



# AUDITOR GENERAL

William O. Monroe, CPA



## OPERATIONAL AUDIT SUPPLEMENTAL ACADEMIC INSTRUCTION FUNDING FOR DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARDS JULY 1999 TO MARCH 2001

### SUMMARY

The 1999 Florida Legislature enacted the Supplemental Academic Instruction (SAI) Categorical Fund to provide for supplemental instruction to students in grades K-12. Supplemental instruction strategies may include, but are not limited to: modified curriculum, reading instruction, after-school instruction, tutoring, mentoring, class size reduction, extended school year, intensive skills development in summer school, and other methods for improving student achievement. Such supplemental instruction may be provided to a student in any manner and at any time identified by the school as being the most effective and efficient way to best help that student progress from grade to grade and to graduate. Each school district is required to submit to the Florida Department of Education (Department) a plan in which it identifies the students to be served and the scope of supplemental academic instruction to be provided.

We found that school districts prepared SAI plans and made efforts to implement their plans. We also noted that the Department issued annual reports to the Legislature for the 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 fiscal years. However, our review disclosed certain enhancements that could be made in the administration of SAI resources. We noted that:

- The school districts' procedures were generally not documented to evidence the specific steps followed in preparing the SAI plans. In addition, for most of the school districts included in our review, the school boards did not review and approve the 1999-2000 or 2000-2001 fiscal year SAI plans.
- The SAI plan format could be improved to include a provision that school districts identify in the SAI plans only those instructional programs and strategies that can reasonably be funded with the SAI allocation.
- For several school districts, procedures were not in place to provide for maintaining a record of students receiving intensive and regularly scheduled SAI services for the purpose of monitoring student achievement.
- Many school districts had not developed methodologies of record for evaluating and measuring the effectiveness of the uses of SAI resources.
- The Department did not timely issue the annual report to the Legislature on the school districts' progress in the SAI instructional strategy areas.

### INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to Section 236.08104, Florida Statutes, categorical funds for SAI are allocated annually to each school district in the amount provided in the

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General Appropriations Act. These funds are in addition to the base funds appropriated on the basis of full-time equivalent (FTE) student membership in the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) and are included in the total potential funds of each district. The Florida Legislature appropriated approximately \$527 million and \$663 million for the 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 fiscal years, respectively, to fund the SAI program.

***AUDIT SCOPE, OBJECTIVES,  
AND METHODOLOGY***

The scope of our audit included a review of the standard SAI plan formats and a review of 14 school districts' SAI plans, procedures, and expenditures from July 1999 to March 2001.

Our objectives were to determine whether the 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 fiscal years' SAI moneys were administered in accordance with Legislative directives. We also reviewed selected management controls over the administration of these moneys. Our objectives did not include evaluations of the effectiveness of the instructional strategies implemented.

We conducted our audit in accordance with Government Auditing Standards issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. Our audit procedures included tests of source records and data, interviews with appropriate Department and school district personnel, and analysis of the applicable laws and written guidelines relating to the program.

We recognize that the Legislature has provided the school districts wide discretion and flexibility in determining the appropriate and best uses of the SAI funding and in developing supplemental instruction strategies to meet the needs of students. It is not our intent to suggest in this report that such

discretion is inappropriate or to make any recommendation toward the limitation of this discretion and flexibility. Rather, the intent of this report is to recommend procedures and enhancements to the planning and record keeping processes that will increase the effectiveness with which school districts utilize the discretion and flexibility provided by the Legislature with SAI funding.

***FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS***

***Finding No. 1: Procedures for Developing and Approving SAI Plans***

Section 236.08104(6), Florida Statutes, requires each school district to submit to the Department a plan identifying the students to be served and the scope of supplemental academic instruction to be provided. The Department provided school districts a standard format to be used to document the school districts' SAI plans.

In the *Report to the Presiding Officers of the Legislature* (February 2000), the Department recommended that school districts examine their school improvement plans and pupil progression plans to ensure alignment and congruence with the SAI plans. The Report also recommended that supplemental resources be prioritized for those students at greatest risk of not meeting State and district guidelines for pupil progression.

