

**THE SCHOOL BOARD OF BROWARD COUNTY, FLORIDA  
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT**

**DR. FRANK TILL  
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS**

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Signature on File.

June 13, 2003

TO: School Board Members

FROM: Katherine Blasik, Ph.D., Assistant Superintendent  
Office of Research and Evaluation

VIA: Frank Till  
Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: **THE INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE SCHOOL BOARD OF  
BROWARD COUNTY, FLORIDA, AND THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN  
AND FAMILIES, DISTRICT 10, EVALUATION REPORT, 2002-03**

The School Board of Broward County (SBBC), Florida, and the Department of Children and Families (DCF) District 10, signed the fourth Interagency Agreement on June 18, 2002 to improve educational services to children in the foster care system of Broward County. This Agreement was designed to improve the sharing of information between the SBBC and the DCF regarding these children. The attached report is the third evaluation of the Agreement and describes the extent to which the SBBC and the DCF complied with selected Agreement requirements. Prior evaluations of the agreement have led to procedural changes that have bolstered educational opportunities for foster care students in Broward County. In addition, a recent Foster Care Information Brief (Eastwood & Clement, January 2003) has described the characteristics of foster care students for the 2002-03 school year.

The present evaluation findings revealed that the SBBC and the DCF made progress on the implementation of the procedural requirements specified in the Agreement. Inspection of progress on 22 items selected from the Agreement indicated that the level of progress varied across items. Four recommendations were tendered to address those areas where less progress was evident and to further the implementation of future Interagency Agreements. The recommendations focused on improving communication through the extended use of electronic transfer of information, enhanced training opportunities, and improved tracking of the needs of exceptional student education foster care students.

Questions or comments regarding this report should be directed to **Dr. Katherine Blasik, Assistant Superintendent, Office of Research and Evaluation at 954-760-7342, or Dr. Cary Sutton, Director, Department of Research Services, at 954-765-6761.**

FT/KAB/COS:fmg  
Attachment

cc: Senior Management  
Area Directors  
Peggy Morrison-Thurston, Director Office of Alternative Education/Drop Out Prevention

**THE SCHOOL BOARD OF BROWARD COUNTY, FLORIDA  
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT**

**DR. FRANK TILL  
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS**

Signature on file.

June 6, 2003

TO: Dr. Frank Till  
Superintendent of Schools

FROM: Earlean C. Smiley, Ed.D., Deputy Superintendent  
Curriculum & Instruction/Student Support

SUBJECT: **INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE SCHOOL BOARD OF  
BROWARD COUNTY AND THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN  
AND FAMILIES**

The Deputy Superintendent and the Director of Alternative Education/Dropout Prevention have reviewed and discussed the findings of the Evaluation Report on the Interagency Agreement between the School Board and the Department of Children and Families. In response to the recommendations included in this report the following steps will be taken:

**Recommendation 1.** The Director of Alternative Education/Dropout Prevention and the DCF District Program Manager of Family Safety for DCF, District 10 will collaborate with ETS to investigate an online implementation of the transfer of school registration and transportation requests. The process of transferring school registration and transportation reassignment information online will assist the DCF to track and monitor the DCF case workers' compliance with the delivery of the DCF School Registration Forms to the schools, the DCF case workers requests for reassignment and transportation for out-of-school boundary foster care youth, and the SBBC transportation arrangements for these foster care youth.

**Response.** The Director of Alternative Education/Dropout Prevention and the District Program Manager of the Family Safety for DCF and the privatized partner ChildNet agree that the receipt of the DCF School Registration Form is critical to the notification of a student's status and the request for reassignment and transportation services. The following procedures will be implemented:

- a. The SBBC Designee in collaboration with DCF and ChildNet has increased the frequency of the electronic match report from monthly to bi-weekly to provide more current information so that the delivery of the DCF School Registration Form can be monitored.
- b. The SBBC "Fostering Success Training Manual" will be revised to reflect the new partner, ChildNet, and provide training for its caseworkers and supervisors on the Interagency Agreement and all procedures and protocols beginning immediately.

- c. Support and monitor the piloting of an electronic (email) of the DCF Registration Form by ChildNet and subsequently monitor the appropriate entry of information into the student database by school-based personnel. A progress report will be provided to the Steering Committee at the October quarterly meeting.

**INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE SCHOOL BOARD OF BROWARD COUNTY AND THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES**

June 6, 2003

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- d. Investigate the possibility of placing the forms on-line for access at any time by school personnel, DCF staff and ChildNet staff. Additionally work with our ETS staff to determine how to submit the forms electronically form the website and monitor the receipt.
- e. The SBBC Court Liaison will continue to notify the DCF Court Liaison and the ChildNet Educational Specialist when the DCF School Registration Form has not been received. The DCF Court Liaison and ChildNet Educational Specialist are responsible for ensuring the receipt of the form.
- f. The SBBC designee in collaboration with the Director of Transportation has provided DCF and the new agency ChildNet with a Transportation Chart that provides preliminary evidence of the likelihood of transportation based upon a child's change of address. The intended result is less interruption in school attendance due to lack of transportation.
- g. The SBBC Designee will continue to work with the Director of Transportation to refine the database that assigns transportation to foster care youth to include information on the number of duplicate requests (mobility of youth) and the tracking of requests that are routed but not honored. The immediacy of transmitting the transportation request will continue to be a priority in all trainings.

**Recommendation 2.** The Director of Alternative Education/Dropout Prevention in cooperation with the DCF District Program Manager of Family Safety for DCF, District 10, will investigate an online posting of the Fostering Student Success Training Manual. Notifications of updates to the manual should be sent electronically to affected SBBC and DCF staff. The inclusion of an online manual will ensure all staff members have access to the latest version of the document, irrespective of staff turnover.

**Response:** The Office of Alternative Education/Dropout Prevention has made preliminary plans to post all pertinent training and other educational information on the departmental website by August, 2003. The posting will include the revised 2004 Fostering Student Success Training Manual and will be accessible to both agencies. The SBBC Dependency Court Liaison will provide updates, revisions and notices to all Foster Care designees via email. SBBC will work with DCF to determine if a similar posting can be provided to their staff via a Department of Children and Families website.

**Recommendation 3.** The Director of Alternative Education/Dropout Prevention in cooperation with DCF District program Manager of Family Safety for DCF, District 10, will review the training that is presently provided. For areas discovered to be deficient in training opportunities, staff will identify, acquire, and implement appropriate training programs. Particular attention shall be placed on educational issues for Guardians and Attorneys Ad Litem, and the Child Welfare Legal Service Attorneys of

the Attorney General's Office. In addition, periodic training updates will be made available to SBBC Foster Care Designees and DCF Case workers.

**Response.** The Director of Alternative Education/Dropout Prevention will work with DCF and ChildNet to collaborate on training for the Guardians and Attorneys Ad Litem and the Child Welfare Legal Service Attorneys of the Attorney General's Office. The training can be made available to child advocates and other public and private entities. Periodic updates will be formally scheduled with both DCF and ChildNet.

**INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE SCHOOL BOARD OF BROWARD COUNTY AND THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES**

June 6, 2003

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**Recommendation 4.** The Director of Alternative Education/Dropout Prevention will develop and implement a tracking system that will identify and track the special needs of foster care ESE students. More specifically this tracking system will identify foster care ESE students who require the appointment of surrogate parents, those who will not be reunited with their parents, and ESE foster care students for whom the courts have terminated parental rights.

**Response.** The Director of Alternative Education/Dropout Prevention will develop a BRIO query (Student Data Warehouse) report that will identify all foster care ESE students so that schools can monitor the potential need for a surrogate parent. The BRIO report will be forwarded to schools as an addendum to the match report so that students are identified as they enter and leave the foster care. Additionally, The Director of Alternative Education/Dropout Prevention will collaborate with the DCF and ChildNet to provide information as to the eligibility of a youth as it is dependent upon the number of children living in a licensed residential home/facility. The Director of Alternative Education/Dropout Prevention will collaborate with the Director of ESE and the Coordinator of FDLRS (Florida Diagnostic Learning Resource System) to increase the recruitment effort and training of surrogates to meet the anticipated increase in need as school based personnel and caseworkers are better trained in the eligibility criteria. The database that tracks all requests and assignments of surrogates will be revised to meet the needs of this Agreement and subsequent evaluation by July 1, 2003.

The Director of Alternative Education in collaboration with the partners and the members of the Foster Care Steering Committee will prepare an action plan addressing the responses to this evaluation and present it to the Superintendent of Schools, The Department of Children and Families, District 10 Manager and the President of ChildNet, Inc. by July 31, 2003.

ECS/PMT:cb

Rev.eval.response

Dr. Frank Till  
Superintendent of Schools

**INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT BETWEEN  
THE SCHOOL BOARD OF BROWARD COUNTY, FLORIDA AND  
THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES, DISTRICT 10  
EVALUATION REPORT, 2002-03**



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June 2003

Prepared by:  
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**The Interagency Agreement Between The School Board of Broward County, Florida, and  
The Department of Children and Families, District 10**

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# **The Interagency Agreement Between The School Board of Broward County, Florida, And The Department of Children And Families, District 10**

## **Evaluation Report**

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The School Board of Broward County (SBBC), Florida and the Department of Children and Families (DCF), District 10 signed the fourth Interagency Agreement on June 18, 2002 to improve educational services to children in the foster care system of Broward County. In a previous evaluation, the SBBC was found to have met the implementation and procedural requirements for thirteen of fifteen items identified for investigation (TRA Associates & Green, 2002). The two items that were not met were: sharing of information related to providing the Superintendent Designee with an updated monthly list of foster care student who reside in licensed residential facilities and providing the DCF School Registration form to the child's school. The recommendations of the previous evaluation formed the basis for the revision of the 2002-03 Interagency Agreement. The purpose of the present evaluation was to determine the extent to which the SBBC and the DCF fulfilled their joint obligations on 22 items of the current Agreement.

