nurse
- Support Service Programs (SLP, OT, PT)
- Paraprofessional roles/responsibilities
- ESE staff development offerings
- Parent/school communication

## Recommendations

The Task Force recommends that:

- Intensive training be provided to all ESE staff (Instructional/Classified) who are servicing students with disabilities;
- This training should encompass, but not be limited to, the following areas:
  - Curriculum – Access Points
  - Supporting communication in children with limited verbal abilities
  - Positive Behavior Support

## Recommendations (cont'd)

- New Employee Orientation
- Transition Planning
- Classroom Engineering
- IEP Development/Collaboration
- ESE Essentials for Paraprofessionals
- Fostering Family/Professional Partnerships
- Infusing Technology in Classroom Instruction



## Next Steps



- Initial training should be available prior to the beginning of the 2009-2010 school year for all staff educating students with severe disabilities.
- Parents will be invited to participate in the above training.
- Teachers of students with autism should be encouraged to fulfill the autism endorsement requirements.

## Next Steps

- **Conversations between the Sarasota county district leadership and SCTA union management should continue in order to examine opportunities of allowing specialty area teachers to remain with the designated area of expertise based on certification endorsement.**