In response to our inquiries, school district personnel indicated that the SAI plans were generally prepared for the 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 fiscal years based on input from school staff, principals, and district administrators, and district superintendents approved the plans. The school districts' procedures, however, were generally not documented to evidence the specific steps followed or the personnel involved in the preparation of the SAI plans. Our review at one school district

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disclosed that such documentation was particularly needful because the school district no longer employed the administrator responsible for the plan process. We also noted that, for 12 of the 14 school districts included in our review, the SAI plans for the 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 fiscal years were not approved of record by the respective school boards.

An integral part of documented procedures would include the steps followed to identify, prioritize, and select the instructional strategies and services to be provided to particular student groups to ensure that the supplemental instructional needs of students are properly addressed. In addition, such documented procedures should include a description of those management and instructional personnel providing input and giving approvals to the plans. Absent a formal documented process, there is an increased risk that the SAI goals may not be consistent with other educational plans of the district school boards, and educationally challenged students with greater needs could be overlooked.

To ensure the most beneficial use of SAI moneys, we recommend that the Department enhance the SAI plan format to provide that school districts document the steps taken to identify, prioritize, and select SAI strategies and student groups. In addition, we recommend that the SAI plan format provide that school boards review and approve the SAI plans before submission of the plans to the Department.

***Department's Response***

The FDOE developed a plan consistent with current statutory language. In the *Report to the Presiding Officers of the Legislature* (February 2000), the department recommended that school districts examine their school improvement plans and pupil progression plans to ensure alignment and

congruence with their SAI plans. The report also recommended that supplemental resources be prioritized for those students at greatest risk of not meeting state and district guidelines for pupil progression. In order to facilitate the planning process and ensure that school districts analyze district data regarding academic performance and align resources, the department will revise the SAI plan format for 2002-2003 school year, to require school districts to document the planning process and obtain school board approval prior to submission to the department.

***Finding No. 2: SAI Planned Expenditures***

The SAI plan format provided by the Department for the 1999-2000 fiscal year requested that school districts identify specific academic, behavior, and attendance activities for elementary, middle, and high schools. The format provided for the 2000-2001 fiscal year was revised to include a chart of 33 possible SAI services, with an additional category for other services that school districts could use to identify the planned instructional strategies. In addition, the 2000-2001 plan format included a request that school districts attach narrative descriptions of specific programs that would be funded with SAI moneys.

We noted that some school districts indicated numerous planned instructional strategies within the SAI plans for the 2000-2001 fiscal year that were not ultimately funded with SAI moneys. For example, the SAI plan for one school district indicated a total of 30 instructional strategies to be implemented; however, only 3 strategies were funded with SAI moneys. In these circumstances, the SAI plan did not represent a reasonable depiction of those instructional strategies to be funded with the SAI moneys, and limited the SAI plan's usefulness as a reference in future decision making.

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The SAI plan format could be enhanced to include a provision that school districts identify in the SAI plans only those instructional programs and strategies that can reasonably be funded with the SAI allocation. This provision, if effectively implemented, should prompt school districts to evaluate the costs of particular instructional programs and strategies and assist school districts in determining which programs and strategies are the most cost effective.

***Department's Response***

The SAI plan format developed by the department for the 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 school years requested that districts identify specific academic, behavior, and attendance activities for elementary, middle, and high schools. The plan format for 2000-2001 was revised to include a chart of 33 possible SAI services with an additional category for other services that school districts could use to identify planned instructional strategies. The SAI plan format is a planning tool that captures the school districts' plans for providing SAI services to students and a reporting document that provides the department with general information to complete the report submitted to the Legislature. Since districts use this format to plan and report proposed SAI activities, the department did not create an amendment process that school districts could use to amend or revise their plans during the school year.

For the 2002-2003 school year, the department will revise the SAI plan format to require districts to identify only those instructional strategies that can reasonably be funded with the SAI allocation.

***Finding No. 3: Identification of Students Served***

In a letter dated September 21, 1999, the Department provided guidance that school districts should separately identify, at the local level, students who receive intensive and regularly scheduled SAI services. The standard SAI plan format for the 1999-2000 fiscal year did not require school districts to specifically define the student eligibility criteria for SAI services. As a result, certain SAI plans reviewed indicated that SAI services would be provided to students who had been "unsuccessful academically," "in danger of failing the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) and Florida Writes," and "at risk of falling behind." In these circumstances, the ability to specifically identify the students served was limited.