The SBBC and the DCF implemented the policies and procedures of the first and subsequent Interagency Agreements to facilitate and monitor the sharing of information regarding foster care students. The agreement permitted the sharing of school assignment, health records, attendance records, academic grades, disciplinary records, and other relevant educational information that would help track the foster care students as they transfer from school to school due to changes in their foster care placement. The process of information sharing required that the SBBC and the DCF electronically match records to identify all foster care students attending Broward County Public Schools.

This agreement was designed to stimulate an awareness of foster care students' unique educational needs and provide supportive educational interventions. The agreement also mandated the employment of a guidance counselor and clerical support for the Putting Families First Center and SBBC and DCF Dependency Court Liaisons.

The 2002-2003 Interagency Agreement consisted of 48 items and three sections: Recitals, Special Conditions, and General Conditions. As reported in the January 29, 2003 Foster Care Research Brief, implementation of the agreement resulted in the identification of approximately 912 foster care students who were enrolled in Broward County Public Schools (Eastwood & Clement, 2003).

The first Interagency Agreement was signed on January 1, 1999, after a Foster Care Standing Committee developed policies and procedures that "strengthened the safety net" for foster care students. The SBBC evaluates the terms of the agreement via a third party evaluator annually to promote revision of the agreement to better meet the needs of foster care students in Broward County. The Office of Alternative Education/Dropout Prevention administered the implementation of the agreement on behalf of the SBBC. The Office of Alternative Education/Dropout Prevention serves students who are at-risk of dropping out of school through

the following programs: Educational Alternative Programs, Disciplinary Programs, Teen Parent Programs, and the Department of Juvenile Justice Educational Services and Community Based Organizations.

### ***Financial Impact***

The 2002-03 financial impact of this agreement for the Broward County School District was \$226,941. A total of \$137,587 was allocated for the continued employment of the guidance counselor and clerical support at the Putting Families First Center. An additional \$89,354 was allocated for the continued employment of the SBBC Dependency Court Liaison and support staff. The source of the funds was the operating budget of the Office of Alternative Education/Dropout Prevention.

### **SUMMARY**

The SBBC and DCF personnel made substantial progress on the implementation of 13 of the 22 Agreement requirements selected for investigation. Progress, but to a lesser extent, was noted for the implementation of the remaining nine items. The level of progress made on the item related to Court Liaisons (2.09) was assessed to be substantial with regard to SBBC personnel, but to a lesser extent for the DCF personnel.

Although progress was noted for each of the following Agreement items, findings indicated that further effort was warranted:

- Jointly update guidelines which affect both agencies and incorporate these guidelines into the Fostering Student Success training manual. Said manual will be distributed to all foster care designees and DCF/DCF contracted caseworkers. (2.10 a)
- Provide staff development related to the implementation of this Agreement through scheduled update sessions with DCF/DCF contracted caseworkers or supervisors and the SBBC foster care designees to increase institutionalization of the processes identified in the Fostering Student Success training manual. (2.10 b)
- Work in cooperation with private and public entities that contract with the DCF to provide foster care services. These efforts will include training for Guardians and Attorneys Ad Litem, and the Child Welfare Legal Service Attorneys of the Attorney General's Office on educational issues. (2.10 c)
- DCF caseworkers and the SBBC Foster Care Designees shall follow procedures as defined in the Fostering Student success training manual in order to request school reassignment and transportation when appropriate. (2.11 c)
- The SBBC shall provide transportation for students living in out-of-home licensed placement when it is in the best interest of the student to attend a school not within approved school assigned boundaries of the shelter/foster care home location. Requests are processed within 10 business days of receipt of the request. Notice of approval or denial of a transportation/school reassignment request will be reported to the DCF/DCF Contracted Caseworker and the foster care designee. The SBBC Court Liaison, upon confirmation by the SBBC Transportation Department, will provide the notice. (2.11 d)

- Surrogate Parent/Foster Care Homes. When a child is adjudicated dependent and is placed in out of home care and is identified as ESE or potentially ESE, the foster parent or other caretaker may serve as the parent for educational purposes unless there are more than four children in the home. If there are more than four children in the home, then a Surrogate Parent, as defined in IDEA, must be appointed for:
  - a. student in foster care who are ESE or perceived to be ESE where reunification with their parents is not a goal;
  - b. students for whom the court has terminated a parent's rights;
  - c. children, as determined on a case by case basis, who are entitled by law to a surrogate but who do not fit the criteria for children identified in (a) or (b). (2.15)
- DCF shall ensure that the DCF School Registration Form and its attachments are provided to the SBBC foster care designee at the time of the status change or no later than 72 hours subsequent to the change. The DCF School Registration Form ensures that school personnel have all necessary information to provide for the health and safety of the child and evidence that leads to the application for transportation services. Any delay in the receipt of the DCF School Registration Form delays the application for transportation and could place the child's safety in jeopardy. (2.20 i)
- DCF shall institute a protocol to monitor the delivery of the DCF School Registration Form as recommended in the 2002 evaluation of this Agreement Evaluation. (2.20 k).
- Court Liaisons. The DCF Court Liaison will maintain a current database of clients and their respective caseworkers and shall notify the SBBC Court Liaison of changes. (2.09)

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Director of the Office of Alternative Education/Dropout Prevention and the DCF District Program Manager of Family Safety for DCF, District 10, will revise the 2003-04 Interagency Agreement to reflect the four recommendations outlined below and present the new agreement to the school Board for approval.

1. The Director of the Office of Alternative Education/Dropout Prevention and the District Program Manager of Family Safety for DCF, District 10, will collaborate with ETS to investigate an online implementation of transfer of school registration and transportation requests. The process of transferring school registration and transportation reassignment information on-line will assist the DCF to track and monitor the DCF case workers' compliance with the delivery of the DCF School Registration Forms to the schools, the DCF case workers requests for reassignment and transportation for out-of-school boundary foster care youths, and the SBBC transportation arrangements for these foster care youths.
2. The Director of the Office of Alternative Education/Dropout Prevention and the District Program Manager of Family Safety for DCF, District 10, will investigate an online posting of the Fostering Student Success Training Manual. Notifications of updates to the manual should be sent electronically to affected SBBC and DCF staff. The inclusion of an online manual will ensure all staff members have access to the latest version of the document, irrespective of staff turnover.

3. The Director of the Office of Alternative Education/Dropout Prevention in cooperation with the DCF District Program Manager of Family Safety for DCF, District 10, will review the training that is presently provided. For areas discovered to be deficient in training opportunities, staff will identify, acquire, and implement appropriate training programs. Particular attention shall be placed on educational issues for Guardians and Attorneys Ad Litem, and the Child Welfare Legal Service Attorneys of the Attorney General's Office. In addition, periodic update training for SBBC Foster Care Designees and DCF Caseworkers shall be provided.
4. The Director of the Office of Alternative Education/Dropout Prevention will develop and implement a tracking system that will identify and track the special needs of foster care ESE students. More specifically this tracking system will identify foster care ESE students who require the appointment of surrogate parents, those who will not be reunited with their parents, and ESE foster care students for whom the courts have terminated parental rights.

**The Interagency Agreement between the School Board of Broward County, Florida,  
And the Department of Children and Families, District 10  
Evaluation Report**

**INTRODUCTION**

The School Board of Broward County (SBBC), Florida and the Department of Children and Families (DCF), District 10 signed the fourth Interagency Agreement on June 18, 2002 to improve educational services to children in the foster care system of Broward County. Last year, the SBBC conducted an evaluation of the Interagency Agreement and met the implementation and procedural requirements for thirteen of the fifteen selected items. The two items that were not met are as follows: sharing of information pertaining to out-of-home care students that were served by the DCF and delivery of the DCF School Registration Form to the schools. The recommendations of last year's evaluation formed the basis for the revision of the 2002-03 Interagency Agreement.

Recognizing that children who were in the foster care system may be at risk educationally, the personnel from SBBC and DCF implemented policies and procedures of the first and subsequent Interagency Agreements to facilitate and govern the sharing of information regarding foster care students. Specifically, the agreement permitted the sharing of the following information: school assignment history, health records, attendance records, academic grades, disciplinary records, and other relevant educational information that tracked foster care students as they transferred from school to school due to changes in their foster care placement. The process of information sharing required that personnel from SBBC and DCF electronically match records to identify all foster care students attending Broward County Public Schools.

The Interagency Agreement was designed to stimulate an awareness of foster care students' unique educational needs and provide supportive educational interventions. The agreement also mandated the employment of the following staff members: a guidance counselor and clerical support for the Putting Families First Center and SBBC and DCF Dependency Court Liaisons.

The Putting Families First Center served as an assessment center for children who were removed from their homes by the Broward Sheriff's Office Child Protective Investigations Unit due to abuse, neglect, or abandonment. The primary responsibility of the guidance counselor was to review, interpret, and collect the educational records of these children. The main function of the Dependency Court Liaisons was to coordinate the process of information sharing so that foster care students could be provided with the most appropriate services, ranging from shelter care to reunification, adoption, and independent living.