For the 2000-2001 fiscal year, the standard SAI plan format was enhanced to provide for school districts to indicate whether SAI moneys would be used for students who: (1) fail to meet the achievement levels required for promotion, (2) scored in the lowest quartile (Level 1) on the FCAT, and/or (3) have been retained two or more years. In addition, the standard SAI plan format provided for school districts to indicate if SAI money would be used for D and F schools, Department of Juvenile Justice sites, dropout prevention, teenage parents programs, charter schools, or extended school year for students with disabilities.

Thus, the SAI plan format provided by the Department allows for school districts to indicate certain classifications of students to be served. However, in several school districts, we noted that procedures were not in place to identify the specific students provided services under the SAI plan for the purpose of monitoring student achievement.

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For example, personnel at one district indicated that students that received SAI services were not specifically identified because all students benefited directly or indirectly from SAI funds. In these circumstances, the school districts' ability to monitor and evaluate the effect of the supplemental services provided may be limited.

To facilitate monitoring and evaluation of the effect of the SAI services provided, we recommend that the Department provide guidance to school districts regarding methodologies for maintaining a record of students receiving intensive and regularly scheduled SAI services for the purpose of monitoring student achievement.

**Department's Response**

Florida law and the General Appropriations Act provides that SAI funds are appropriated to school districts to provide supplemental academic instruction to students enrolled in kindergarten through twelfth grade in the most effective and efficient way to best help students progress from grade to grade and graduate. Furthermore, proviso language provides that districts may utilize these funds to implement remedial instruction required by sections 232.245 and 232.246, Florida Statutes. Schools must determine the most appropriate supplemental strategies for each student. According to section 232.245(3), Florida Statutes, each student who does not meet specific levels of performance as determined by the district school board in reading, writing, science, and mathematics for each grade level, or who does not meet specific levels of performance, determined by the Commissioner of Education, on statewide assessments must be provided with additional diagnostic assessments to determine the nature of the student's difficulty and areas of academic need. The school must develop and implement an

academic improvement plan (AIP) designed to assist the student in meeting state and district expectations for proficiency. Each plan must include the provision of intensive remedial instruction in the areas of weakness. Thus, many schools use SAI funds to support the services and instructional strategies for students as indicated on their Academic Improvement Plans.

The Dropout Prevention Act of 1986 was enacted to encourage district school boards to establish comprehensive dropout prevention programs. These programs are designed to meet the needs of students who are not effectively served by traditional education programs in the public school system. During the last several years, the Florida Legislature amended the Dropout Prevention Act and enacted separate statutes for educational programs for teenage parents and students served in Department of Juvenile Justice facilities.

School districts are currently providing alternative programs for students at-risk of school failure, including students who are academically unsuccessful, truant, disruptive or violent, pregnant or parenting, or committed to a DJJ facility. Most districts are funding these programs with SAI funds. School districts submit data electronically through the department's student information database regarding the effectiveness of these programs.

Therefore, school districts are monitoring and reporting student achievement for all students receiving services identified on their AIPs that are funded with SAI funds and all students participating in Dropout Prevention programs funded with SAI funds.

For the 2002-2003 school year, the Department will encourage school districts to develop local accountability for students receiving intensive and regularly scheduled services provided with SAI funds.

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***Finding No.4: Evaluating Results of SAI Services***

The Department *Report to the Presiding Officers of the Legislature* (February 2000) encouraged school districts to continue to develop models to evaluate the effectiveness of their SAI expenditures in order to replicate effective programs and share such data Statewide.

The standard SAI plan format provided by the Department for the 1999-2000 fiscal year requested that school districts include plans for evaluating outcomes consistent with the scope of services and estimated costs to be charged to SAI funds. Accordingly, we noted that the 1999-2000 fiscal year SAI plans generally included goals for evaluating SAI services; however, school district records generally did not evidence the steps followed by the districts in evaluating progress toward the achievement of the goals. For example, at one school district, the 1999-2000 SAI plan indicated that 85 percent of the students receiving SAI services would have a grade point average greater than the grade point average in the previous year. In addition, at another school district, the 1999-2000 SAI plan indicated that there would be a 5 percent decrease in the number of out of school suspensions at one school during the next academic year. However, these two school districts could not demonstrate of record that data was reviewed to evaluate the progress toward accomplishing these SAI goals.