The 2002-03 Interagency Agreement consisted of 48 items and three sections: Recitals, Special Conditions, and General Conditions. As of January 29, 2003 the implementation of the agreement resulted in the identification of approximately 912 foster care students: 83 students were in pre-kindergarten and kindergarten, 283 in elementary schools, 229 in middle schools, 288 in high schools, and 29 in Adult/Vocational Community Centers (Clement and Eastwood, 2003). Figures 1-6 delineate the demographic composition of foster care students in Broward

County Public Schools during the 2002-03 school year. The demographic data were extracted from Foster Care Research Brief (Clement and Eastwood, 2003).

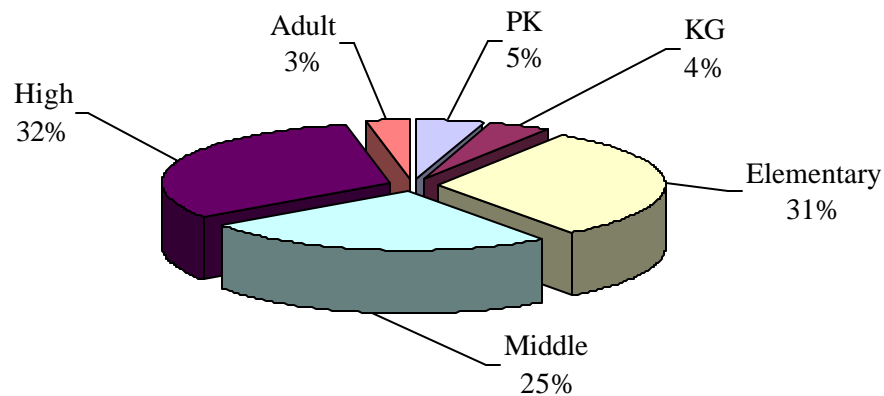


Figure 1. The percentage of foster care students who were enrolled at each level of the Broward County Public Schools during the 2002-03 school year.

Figure 1 shows the distribution of foster care students across the Broward County Public School System. The data indicate that the majority of foster care students were enrolled in high (31.6%) and elementary (31%) schools followed by middle schools, 25.1%. Less than 15% of the foster care students were enrolled in pre-kindergarten (PK), kindergarten (KG), and adult/vocational community centers.

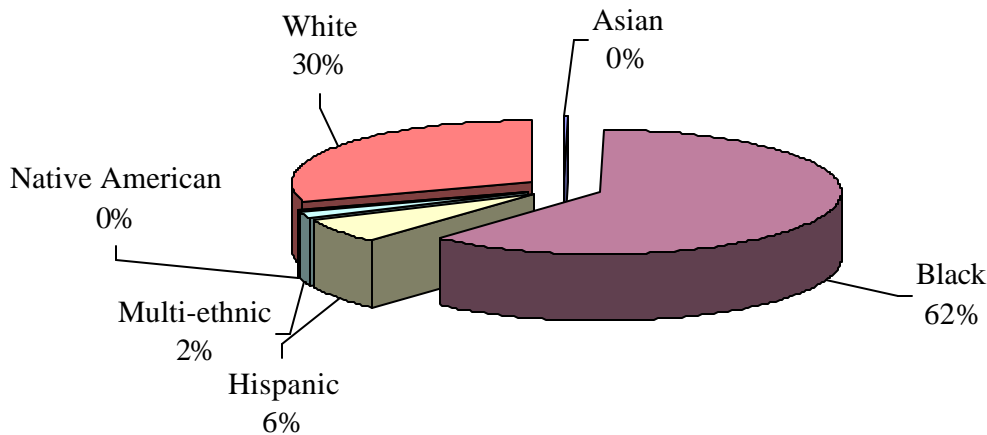


Figure 2. The percentage of foster care students enrolled in Broward County Public Schools during the 2002-03 school year by ethnicity.

Figure 2 shows that the majority of foster care participants were Black students (61.5%) followed by White students (25.7%). Less than 10% of the foster care participants were Asian, Hispanic, Multi-ethnic, and Native American students.

Most foster care participants were male (53%), slightly less than half were classified for Exceptional Student Education (ESE; 45.9%), and the majority qualified for Free or Reduced Price Lunch (FRL; 73.1%). A small percentage of foster care participants were identified as limited English proficient (LEP; 3.3%). The SBBC Foster Care Designees were required to follow the procedures outlined in the manual for Special Programs and Procedures for Exceptional Students to determine the special education needs of foster care students.

The first Interagency Agreement was signed on January 1, 1999, after a Foster Care Standing Committee developed policies and procedures that “strengthened the safety net” for foster care students. The SBBC evaluates the terms of the agreement via a third party evaluator annually to promote revision of the agreement to better meet the needs of foster care students in Broward County. The Office of Alternative Education/Dropout Prevention administered the implementation of the agreement on behalf of the SBBC. The Office of Alternative Education/Dropout Prevention serves students who are at-risk of dropping out of school through the following programs: Educational Alternative Programs, Disciplinary Programs at specialized centers and all traditional schools, Teen Parent Programs, and the Department of Juvenile Justice Educational Services and Community Based Organizations (e.g., Runaway Shelter, Substance Abuse Treatment Centers, and Expulsion Abeyance Programs).

### ***Financial Impact***

The financial impact of this agreement for the Broward County School District for the 2002-03 school year was \$226,941. A total of \$137,587 was allocated for the continued employment of the guidance counselor and clerical support at the Putting Families First Center. An additional \$89,354 was allocated for the continued employment of the SBBC Dependency Court Liaison and support staff. The source of the funds was the operating budget of the Office of Alternative Education/Dropout Prevention.

### ***Purpose of the Evaluation***

The purpose of this evaluation was to document the extent to which personnel from SBBC and DCF complied with 22 of the 48 items on the Interagency Agreement during the 2002-03 school year. The Superintendent’s Designee in collaboration with the DCF District Administrator’s designee identified the 22 items as being of greatest importance for the success of the 2002-03 Interagency Agreement.<sup>1</sup> More specifically, the evaluation study was guided by the following questions:

1. Did the DCF and SBBC representatives meet, at a minimum, on a quarterly basis to define and establish communication protocols, identify responsible staff, and facilitate prompt and substantive information sharing and communication?
2. Did the SBBC identify a foster care designee for each school and establish roles and responsibilities of the designee as part of the Fostering Student Success Training Manual?

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<sup>1</sup> The number of items evaluated increased to 22 from the 15 that were evaluated in the previous report to reflect the increased segmentation of the Articles into more circumscribed requirements in the current Interagency Agreement.

3. Did the DCF and SBBC provide a Court Liaison for shelter and dependency hearings? Did the Court Liaisons maintain procedures that align their work to achieve appropriate educational services for children in the custody of DCF including daily communication with the SBBC Foster Care Designees? Did the DCF Court Liaison maintain a current database of clients and their respective caseworkers and notified the SBBC Court Liaison of changes?
4. Were guidelines that affect both agencies updated and incorporated into the Fostering Student Success Training Manual? Was the manual distributed to all SBBC Foster Care Designees and DCF Caseworkers? Was staff development related to the implementation to this agreement provided to staff?
5. Did DCF Caseworkers and the SBBC Foster Care Designees follow procedures as defined in the Fostering Student Success Training Manual in order to request school reassignment and transportation? Did SBBC provide transportation for students living in out-of-home licensed placements and were procedures and timelines followed? Did the SBBC Court Liaison, upon confirmation by the SBBC Transportation Department provide DCF Caseworkers and SBBC Foster Care Designees with notices of approval/denial of transportation/reassignment requests?
6. Did SBBC and DCF develop and implement collaborative programming to assist students in acquiring independent living skills?
7. Was the need for surrogate parents determined for students with and those perceived to have disabilities, on a case-by-case basis?
8. Did the foster parent or other caretaker serve as the parent for educational purposes when a child was identified as ESE or potentially ESE, adjudicated dependent and was placed in out-of-home care, and placed in a home with less than five children?
9. Were surrogate parents appointed when foster care students were classified as ESE or perceived to be ESE and lived in DCF licensed residential facilities under the following conditions: where reunification with parents was not a goal; the court terminated parent's rights; or when children who did not fit the aforementioned criteria?
10. Did SBBC personnel provide training for surrogate parents and did the training include eligibility, Individual Education Plans (IEP), and placement processes for students with disabilities as well as the impact of abuse and neglect on students' education?
11. Did the DCF provide to the Superintendent of Schools' Designee an updated monthly list of children in foster care residing in licensed residential settings?

12. Did the SBBC provide information on youth truancy to the DCF Designee on a bi-weekly basis in order to support continued school attendance and agency collaboration?
13. Did DCF personnel provide the DCF School Registration Form and its attachments to SBBC Foster Care Designees at the time of the status change or no later than 72 hours subsequent to the change? Did the DCF institute a protocol to monitor the delivery of the DCF School Registration Form as recommended in the 2001-02 evaluation of this agreement?
14. Did SBBC provide a guidance counselor and a clerk at the Putting Families First Center to: prepare educational records reviews for foster care students who were processed through the Center; assist in the stabilization process by providing DCF Caseworkers with educational record reviews on students in foster care; act as a liaison between the SBBC and agencies participating in the Putting Families First Center; and provide educational records review to the Comprehensive Behavioral Health Assessment and the Multidisciplinary staffing?

## METHODS

Data regarding the implementation of the 2002-03 Interagency Agreement were gathered through three methods: interviews, surveys, and review of records, and files. The interview participants consisted of eleven SBBC and DCF personnel.

Three surveys were developed and distributed in January 2003 to 208 SBBC Foster Care Designees, 179 DCF Foster Care Caseworkers, and 46 DCF Contracted Caseworkers. The surveys addressed specific items of the 2002-03 Interagency Agreement that were related to the foster care training manual, staff development, sharing of information between SBBC and DCF personnel, the DCF School Registration Form, surrogate parents, opinions about the impact of the implementation of the agreement on foster care students and their families, and suggestions for improving components of the agreement. The survey items consisted of a combination of a Likert-scale response and open-ended questions. The response rates of the surveys are displayed in Table 1.