The 2000-2001 SAI plan format did not request that school districts include or document the goals desired by the implementation of the planned instructional programs and strategies. Our review of SAI plans indicated that specific goals by instructional program or strategy were generally not established for the 2000-2001 fiscal year.

We did note, based on information provided by school districts to the Department, that the Department has documented the school districts' overall progress in the areas of academic improvement, graduation rate, dropout rate, attendance rate, and retention/promotion rate as required by law. However, the development of goals by instructional program or strategy would allow for the school districts to better evaluate the effectiveness of the instructional programs and strategies implemented and to connect the programs and strategies with the desired outcomes. Defining and evaluating specific goals and outcomes would also enhance school districts' abilities to evaluate the successes of instructional programs and strategies in the development of future SAI plans.

We recommend that the Department enhance the SAI plan reporting format to require school districts to define the desired outcomes to be achieved by the provision of the services. Such revisions to the SAI plan format should encourage school districts to assess and evaluate the impact of SAI resources on projected goals and to consider such results in the development of future SAI plans.

***Department's Response***

Pursuant to section 236.08104, Florida Statutes, school districts are required to submit information through the department's database documenting the district's progress in the areas of academic improvement, graduation rate, dropout rate, attendance rate, and retention/promotion rate. Department staff aggregates the information, analyzes the data, and prepares the report submitted to the Legislature. In the *Report to the Presiding Officers of the Legislature* (February 2000), the department compared student outcomes for 1998-1999 and 1999-2000 school years, using the outcomes identified in statute. This comparison of

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state data indicated that students have improved on all of the primary indicators: graduation rate, dropout rate, promotion rate, attendance rate, and performance on FCAT. It appears that school districts are using their resources to support strategic efforts for improved student performance.

The department complied with the Supplemental Academic Instruction Act to report school districts' progress as noted above. In the 2002-2003 plan format, the department will encourage school districts to use data to monitor and evaluate student progress. Districts may use these data and identify specific goals and objectives to evaluate specific programs. They may use the Dropout Prevention Evaluation Format to monitor student progress for students participating in dropout prevention, teenage parent, and juvenile justice education programs. Schools may monitor student progress as indicated on students' AIPs. The department will continue to compare school districts' progress on the indicators as required by statute.

***Finding No. 5: Annual Report on SAI***

Section 236.08104(6), Florida Statutes, requires the Department to submit an annual report to the presiding officers of the Legislature by February 15 on the school districts' progress in the areas of academic improvement, graduation rate, dropout rate, attendance rate, and retention/promotion rate. In February 2000, the Department issued a report to provide information to the Legislature on school districts' proposed expenditures of SAI funds, the estimated number of students and schools benefiting from SAI funding, the services school districts planned to fund, and the most common strategies used to serve students benefiting from SAI funding. The Department's 2000-2001 overall report on SAI included outcome information on academic improvement, graduation rate, dropout

rate, attendance, and retention/promotion rate. However, the 2000-2001 report, due February 15, 2001, was not issued until July 2001, or approximately 3 months after the Legislative session had ended. When such data is not made available on a timely basis to the Legislature and other interested parties, such as school districts, the ability of these entities to evaluate the effective use of SAI funding is limited.

We recommend that the Department timely report, as required by law, the results of the school districts' efforts toward the respective SAI goals. Also, school districts should be provided this information to assist in the school districts' SAI evaluation process.

***Department's Response***


For 1999-2000 and 2000-2001, the department compiled the information provided by the districts into annual reports and submitted the reports to the presiding officers of the Legislature. At the same time, the department disseminated these reports to the school districts and provided the SAI plan format for the following year. Each year, the department also provided districts with additional information, such as indicators of educational benefit, school success, and demographic information for the general school population to assist them with the planning and submission process. Districts may use these district-specific profiles to determine instructional strategies and prioritize services for specific students.

The department will make every effort to compile and submit the report for 2000-2001 to the presiding officers of the Legislature by February 15, 2002.

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***AUTHORITY***

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 11.45, Florida Statutes, I have directed that this report be prepared and submitted to the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House, and the Legislative Auditing Committee.