Table 1  
*Survey Response Rates*

	Sent		Returned	
	<i>N</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>n</i>	%
SBBC Foster Care Designees	208	181*		87
DCF Caseworkers	179	162		91
DCF Contracted Caseworkers	46	41		89

*Note.* \* Includes 33 (18%) SBBC Foster Care Designees who reported that there were no foster care students enrolled at their schools during the school year as of the time of the survey.

Table 1 shows that the response rates for each of the three surveyed groups were high. The DCF Caseworkers registered a 91%, DCF Contracted Caseworkers responded at 89% while the SBBC Foster Care Designees registered a response rate of 87%. Additionally, the results of the survey

revealed that 33 (18.9%) of the SBBC Foster Care Designees reported that there were no foster care students enrolled at their schools from the beginning of the school year until the time of the survey on January 13, 2003.

## RESULTS

**Question 1. Did the DCF and the SBBC representatives meet, at a minimum, on a quarterly basis to define and establish communication protocols, identify responsible staff, and facilitate prompt and substantive information sharing and communication? (2.07c)**

The SBBC and DCF representatives reported during separate interviews that they established the Foster Care Standing Committee to monitor the implementation of the Interagency Agreement, make recommendations, and promote and facilitate agency collaboration. The members of the Foster Care Standing Committee also reviewed policies, procedures, and practices that impact the education of foster care students. The SBBC and DCF representatives stated that at the time of the interview, the Foster Care Standing Committee had three quarterly meetings: July 17, 2002, October 28, 2002, and January 22, 2003. The fourth meeting took place as scheduled on April 23, 2003. Forty-two individuals served on the Foster Care Standing Committee during the 2002-03 school year. The members of the committee included representatives from DCF, SBBC, Legal Aid, Community Based Solutions (ChildNet), Broward Sheriff's Office (BSO), Office of the Attorney General, and community advocates.

The SBBC and DCF representatives pointed out that communication protocols were defined and established by sub-committee members and reviewed by the larger committee. The data in Table 2 (page 7) provide evidence of the two-way flow of information between DCF and SBBC personnel during the 2002-03 school year.

The data in Table 2 show that the level of collaboration between DCF and SBBC personnel was fair. The data revealed that 26.8% of SBBC Foster Care Designees reported that they always contacted DCF and DCF Contracted Caseworkers when foster care students were in need of additional interventions. On the other hand, the data also show that almost half (48.8%) of the contracted DCF Caseworkers and 29.6% of DCF Caseworkers reported that they always responded to the concerns of the SBBC Foster Care Designees when they were contacted. Less than 20% of the respondents from both groups reported that they were never contacted or that they never responded to the Foster Care Designees about the concerns of the foster care students.

Table 2

*Two-way Flow of information Between DCF and SBBC Personnel*

The DCF caseworker communicated with me (SBBC Foster Care Designee) regularly and/or as needed.

	<i>n</i>	%
Always	19	12.8
Most of the Time	29	19.6
Some of the Time	42	28.4
Once in a While	27	18.2
Never	24	16.2
No response	7	4.7
Total	148	100.0

I (SBBC Foster Care Designee) communicated with the DCF Caseworker when students were in need of additional interventions.

	<i>n</i>	%
Always	73	49.3
Most of the Time	32	21.6
Some of the Time	15	10.1
Once in a While	6	4.1
Never	11	7.4
No response	11	7.4
Total	148	100.0

The SBBC Foster Care Designee at the school, communicated with me when foster care students were in need of additional interventions.

	DCF Caseworker		Contracted Caseworker	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Always	17	10.5	11	26.8
Most of the Time	17	10.5	4	9.8
Some of the Time	29	17.9	6	14.6
Once in a While	31	19.1	11	26.8
Never	41	25.3	7	17.1
No response	27	16.7	2	4.9
Total	162	100.0	41	100.0

I responded to SBBC Foster Care Designee, at the school, when contacted and responded to the concern.

	DCF Caseworker		Contracted Caseworker	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Always	48	29.6	20	48.8
Most of the Time	42	25.9	9	22.0
Some of the Time	11	6.8	4	9.8
Once in a While	4	2.5	2	4.9
Never	21	13.0	2	4.9
No response	36	22.2	4	9.8
Total	162	100.0	41	100.0

**Question 2 Did the SBBC identify a foster care designee for each school and establish roles and responsibilities of the designees as part of the Fostering Student Success Training Manual? (2.08)**

The SBBC representatives reported that during the 2002-03 school year there was a foster care designee at 217 K-12 public and charter schools in Broward County. The SBBC Court Liaison maintained a roster of school-based foster care designees and communicated changes to the DCF Court Liaison. The results of the survey revealed that 33 (18.9%) of the foster care designees reported that there were no foster care students enrolled at their schools during the school year as of the January 2003 survey.

The SBBC representatives outlined the roles and responsibilities of the foster care designees as follows:

- determining foster care students transportation needs and submitting the appropriate request forms,
- receiving and submitting the free/reduced lunch forms,
- initiating a confidential folder for each foster care student,
- notifying the Exceptional Student Education (ESE) specialist to review the foster care students records for current and potential ESE eligibility,
- determining the need for the foster care students to be assigned surrogate parents,
- reviewing foster care students educational data on TERMS,
- notifying the social worker of the foster care students' status,
- conferring with foster care students,
- documenting interventions on the L-27 Panel,
- development of intervention plans in cooperation with the Child Study Team,
- communicating with the DCF Caseworkers, and
- facilitating transition when the foster care student was reassigned to another school or when the student left the foster care system.

A review of the manual by the independent evaluator validated the statements made by the SBBC representatives concerning the roles and responsibilities of the SBBC Foster Care Designees. The data in Table 3 shows that the majority of foster care designees initiated and maintained a confidential folder for each foster care student, facilitated transition when foster care students were assigned to another school or exited foster care, and notified the social worker of the foster care students' status.

As shown in Table 3 (page 9), 77% of the SBBC Foster Care Designees reported that they have "always" initiated and maintained a confidential folder for each foster care student, 35.1% always facilitated transition when foster care students were assigned to another school or exited foster care, while 56% always notified the DCF and Contracted Caseworkers of the student's status. Less than 5% of SBBC Foster Care Designees never maintained a confidential folder for each foster care student, facilitated transition when foster care students were assigned to another school or exited foster care, or notified the social worker of the students' status.

Table 3

*Roles and Functions Performed by the SBBC Foster Care Designees During the 2002-03 School Year*

	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
I initiated and maintained the confidential folder for each foster care student.		
Always	114	77.0
Most of the Time	17	11.5
Some of the Time	5	3.4
Once in a While		
Never	4	2.7
No response	8	5.4
Total	148	100.0
I facilitated transition when foster care students were assigned to another school or exited foster care.		
Always	52	35.1
Most of the Time	34	23.0
Some of the Time	19	12.8
Once in a While	5	3.4
Never	16	10.8
No response	22	14.9
Total	148	100.0
I notified the social worker of the child's status.		
Always	83	56.1
Most of the Time	31	21.0
Some of the Time	18	12.2
Once in a While	6	4.1
Never	3	2.0
No response	7	4.7
Total	148	100.0

**Question 3. Did the DCF and the SBBC provide a Court Liaison for Shelter and Dependency Hearings? Did the Court Liaisons maintain procedures that align their work to achieve appropriate educational services for children in the custody of DCF including daily communication with the SBBC Foster Care Designees? Did the DCF Court Liaison maintain a current database of clients and their respective caseworkers and notified the SBBC Court Liaison of changes? (2.09)**

The independent evaluator's review of SBBC's and DCF's records revealed that both agencies had employed Court Liaisons for Shelter and Dependency Hearings during the 2002-03 school year. The SBBC representatives described Shelter Hearings as legal reviews that must take place when the Broward Sheriff's Office (BSO) removed a child from the home due to abuse, neglect, abandonment, or other forms of maltreatment. The role of the SBBC Court Liaison at the Shelter

Hearings was to provide supporting documentation at the request of the Attorney General and to obtain information regarding the child's new legal status and placement. The SBBC Court Liaison position was vacant from June 14, 2002 until October 14, 2002.

In an interview the SBBC Court Liaison pointed out that the information obtained at the Shelter and Dependency Hearings was communicated to the SBBC Foster Care Designees via electronic mail within 24 hours. The SBBC Court Liaison also stated that when school personnel received this information they were able to initiate transportation requests, provide appropriate support/counseling services, free lunch, and address other immediate needs of the foster care students.

The SBBC personnel stated that foster care students' data were entered into the district's database that included student demographic information provided via the DCF School Registration Forms. The SBBC personnel noted that data related to behavioral interventions, social work services, psychological evaluations, exceptional student education (ESE), 504 plans (part of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act), dropout prevention programs, and Department of Juvenile Justice involvement were also included in the SBBC database for foster care students. The DCF personnel reported that each DCF Caseworker was required to update foster care students' information sheets for input of this data into DCF's statewide database when changes were made to the students' status. The SBBC and DCF databases were matched by the court liaisons weekly to determine if there were discrepancies.

The SBBC Court Liaison reported that she communicated with the SBBC Foster Care Designees via group electronic mail frequently about procedures related to foster care students and the performance of their roles and functions. The SBBC Court Liaison further stated that group electronic mail was also used to address system-wide issues or updates.

The SBBC Court Liaison reported that she maintained a database of foster care designees and their school assignments during the 2002-03 school year. The SBBC Court Liaison stated that data regarding the changes of foster care designees were communicated to DCF Caseworkers as soon as changes were made. The independent evaluator's review of the logs kept by the SBBC Court Liaison revealed that the SBBC Court Liaison reported changes in foster care designees to the DCF Court Liaison who then disseminated the information to the DCF and DCF Contracted Caseworkers.

The SBBC and DCF Court Liaisons reported during separate interviews that they communicated on a daily basis by phone, in person, by using the mailbox set aside in the Broward County Courthouse, and through electronic mail. The Court Liaisons stated that the court mailbox was used when documents could not be sent through electronic mail or faxed. The SBBC Court Liaison pointed out that she communicated with the DCF Court Liaison via electronic mail at least three times weekly and met on a weekly basis to collaborate on issues related to foster care students, training activities, transportation, and court ordered matters.

**Question 4. Were guidelines that affected both agencies updated and incorporated into the Fostering Student Success training manual? Was the manual distributed to all foster care designees and DCF and DCF Contracted Caseworkers? Was staff development related to the implementation to this Agreement provided to staff? (2.10)**

The SBBC Court Liaison reported that the Fostering Student Success Training Manual was updated and distributed to 171 foster care designees at the training session that was held on September 24, 2002. The court liaisons pointed out that the manuals were mailed to all of the schools that did not have a representative at the training session. The independent evaluator reviewed the Fostering Student Success Training Manual and verified that it was updated for the 2002-03 school year. The independent evaluator observed no major procedural changes. Updates included name/organizational changes and re-designing of the manual's layout to make it easier and more interesting to read. In addition, a Fostering Student Success Manual, designed specifically for caseworkers, was compiled and distributed to DCF Caseworkers.

Table 4  
*Did you Receive a Copy of the Fostering Student Success Training Manual?*

	SBBC Foster Care Designees		DCF Caseworkers		DCF Contracted Caseworkers	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Yes	130	83.3	67	41.4	26	63.4
No	18	11.5	59	36.4	11	26.8
Don't Know	7	4.5	15	9.3	4	9.8
No Response	1	0.6	21	13.0		
Total	156*	100.0	162	100.0	41	100.0

*Note.* \* Total includes 8 (5.1%) SBBC Foster Care Designees who reported that there were no foster care students at their schools during the school year as of the time of the survey.

The data in Table 4 revealed that the majority of SBBC Foster Care Designees and less than 50% of the DCF caseworkers received the Fostering Student Success Training Manual. However, it should be noted that the surveys were returned before most of the training, at which the manuals would be distributed, had taken place. More specifically, the data in Table 4 show that 83.3% of the SBBC Foster Care Designees, 41.4% of the DCF Caseworkers, and 63.4% of the DCF Contracted Caseworkers received the Fostering Student Success Training Manual. The SBBC Court Liaison reported that training was conducted on foster care educational issues for 27 representatives from private and public entities. However, attendance did not include staff from Guardians and Attorneys Ad Litem, and the Child Welfare Legal Service Attorneys of the Attorney General's Office as of January 13, 2003.

The SBBC Court Liaison reported that staff development activities were conducted during the 2002-03 school year for SBBC and DCF personnel. The SBBC Court Liaison reported that the content of the training included an overview of the of the Interagency Agreement, the resources of the Broward County Public School System, the DCF School Registration Form, and the Broward County School registration process, the educational stability of foster care students, placement decisions, procedures related to transportation, educational evaluations, court orders, exceptional students education (ESE), and surrogate parents.

Table 5

*Did You Participate in the School Board Sponsored Training?*

	SBBC Foster Care				DCF Contracted	
	Designees		Caseworkers		Caseworkers	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Yes	131	83.4	64	39.5	22	53.6
No	22	14.0	14	8.6	5	12.2
Don't Know	4	2.5	63	38.8	13	31.7
No Response			21	12.9	1	2.4
Total	157*	100.0	162	100.0	41	100.0

*Note.* \* Total includes 9 (3.2%) foster care designees who reported that there were no foster care students at their schools during the school year as of the time of the survey.

Table 5 shows the number and percent of SBBC Foster Care Designees who reported that they participated in training/staff development activities related to the implementation of the 2002-03 Interagency Agreement. This training session was provided on September 24, 2002. As shown in Table 5, 83.4% of the SBBC Foster Care Designees reported that they participated in the training. Separate training sessions were provided for DCF Caseworkers and Contracted Caseworker. As of January 13, 2003, 39.5% of the DCF Caseworkers, and 53.7% of the DCF Contracted Caseworkers reported that they participated staff development activities.

The DCF Court Liaison reported that training materials and information related to the 2002-03 Interagency Agreement were distributed to the DCF Caseworkers during seven workshops held in late July 2002. These July workshops covered issues pertaining to the opening of the school year such as registration and transportation; these workshops were separate from the total training specified in the Agreement. The DCF Court Liaison pointed out that because there was a high rate of turn over among DCF caseworkers, DCF conducted trainings for caseworkers were held on numerous occasions throughout the 2002-03 school year. The DCF Court Liaison also reported that the Fostering Success Training Manual was distributed to all contracted case management agencies including Kids in Distress, Children's Home Society, Neighbors to Families, and Camelot. The records reviewed by the independent evaluator revealed that 171 SBBC Foster Care Designees and 32 DCF Caseworkers and Contracted Caseworkers were trained by January 20, 2003.

**Question 5. Did DCF Caseworkers and the SBBC Foster Care Designees follow procedures as defined in the Fostering Student Success Training Manual in order to request school reassignment and transportation? Did the SBBC provide transportation for students living in out-of-home licensed placements and were procedures and timelines followed? Did the SBBC Court Liaison, upon confirmation by the SBBC Transportation Department provide DCF Caseworkers and SBBC Foster Care Designees with notices of approval/denial of transportation/reassignment requests? (2.11 c, d, e)**

The SBBC Director of Transportation reported that as of May 27, 2003, 425 requests were received for foster care students who were relocated outside of their schools' boundaries. Of these, 385 (90.5%) were approved and transportation provided. Nineteen requests (4.5%) were denied because transportation resources were not available ( $n=16$ ), the student lived with two

miles of the school ( $n=2$ ), or the student attended a charter school ( $n=1$ ). An additional 17 (4.0%) students moved after submitting request but before being routed. Contracted transportation was arranged for two students, and requests from four students were pending. The Transportation Department also reported that 356 of the 385 (92.5%) approved requests were completed within 10 days of receiving the request. Sixteen (4.2%) requests were approved in 11 to 15 days, and 13 (3.4%) requests required 16 or more days to approve. The SBBC Court Liaison reported that she delivered the notices of approval and denial to the caseworkers and the foster care designees.

Requests for transportation were made when foster care students changed residences but chose to remain at their home schools. When it was decided that the foster care students should remain at their home schools, the DCF Caseworkers were required to provide the SBBC Foster Care Designees at the foster care students' home schools with updated DCF School Registration Forms. The information on the forms must be accurate and included the following: name, date of birth, current home address, (with city and zip code), foster parent, guardian or placement contact person, home and emergency phone numbers, and special needs eligibilities (i.e., ESE). The SBBC Foster Care Designee was required to complete the transportation request forms and fax them to the SBBC Dependency Court Liaison who processed the requests. The SBBC Court Liaison was also required to input the transportation requests into the transportation database for foster care students. The routers from the Transportation Department were required to process the requests and submit route numbers and drop-off and pick-up times to the SBBC Court Liaison, who transmitted the new transportation arrangements to the appropriate SBBC Foster Care Designees and caseworkers. The SBBC personnel pointed out that this process required two weeks and, during this time DCF personnel were responsible for seeing that the student is transported to school.<sup>2</sup>

Table 6

*Transportation was Provided by the SBBC Within 10 Days After Notifying the SBBC, School-based Foster Care Designee of the Need.*

	DCF Caseworkers	DCF Contracted Caseworkers	
		<i>n</i>	%
Always	14	5	12.2
Most of the Time	29	9	22.0
Some of the Time	39	4	9.8
Once in a While	20	8	19.5
Never	27	11	26.8
No response	33	4	9.7
Total	162	41	100.0

As shown in Table 6 (page 14), 8.6% of the DCF Caseworkers and 12.2% of the Contracted Caseworkers reported that transportation was always provided within ten business days of

<sup>2</sup> The counting for the 10-day requirement to provide transportation may begin at different points in time for the various entities involved. For instance, the DCF caseworker may begin counting the 10 days when the request form is submitted, but the Transportation Department does not begin counting until they receive the form. The delay between these two events may result in a substantial number of transportation delays reported by the DCF caseworkers and fewer by the Transportation Department.

notification, while 26.5% DCF Caseworkers and 34.2% of the Contracted Caseworkers reported that transportation was always provided or provided most of the time. In addition, 16.7% of the DCF Caseworkers and 26.8% of the Contracted Caseworkers reported that transportation was never provided within ten business days.

Table 7  
*Processing of Requests for Reassignment/Transportation by SBBC Foster Care Designees*

	<i>n</i>	%
I received a request for out-of-boundary transportation at the time of the child's status change.		
Always	15	10.1
Most of the Time	20	13.5
Some of the Time	22	14.9
Once in a While	24	16.2
Never	44	29.7
No response	23	15.5
Total	148	100.0
I submitted the transportation request form within 24 hours to the office of Alternative Education for immediate processing.		
Always	50	33.8
Most of the Time	26	17.6
Some of the Time	8	5.4
Once in a While	4	2.7
Never	31	21.0
No response	29	19.6
Total	148	100.0

As shown in Table 7, 23.6% of the SBBC Foster Care Designees reported that they received the request for out-of-boundary transportation from the DCF Caseworkers at the time of the foster care students change of status always or most of the time. Table 7 also shows that 51.4% of the SBBC Foster Care Designees reported that they always or most of the time submitted the requests for transportation within 24 hours to the Office of Alternative Education.