  
William O. Monroe, CPA

***AUDITEE RESPONSE***

In a letter dated November 2, 2001, the Commissioner of Education generally concurred with our audit findings. For a more comprehensive understanding of the Commissioner's responses to the findings and recommendations contained in this report, please see the Auditor General's Web site, where the response may be viewed in its entirety.

***To promote accountability in government and improvement in government operations, the Auditor General makes operational audits of selected programs, activities, and functions of district school boards. This operational audit was made in accordance with applicable Government Auditing Standards issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. This audit was conducted by Gregory L. Centers, CPA. Please address inquiries regarding this report to David W. Martin, CPA, Audit Manager, via e-mail at [davidmartin@aud.state.fl.us](mailto:davidmartin@aud.state.fl.us) or by telephone at (850) 487-9039.***

***This report, as well as other audit reports prepared by the Auditor General, can be obtained on our Web site (<http://www.state.fl.us/audgen>); by telephone at (850) 487-9024; or by mail at G74 Claude Pepper Building, 111 West Madison Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1450.***





FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

**CHARLIE CRIST**  
COMMISSIONER

November 2, 2001

William O. Monroe  
Office of the Auditor General  
G74 Claude Pepper Building  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1450

Dear Mr. Monroe:

During the 2000-2001 school year, your staff conducted an audit of 14 school districts that included a review of the districts' Supplemental Academic Instruction (SAI) plans, procedures, and expenditures from July 1999 through March 2001. Your staff recognized that the Legislature provided school districts with maximum flexibility in determining the appropriate and most effective use of the SAI funds and in developing supplemental academic instruction strategies to meet the needs of students. The audit report determined that school districts prepared SAI plans and made efforts to implement the plans according to statutory requirements. It was also noted that the department complied with statutory requirements regarding the development of the SAI plan format and reporting district outcomes. Thus the report recommends procedures and enhancements to the planning and record keeping processes that may increase the effectiveness with which school districts utilize the flexibility provided by the Legislature.

Enclosed, please find the Department's response to the audit report which includes an overview of our related activities and the proposed enhancements to the utilization of SAI funds by school districts. If you have questions or need additional information, please contact Shan Goff, Chief, Bureau of Instructional Support and Community Services, at 850/488-1379.

Sincerely,  
  
Charlie Crist

cc: Jim Horne, Secretary of Education  
Betty Coxe, Deputy Commissioner  
Melinda Miguel, Inspector General

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Florida Department of Education

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**Response to Operational Audit of  
Supplemental Academic Instruction Funding  
for District School Boards  
July 1999 to March 2001**

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**Overview**

The 1999 Florida Legislature enacted section 236.08104, Florida Statutes, Supplemental Academic Instruction (SAI) Categorical Fund, to provide supplemental academic instruction to students enrolled in kindergarten through twelfth grade. The following 1998-99 programs were folded into this fund: (1) K-8 Basic Summer School, (2) projected summer school funding through the FEFP with the exception of juvenile justice summer programs, and (3) the weighted portion of regular school year dropout prevention programs formerly funded through the FEFP. According to the 1999 General Appropriations Act, these funds are provided for supplemental academic instruction to be provided at appropriate times throughout the school year *to help students gain at least a year of knowledge for each year in school and to help students not be left behind.*

The SAI legislation states that instructional supplemental strategies/activities may include, but are not limited to, modified curriculum, reading instruction, after school instruction, tutoring, mentoring, class size reduction, extended school year, intensive skills development in summer school, and other methods for improving student achievement.

Section 236.08104(6), Florida Statutes, requires each district receiving funds from the Supplemental Academic Instruction Fund to submit a plan to the Florida Department of Education (FDOE) which identifies the students to be served and the scope of supplemental academic instruction to be provided. Districts shall also submit information through the department's database documenting the district's progress in the areas of academic improvement, graduation rate, dropout rate, attendance rate, and retention/promotion rate. The department shall compile this information into an annual report which shall be submitted to the presiding officers of the Legislature by February 15.

The Department of Education developed a format for the SAI plan that required school districts to identify the students to be served and the scope of supplemental academic instruction to be provided. In addition, districts were asked to provide information on the proposed expenditures, the estimated number of students and schools benefiting from SAI funding, the services districts planned to fund, and the most common strategies used to serve students benefiting from SAI funding.