DCF personnel reported that alternative transportation was arranged for the foster care students who were not routed within ten business days. The DCF Court Liaison stated that examples of alternative arrangements included the foster parent transporting the foster care students, or having DCF personnel transport these students.

The Superintendent's Designee reported that requests for transportation increased during the 2002-03 school year indicating a need to examine the placements of foster care students in terms of their proximity to their home schools. The Superintendent's Designee pointed out that the determination as to whether a foster care student should remain at his/her school and be transported across boundaries is made on a case-by-case basis by a team consisting of the DCF caseworker, caregiver, and school staff working with the student.

**Question 6. Did the SBBC and DCF develop and implement collaborative programming to assist students requiring Independent Living Skills? (2.12)**

The SBBC and DCF personnel reported that they collaborated in developing the Independent Living Skills curriculum that focused on food preparation, health, and budgeting. The classes in Independent Living Skills were held and at Lauderhill Middle Community School. The SBBC Family and Consumer Sciences Specialist reported that the program was originally conducted on Wednesdays from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. with a capped enrollment of 20 students. Staff reported that during the 2002-03 school year, enrollment in the program increased by 50%, resulting in the establishment of an additional class. The class was conducted over eight weeks and targeted foster care students who were about to exit the foster care system. At the time of the interview, 48 foster care students have participated in the program. The Curriculum Specialist and Family and Consumer Sciences Specialist assisted in the development of the curriculum, recruited the teacher, and ensured that the facility was appropriate.

**Question 7. Was the need for a surrogate parents determined for students with and those who were perceived to have disabilities, on a case-by-case basis? Did the SBBC collect data on the determination of surrogate parents and report that data as part of the annual compliance report? (2.14)**

The SBBC personnel reported that prior to January 28, 2003, 29 requests for a surrogate parents were received from DCF personnel. The SBBC representatives further stated that twenty-five requests were approved, one request was denied for the following reason: as the home had fewer than five (5) children and three referrals were pending receipt of additional paperwork to clarify the status of parental rights. The SBBC personnel reported that overall, 34 surrogate parents have been assigned to 141 foster care students in Broward County. A database was developed to facilitate the tracking of surrogate parenting information including requests for surrogates, student school placements, surrogate's name, contact person at the school, and the reasons for denial of requests for surrogate parents.

**Question 8 Did the foster parent or other caretaker serve as the parent for educational purposes when a child was identified as ESE or potentially ESE, adjudicated dependent and was placed in out-of-home care, and placed in a home with less than five children? (2.15)**

The SBBC personnel reported that the foster care parents served as the surrogates for foster care students who lived in homes with less than five children. Table 8 on the next page summarizes the survey responses from the SBBC and DCF personnel to items related to the role of the caretakers in the delivery of educational services.

Table 8  
*Caretakers' Role in the Delivery of Educational Services*

	SBBC Foster Care Designees		DCF Caseworkers		DCF Contracted Caseworkers	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
The foster parent or other caretaker served as the parent for educational purposes for foster care students.						
Always	48	33.4	17	10.5	10	24.4
Most of the Time	49	33.1	57	35.2	12	29.3
Some of the Time	35	23.7	35	21.6	8	19.5
Once in a While	6	4.1	8	4.9	7	17.1
Never	6	4.1	15	9.3	2	4.9
No response	4	2.8	30	18.5	2	4.9
Total	148	100.0	162	100.0	41	100.0
The foster parent or other caretaker served as the parent for educational purposes when foster students were identified as ESE (Exceptional Student Education).						
Always	45	30.4	17	10.5	12	29.3
Most of the Time	50	33.8	49	30.3	7	17.1
Some of the Time	21	14.2	33	20.4	8	19.5
Once in a While	2	1.4	13	8.0	8	19.5
Never	12	8.1	18	11.1	4	9.8
No response	18	12.2	32	19.8	2	4.9
Total	148	100.0	162	100.0	41	100.0

As shown in Table 8, 33.4% of the SBBC Foster Care Designees, 10.5% of the DCF Foster Care Caseworkers, and 24.3% of the DCF Contracted Caseworkers indicated that a foster parent or other caretaker always served as the parent to meet the educational needs of foster care students. Table 8 also shows that 30.4% of the SBBC Foster Care Designees, 10.5% of the DCF Public Caseworkers, and 29.2% of the DCF Contracted Caseworkers reported that a foster parent or other caretaker always served as the parent for educational purposes when foster care students was identified as ESE or potentially ESE students. The survey data revealed that less than 10% of the foster care designees and caseworkers reported that foster parents or caretakers never served as the parent for educational purposes for ESE foster care students.

**Question 9. Were surrogate parents appointed when a foster care student was classified as ESE or perceived to be ESE and was in a DCF licensed residential facility under the following conditions: where unification with parents was not a goal; when the court terminated a parent's rights; and when children who did not fit the criteria were considered on a case-by-case basis? (2.16)**

The SBBC personnel reported that a surrogate parent was appointed when a student was identified as ESE or was perceived to be eligible for ESE and the student was in a DCF licensed residential facility. A surrogate was appointed when it was determined that the whereabouts of the student's biological parent was unknown or when the rights were terminated through the court system.

Table 9

*The Appointment of Surrogate Parents for Broward County ESE Foster Care Students Who Lived in a Licensed Residential Home With More Than Four Children*

	SBBC Foster Care Designees		DCF Caseworkers		DCF Contracted Caseworkers	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
A surrogate parent was requested when a student is ESE or perceived to be ESE and is a licensed residential home with more than four children.						
Always	29	19.6	19	11.7	6	14.6
Most of the Time	13	8.8	20	12.4	6	14.6
Some of the Time	8	5.4	17	10.5	7	17.1
Once in a While	4	2.7	17	10.5	5	12.2
Never	61	41.2	46	28.4	11	26.8
No response	33	22.3	43	26.5	6	14.6
Total	148	100.0	162	100.0	41	100.0

The data in Table 9 revealed that less than a third of SBBC Foster Care Designees (19.6%), DCF Caseworkers (11.7%), and DCF Contracted Caseworkers (14.6%) reported that they always requested surrogate parents for ESE when they resided in a licensed residential home with more than four children. The survey data revealed that almost half of the SBBC Foster Care Designees and less than one-third of DCF Caseworkers reported that surrogate parents were never appointed for ESE foster care students when they resided in a licensed residential home with more than four children.

**Question 10. Did the SBBC provide training for surrogate parents? Did the training include eligibility, Individual Education Plans (IEP), and placement processes for students with disabilities as well as the impact of abuse and neglect on students' education? (2.17)**

The SBBC personnel reported that as surrogate parents were appointed throughout the year, training was held when three or more new surrogates were identified. The SBBC personnel reported that overall, twelve new surrogates were trained during the summer. The SBBC personnel pointed out that the surrogate parent training seminars addressed the following:

- Procedural safeguards for ESE students including the IEP process,
- The role of surrogate parents,
- Procedures for initiating contact with students, DCF caseworkers, and ESE specialists, and
- The impact of abuse and neglect on a child's education.

**Question 11. Did the DCF provide to the Superintendent's Designee an updated monthly list of children in foster care residing in licensed residential settings? (2.20)**

The SBBC personnel reported that DCF personnel provided the Superintendent's Designee with current monthly listings of foster care students who resided in licensed residential settings. The SBBC personnel pointed out that the up-dated monthly lists were provided on a regular basis.

The Superintendent's Designee reported that the first part of the 2002-03 contract year was spent reconciling data to increase accuracy.

**Question 12. Did the SBBC provide information on youth truancy to the DCF Designee on a bi-weekly basis in order to support continued school attendance and agency collaboration? (2.20)**

The Superintendent's Designee reported that the SBBC Department of Educational Technology Services (ETS) submitted bi-weekly truancy data to personnel of DCF Department of Management Information System (MIS) through January 2003. The information included foster care students' school, grade, attendance, and external suspensions. The Superintendent's Designee noted that the process had operated smoothly.

Table 10

*I received information on youth truancy on a bi-weekly basis in order to support continued school attendance and agency collaboration*

	DCF Public Caseworkers		DCF Contracted Caseworkers	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Always	8	4.9	7	17.1
Most of the Time	12	7.4	4	9.8
Some of the Time	17	10.5	6	14.6
Once in a While	28	17.3	3	7.3
Never	66	40.7	18	43.9
No response	34	19.2	3	7.3
Total	162	100.0	41	100.0

Table 10 shows the responses from DCF Caseworkers and DCF Contracted Caseworkers regarding the receipt of bi-weekly youth truancy information. The data revealed that less than one-third of the DCF Caseworkers reported that they always received the bi-weekly truancy information, and approximately half of the DCF Contracted Caseworkers reported that they received the truancy information most of the time, some of the time, or once in a while. On the other hand, over 40% of the DCF and DCF contracted caseworkers reported that never received bi-weekly truancy information.

**Question 13. Did DCF personnel provide the DCF School Registration Form and its attachments to the SBBC Foster Care Designees at the time of the status change or no later than 72 hours subsequent to the change? Did the DCF School Registration Form provide school personnel with all the necessary information to provide for the health and safety of the child and evidence that leads to the application for transportation services? Did the DCF institute a protocol to monitor the delivery of the DCF School Registration Form as recommended in the 2002-03 evaluation of this agreement? (2.20)**

The SBBC and DCF Court Liaisons reported that the DCF School Registration Forms and attachments were not always presented to SBBC Foster Care Designees at the time of or within 72 hours of the status change of foster care students. The SBBC Court Liaison pointed out that the DCF School Registration Form ensured that school personnel have all the necessary

information to provide for the health and safety of foster care students and evidence that leads to the application for transportation services. The SBBC Court Liaison pointed out that any delay in the receipt of the DCF School Registration Forms delayed the application for transportation.