According to section 230.23(16)©4, Florida Statutes, district school boards are encouraged to prioritize the expenditure of funds received for SAI to improve student

performance in schools that receive a grade performance category designation of “D” or “F”. Further, in accordance with section 232.245(2)(b), Florida Statutes, school boards must also allocate remedial and supplemental instruction resources first to students who fail to meet achievement levels required for promotion. Therefore, the department required school districts to identify whether SAI funds were used to provide services for students who fail to meet achievement levels required for promotion, score in the lowest quartile (Level 1) on FCAT, or who were retained two or more years. The districts also identified whether SAI funds were allocated to “D” and “F” schools.

Prior to the submission of SAI plans by the school districts in 1999 and 2000, the department staff provided technical assistance for the planning process that included, but was not limited to, the following:

- One day SAI Workshop in June 1999
- Technical Assistance Paper related to SAI Funds distributed August 1999
- *Supplemental Academic Instructional Categorical Program Planning Resource Guide for 2000-2001*
- Supplemental Academic Instruction Local Education Agency Profile
- Five regional meetings regarding the SAI planning process conducted in January and February 2000

#### **Auditor General’s Findings and DOE’s Response**

##### ***Finding No. 1 Procedures for Developing and Approving SAI Plans***

***“The school districts’ procedures were generally not documented to evidence the specific steps followed in preparing the SAI plans. In addition, for most of the school districts included in our review, the school boards did not review and approve the 1999-2000 or 2000-2001 fiscal year SAI plans.***

***It is recommended that the FDOE enhance the SAI plan format to provide that school districts document the steps taken to identify, prioritize and select SAI strategies and student groups. In addition, it is recommended that the SAI plan format provide that school boards review and approve the SAI plans before submission of the plans to the FDOE.”***

The FDOE developed a plan consistent with current statutory language. In the *Report to the Presiding Officers of the Legislature* (February 2000), the department recommended that school districts examine their school improvement plans and pupil progression plans to ensure alignment and congruence with their SAI plans. The report also recommended that supplemental resources be prioritized for those students at greatest risk of not meeting state and district guidelines for pupil progression. In order to facilitate the planning process and ensure that school districts analyze district data regarding academic performance and align resources, the department will revise the SAI plan format for

2002-2003 school year, to require school districts to document the planning process and obtain school board approval prior to submission to the department.

***Finding No. 2 SAI Planned Expenditures***

***“The SAI plan format could be improved to include a provision that school districts identify in the SAI plans only those instructional programs and strategies that can reasonably be funded with the SAI allocation.***

***It is recommended that the SAI plan format could be enhanced to include a provision that school districts identify in the SAI plans only those instructional programs and strategies that can reasonably be funded with the SAI allocation. This provision, if effectively implemented, should prompt school districts to evaluate the costs of particular instructional programs and strategies and assist districts in determining which programs and strategies are the most cost effective.”***

The SAI plan format developed by the department for the 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 school years requested that districts identify specific academic, behavior, and attendance activities for elementary, middle, and high schools. The plan format for 2000-2001 was revised to include a chart of 33 possible SAI services with an additional category for other services that school districts could use to identify planned instructional strategies. The SAI plan format is a planning tool that captures the school districts’ plans for providing SAI services to students and a reporting document that provides the department with general information to complete the report submitted to the Legislature. Since districts use this format to plan and report proposed SAI activities, the department did not create an amendment process that districts could use to amend or revise their plans during the school year.

For the 2002-2003 school year, the department will revise the SAI plan format to require districts to identify only those instructional strategies that can reasonably be funded with the SAI allocation.

***Finding No. 3 Identification of Students Served***

***“In several school districts, procedures were not in place to provide for maintaining a record of students receiving intensive and regularly scheduled SAI services for the purpose of monitoring student achievement.***

***It is recommended that FDOE provide guidance to school districts regarding methodologies for maintaining a record of students receiving intensive and regularly scheduled SAI services for the purpose of monitoring student achievement.”***

Florida law and the General Appropriations Act provides that SAI funds are appropriated to school districts to provide supplemental academic instruction to students enrolled in kindergarten through twelfth grade in the most effective and efficient way to best help students progress from grade to grade and graduate. Furthermore, proviso language provides that districts may utilize these funds to implement remedial instruction required

by sections 232.245 and 232.246, Florida Statutes. Schools must determine the most appropriate supplemental strategies for each student. According to section 232.245(3), Florida Statutes, each student who does not meet specific levels of performance as determined by the district school board in reading, writing, science, and mathematics for each grade level, or who does not meet specific levels of performance, determined by the Commissioner of Education, on statewide assessments must be provided with additional diagnostic assessments to determine the nature of the student's difficulty and areas of academic need. The school must develop and implement an academic improvement plan (AIP) designed to assist the student in meeting state and district expectations for proficiency. Each plan must include the provision of intensive remedial instruction in the areas of weakness. Thus, many schools use SAI funds to support the services and instructional strategies for students as indicated on their Academic Improvement Plans.

The Dropout Prevention Act of 1986 was enacted to encourage district school boards to establish comprehensive dropout prevention programs. These programs are designed to meet the needs of students who are not effectively served by traditional education programs in the public school system. During the last several years, the Florida Legislature amended the Dropout Prevention Act and enacted separate statutes for educational programs for teenage parents and students served in Department of Juvenile Justice facilities.

School districts are currently providing alternative programs for students at-risk of school failure, including students who are academically unsuccessful, truant, disruptive or violent, pregnant or parenting, or committed to DJJ facility. Most districts are funding these programs with SAI funds. School districts submit data electronically through the department's student information database regarding the effectiveness of these programs.

Therefore, school districts are monitoring and reporting student achievement for all students receiving services identified on their AIP's that are funded with SAI funds and all students participating in Dropout Prevention programs funded with SAI funds.

For the 2002-2002 school year, the Department will encourage school districts to develop local accountability for students receiving intensive and regularly scheduled services provided with SAI funds.

#### ***Finding No. 4 Evaluating Results of SAI Services***

***“Many school districts had not developed methodologies of record for evaluating and measuring the effectiveness of the uses of SAI resources on the SAI program.***

***It is recommended that FDOE enhance the SAI plan reporting format to require school districts to define the desired outcomes to be achieved by the provision of the services. Such revisions to the SAI plan format should encourage school districts to assess and evaluate the impact of SAI resources on projected goals and to consider such results in the development of future SAI plans.”***

Pursuant to section 236.08104, Florida Statutes, school districts are required to submit information through the department's database documenting the district's progress in the areas of academic improvement, graduation rate, dropout rate, attendance rate, and retention /promotion rate. Department staff aggregates the information, analyzes the data, and prepares the report submitted to the Legislature. In the *Report to the Presiding Officers of the Legislature* (February 2000), the department compared student outcomes for 1998-1999 and 1999-2000 school year, using the outcomes identified in statute. This comparison of state data indicated that students have improved on all of the primary indicators: graduation rate, dropout rate, promotion rate, attendance rate, and performance on FCAT. It appears that school districts are using their resources to support strategic efforts for improved student performance.

The department complied with the Supplemental Academic Instruction Act to report districts' progress as noted above. In the 2002-2003 plan format, the department will encourage school districts to use data to monitor and evaluate student progress. Districts may use these data and identify specific goals and objectives to evaluate specific programs. They may use the Dropout Prevention Evaluation Format to monitor student progress for students participating in dropout prevention, teenage parent, and juvenile justice education programs. Schools may monitor student progress as indicated on students' AIP's. The department will continue to compare districts' progress on the indicators as required by statute.

***Finding No. 5 Annual Report of SAI***

***"The FDOE did not timely issue the annual report to the Legislature on the districts' progress in the SAI instructional strategy areas.***

***It is recommended that FDOE timely report, as required by law, the results of the districts' efforts toward the respective SAI goals. Also, districts should be provided this information to assist in the districts' SAI evaluation process."***

For 1999-2000 and 2000-2001, the department compiled the information provided by the districts into annual reports and submitted them to the presiding officers of the Legislature. At the same time, the department disseminated these reports to the school districts and provided the SAI plan format for the following year. Each year, the department also provided districts with additional information, such as indicators of educational benefit, school success, and demographic information for the general school population to assist them with the planning and submission process. Districts may use these district-specific profiles to determine instructional strategies and prioritize services for specific students.

The department will make every effort to compile and submit the report for 2000-2001 to the presiding officers of the Legislature by February 15, 2002.