Table 11

*Processing of the DCF School Registration Form By SBBC Designees during the 2002-03 School Year*

	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
I received the DCF School Registration Form and accompanying court orders and/psychological evaluations within 72 hours of a child's adjudication as dependent.		
Always	19	12.8
Most of the Time	26	17.6
Some of the Time	39	26.4
Once in a While	39	26.4
Never	17	11.5
No response	8	5.4
Total	148	100.0
Did the DCF School Registration form and accompanying court orders and or psychological evaluations provide you with the necessary information to ensure the health and safety of students?		
Always	21	14.2
Most of the Time	53	35.8
Some of the Time	42	28.4
Once in a While	15	10.1
Never	14	9.5
No response	3	2.0
Total	148	100.0
I ensured that the Data processor revise the foster care students demographic information on TERMS (A03 and A05) within 24 hours of receipt of the DCF School Registration Form		
Always	88	59.5
Most of the Time	26	17.6
Some of the Time	12	8.1
Once in a While	4	2.7
Never	10	6.8
No response	8	5.4
Total	148	100.0

Table 11 shows that 12.8% of the SBBC Foster Care Designees always received the DCF School Registration Forms and attachments within 72 hours of a child's change of status. An additional 17.6% of the foster care designees reported that they received the DCF School Registration Form most of the time.

The data in Table 11 also revealed that 50% of the SBBC Foster Care Designees reported that the DCF School Registration Form and attachments provided the necessary information to insure the health and safety of the foster care students all of the time or most of the time.

Finally, more than half (59.5%) of the SBBC Foster Care Designees reported that they ensured that the Data Processor at their schools revised the foster care students demographic information in the SBBC database within 24 hours of receipt of the DCF School Registration Forms. Less than 10% of the SBBC Foster care Designees did not ensure that the foster care students' information was entered in the SBBC database within 24 hours.

Table 12

*Submission of the DCF School Registration form By DCF Caseworkers During the 2002-03 School Year*

	DCF Caseworkers		DCF Contracted Caseworkers	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
I submitted a completed DCF School Registration Form and accompanying court order within 72 hours of a student entering foster care				
Always	43	26.5	19	46.3
Most of the Time	51	34.5	14	34.2
Some of the Time	10	6.2		
Once in a While	4	2.7	1	2.4
Never	18	11.1	3	7.3
No response	36	22.2	4	9.8
Total	162	100.0	41	100.0
I submitted a new DCF School Registration Form at the time of a status change or no later than 72 hours after the change				
Always	45	27.8	13	31.7
Most of the Time	46	28.4	14	34.2
Some of the Time	23	14.2	7	17.1
Once in a While	1	0.6	1	2.4
Never	16	9.9	3	7.3
No response	31	19.1	3	17.3
Total	162	100.0	41	100.0

The data in Table 12 illustrate that less than one-third of the DCF case workers reported that they always submitted the completed DCF School Registration Forms and attachments within 72 hours of the foster care students entering foster care or at the time of status change. Less than 12% of the caseworkers never submitted the DCF School Registration Forms.

The DCF Caseworkers and DCF Contracted Caseworkers were surveyed regarding DCF instituting a protocol to monitor the delivery of the DCF School Registration Form. The results of the survey are presented in Table 13.

Table 13

*Did DCF Institute a Protocol to Monitor the Delivery of the DCF School Registration Form?*

	DCF Caseworkers		DCF Contracted Caseworkers	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Yes	87	53.7	27	65.9
No	7	4.3	3	7.3
Don't Know	46	28.4	10	24.4
No Response	22	13.6	1	2.4
Total	162	100.0	41	100.0

The data in Table 13 show that over half of the DCF Caseworkers reported that DCF personnel had implemented a protocol to monitor the delivery of the DCF School Registration Form. Fewer than one-third of the caseworkers did not know if the protocol had been implemented, while less than 10% percent reported that the protocol had not been implemented. The DCF personnel reported that at the beginning of the 2002-03 school year, DCF designed and implemented a protocol for logging and tracking the School Registration Forms for foster care students. The DCF personnel further stated that the tracking log had two functions: first, to serve as a master list to verify the names of foster care students and second, to verify the dates that the DCF School Registration Forms were delivered. The DCF personnel stated that the second objective was not realized.

**Question 14. Did the SBBC provide a guidance counselor and a clerk at the Putting Families First Center to: prepare an educational records review for foster care students who are processed through the Center as part of the daily early intervention services determination; assist in the stabilization process by providing DCF/contracted caseworkers with educational record reviews on students in foster care; act as a liaison between the SBBC and agencies participating in the Putting Families First Center; and participate in the Comprehensive Behavioral Health Assessment and the Multidisciplinary staffing? (2.21)**

The Superintendent's Designee reported that a guidance counselor and a clerk were appointed to work at the Putting Families First Center. The SBBC personnel reported that the counselor submitted placement and educational reports on all foster care students that were processed through the Center. The SBBC personnel stated that as of January 31, 2003, the guidance counselor submitted 864 reports. The SBBC personnel pointed out that these reports were sent as needed and appropriate to the DCF and DCF Contracted Caseworkers and the Children's Protective Services Unit of Broward Sheriff's Office. In addition, the guidance counselor provided daily reports to the SBBC Court Liaison for reference during shelter hearings.

The SBBC personnel reported that the guidance counselor participated in Comprehensive Behavioral Health Assessment and Multidisciplinary Staffing. The SBBC personnel reported that as of January 31, 2003, 232 Comprehensive Behavioral Health Assessment and Multidisciplinary Staffing reports were submitted.

*Perceptions of Interagency Agreement Effectiveness*

The following are perceptions of SBBC and DCF personnel regarding the effectiveness of the Interagency Agreement:

- Students who are able to remain in their home schools exhibit good attendance and maintain their existing social and emotional contacts,
- Students taking Independent Living Skills classes learn how to cook,
- Students increase their grade point averages,
- In the last 3 years, the number of times a foster care student was removed from his/her home school decreased, thereby increasing the stabilization process,
- The number of students with surrogates increased from 5 to 135. This increase indicates that “people are watching out for kids.”
- The agreement helps ensure students in foster care receive the attention they deserve,
- Families receive more services,
- Collaboration between the agencies has improved communication so that more structured services and care can be provided to students,
- Foster care students are no longer invisible to school personnel,
- The agreement eliminated the need for students to change schools since transportation is now provided,
- The agreement helped students in their transition to foster homes,
- The process makes students more comfortable,
- There is more communication between the school and DCF, and
- The agreement has helped to identify students more quickly.

One caseworker said, “For my clients, it has been a positive experience. It has allowed them to remain in the same school with friends, teachers, and other significant relationships that they had cultivated.” Another caseworker reported, “It allows for the educational stability in their [foster care students] lives while everything else was chaotic.”

The following are suggestions from DCF and SBBC personnel for improving the Interagency Agreement:

- Make the foster care designee a stipend position to reinforce its importance,
- Examine the possibility of accessing alternative to suspension programs for children in foster care,
- Provide before and after school care in middle and high schools,
- Require contracted agencies to share all client information with the SBBC,
- Address early intervention services for children in foster care and coordinate with Head Start,
- Make SBBC and DCF terminology consistent,
- The 10 days it takes to arrange for transportation could be shorter,
- Ensure that interim transportation is provided by DCF,
- Organize SBBC and DCF work schedules so that SBBC employees can have more flexible hours to meet with DCF staff,
- The amount of time to re-route buses needs to be shortened, and
- School records should be made available to DCF employees.

- In some cases, School-based Designees are unsure about what to do, implying that more training is necessary,
- Would like a list of school services that are available to students (e.g., anger management classes),
- Would like report cards and interim reports automatically mailed or faxed to DCF caseworkers,
- Would like to be notified about a student's truancy from school, and
- Improve communication between SBBC designees and DCF caseworkers.

## SUMMARY

The following table provides a summary of the findings and specifies the level of progress that the SBBC and DCF have made on the implementation on the 22 selected items.

	<b>INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT ITEMS</b>	<b>LEVEL OF PROGRESS</b>	<b>FINDINGS</b>
2.07 (c)	<p><b>Agency Collaboration.</b> In order to support continued collaboration, DCF and SBBC representatives agree to meet, at a minimum, on a quarterly basis in order to:</p> <p>c) Define and establish communication protocols, identify responsible staff, and facilitate prompt and substantive information sharing and communications between DCF and SBBC.</p>	SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS	The SBBC and DCF established the Foster Care Standing Committee to monitor the implementation of the Interagency Agreement, make recommendations, promote, and facilitate agency collaboration. Communication protocols were defined and established by sub-committee members and reviewed by members of the larger committee. Collaboration between the two agencies was fair. The Foster Care Standing Committee had four quarterly meetings: July 17, 2002, October 28, 2002, January 22, 2003, and April 23, 2003.
2.08	<p><b>Foster Care Designees.</b> SBBC agrees to identify a foster care designee for each school and to establish roles and responsibilities of the designee as part of the Fostering Student Success training manual. SBBC Court Liaison will maintain a current roster of school based foster care designees and provide any changes to the DCF Court Liaison.</p>	SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS	There was a foster care designee at 217 K-12 public and charter schools in the district during the 2002-03 school year. The Fostering Student Success Training Manual delineated the roles and responsibilities of SBBC Foster Care Designees. The SBBC Court Liaison maintained a roster of school-based foster care designees and communicated changes to the DCF Court Liaison.

	INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT ITEMS	LEVEL OF PROGRESS	FINDINGS
2.09	<p><b>Court Liaisons.</b> DCF and SBBC agree to each provide a Court Liaison for Shelter and Dependency Hearings. Court liaisons shall maintain procedures that will align their work to achieve appropriate educational services for children in the custody of DCF. The SBBC Dependency Court Liaison is responsible for daily communication with the SBBC Foster Care Designees to share the change in placement as reported at the Dependency Shelter Hearings. The DCF Court Liaison will maintain a current database of clients and their respective caseworkers and shall notify the SBBC Court Liaison of changes. A change in caseworker will result in the submission of a new School Registration Form so that schools have accurate contact information.</p>	<p>SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS FOR SBBC</p> <p>LIMITED PROGRESS NOTED FOR DCF</p>	<p>The independent evaluator's review of SBBC's and DCF's records revealed that both agencies had employed Court Liaisons for Shelter and Dependency Hearings during the 2002-03 school year. Interviews with the Court Liaisons and records indicated that they communicated and collaborated almost daily. The SBBC Court Liaison communicated the information obtained at the Shelter and Dependency Hearings to the SBBC Foster Care Designees via electronic mail. The SBBC Court Liaison maintained a database of foster care designees and their school assignments during the 2002-03 school year and notified DCF personnel of changes. However, the DCF personnel did not create an additional database of clients and caseworkers as a statewide database is maintained by DCF. The SBBC and DCF databases were matched electronically reviewed by the court liaisons biweekly to determine if there were discrepancies. The independent evaluator's review of the logs kept by the SBBC Court Liaison revealed that the SBBC Court Liaison reported changes in foster care designees to the DCF caseworkers.</p>
2.10 (a)	<p><b>Staff Development.</b> Each party agrees to:</p> <p>a) jointly update guidelines which affect both agencies and incorporate these guidelines into the Fostering Student Success manual. Said manual will be distributed to all foster care designees and DCF/DCF contracted caseworkers.</p>	<p>PROGRESS NOTED</p>	<p>The Fostering Student Success Training Manual was updated for the 2002-03 school year. No major procedural changes were made; updating involved only name/organizational changes and re-formatting of the manual. The manuals were distributed to 171 SBBC Foster Care Designees who attended the training session on September 24, 2002. The manuals were mailed to those schools that were not represented. The manuals were also distributed to DCF Caseworkers. Results of the surveys revealed that 83.3% of the SBBC Foster Care Designees, 41.4% of the DCF caseworkers, and 63.4% of the DCF contracted caseworkers reported receiving copies of the manual when surveyed in January 2003.</p>

	INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT ITEMS	LEVEL OF PROGRESS	FINDINGS
2.10 (b)	b) provide staff development related to the implementation of this Agreement through scheduled update sessions with DCF/DCF contracted caseworkers or supervisors and the SBBC foster care designees to increase institutionalization of the processes identified in the Fostering Student Success training manual.	PROGRESS NOTED	The SBBC Court Liaison reported that staff development activities were conducted during the fall of the 2002-03 school year for SBBC and DCF personnel. The content of the training included an overview of the of the Interagency Agreement, the resources of the Broward County Public School System, the DCF School Registration Form, and the Broward County School registration process, the educational stability of foster care students, placement decisions, procedures related to transportation, educational evaluations, court orders, exceptional students education (ESE), and surrogate parents. The results of the survey showed that 83.4% of the SBBC Foster Care Designees, 39.5% of the DCF Caseworkers, and 53.6% of the DCF Contracted Caseworkers reported that they participated in staff development activities during the 2002-03 school year. The records reviewed by the independent evaluator revealed that as of January 20, 2003, 171 SBBC Foster Care Designees and 32 DCF caseworkers and DCF contracted caseworkers were trained.
2.10 (c)	c) work in cooperation with private and public entities that contract with the DCF to provide foster care services. These efforts will include training for Guardians and Attorneys Ad Litem, and the Child Welfare Legal Service Attorneys of the Attorney General's Office on educational issues.	PROGRESS NOTED	The SBBC Court Liaison reported training 27 representatives from private and public entities on foster care educational issues at the time of the January 2003 interview had been completed. No training was held specifically for Guardians and Attorneys Ad Litem, and the Child Welfare Legal Service Attorneys of the Attorney General's Office as of January 13, 2003.

	INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT ITEMS	LEVEL OF PROGRESS	FINDINGS
2.11 (c)	<p><b>Educational Stabilization.</b> This Agreement ensures that:</p> <p>(c) DCF caseworkers and the SBBC Foster Care Designees shall follow procedures as defined in the Fostering Student success training manual in order to request school reassignment and transportation when appropriate.</p>	PROGRESS NOTED	<p>The survey showed that the foster care designees did not always submit the request for transportation within 24 hours to the Office of Alternative Education. In addition, the SBBC Foster care Designees did not always receive the request for out-of-boundary transportation from the DCF Caseworkers at the time of the foster care students' change of status. The survey showed that 33.8% of the SBBC Foster Care Designees reported that they always submitted the request for transportation within 24 hours to the Office of Alternative Education. Additionally, 29.7% of the foster care designees reported that they never received requests for out-of-boundary transportation at the time of the foster students' status change.</p>
2.11 (d)	<p>d) The SBBC shall provide transportation for students living in out-of-home licensed placement when it is in the best interest of the student to attend a school not within approved school assigned boundaries of the shelter/foster care home location. Requests are processed within 10 business days of receipt of the request. Notice of approval or denial of a transportation/school reassignment request will be reported to the DCF /DCF Contracted Caseworker and the foster care designee. The SBBC Court Liaison, upon confirmation by the SBBC Transportation Department, will provide the notice.</p>	PROGRESS NOTED	<p>The Director of Transportation reported receiving 425 requests for transportation on behalf of foster care students as of May 27, 2003. Of these, 385 (90.5%) were approved and transportation was provided. The Transportation Department also reported that 356 of the 385 (92.5%) approved requests were completed within 10 days of receiving the request. Sixteen (4.2%) requests were approved in 11 to 15 days, and 13 (3.4%) requests required 16 or more days to approve. The SBBC Court Liaison reported that she delivered the notices of approval and denial to the caseworkers and the foster care designees. The survey data revealed that 62.9% of the DCF caseworkers and 63.4% of the contracted caseworkers reported that transportation was provided within ten business days of notification always, most of the time, some of the time, or once in a while. On the other hand, 16.7% of the DCF caseworkers and 26.8% of the contracted caseworkers reported that transportation was never provided within ten business days.</p>

	INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT ITEMS	LEVEL OF PROGRESS	FINDINGS
2.11 (e)	e) DCF retains the responsibility to coordinate temporary transportation for students to and from school during the time that SBBC transportation is being arranged.	SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS	The DCF personnel reported that alternative transportation was arranged for the foster care students who were not routed within ten business days. Examples of alternative arrangements included having foster care parents or DCF personnel transport these students.
2.12	<b>Independent Living Skills.</b> The SBBC and DCF agree to develop and implement collaborative programming to assist students in acquiring independent living skills.	SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS	The SBBC and DCF personnel collaborated in developing the Independent Living Skills curriculum. Classes were operated by the SBBC at Lauderhill Middle Community School. Forty-eight students enrolled in the Independent Living Skills classes for the Fall term ending in December 2002.
2.14	<p><b>Determining Need for a Surrogate Parent.</b> When a student in the care or protective custody of DCF has or is perceived to have a disability, the need for a surrogate parent must be determined by the SBBC on a case-by-case basis consistent with applicable law. The parties acknowledge and agree as follows:</p> <p>a) all students in foster care are not ESE students;</p> <p>b) not every student in foster care who is an ESE student requires the appointment of a surrogate parent; and</p> <p>SBBC shall collect data pursuant to the determination efforts and report that data as part of the annual compliance report. Data will include the number of requests for a surrogate parent approved and denied, and when denied, the reason for denial for children in DCF licensed residential facilities</p>	SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS	The SBBC personnel reported that 29 requests for surrogate parents were received from DCF personnel from the beginning of the 2002-03 school year until January 28, 2003. The SBBC representatives further stated that twenty-five requests were approved, one request was denied as the home had fewer than five (5) children and three referrals were pending receipt of additional paperwork to clarify the status of parental rights. The SBBC personnel reported that overall, 34 surrogate parents were assigned to 141 foster care students in Broward County.

	INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT ITEMS	LEVEL OF PROGRESS	FINDINGS
2.15	<p><b>Surrogate Parent/Foster Care Homes.</b> When a child is adjudicated dependent and is placed in out of home care and is identified as ESE or potentially ESE, the foster parent or other caretaker may serve as the parent for educational purposes unless there are more than four children in the home. If there are more than four children in the home, then a Surrogate Parent, as defined in IDEA, must be appointed for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) student in foster care who are ESE or perceived to be ESE where reunification with their parents is not a goal;</li> <li>b) students for whom the court has terminated a parent's rights;</li> <li>c) children, as determined on a case by case basis, who are entitled by law to a surrogate but who do not fit the criteria for children identified in (a) or (b).</li> </ul>	PROGRESS NOTED	The survey data revealed that less than 40% of the SBBC Foster Care Designees, DCF Foster Care Caseworkers, and DCF Contracted Caseworkers reported that foster parents or other caretakers always served as parents for educational purposes when foster care students were identified as ESE or potentially ESE students.
2.16	<p><b>Surrogate Parents/Residential Facilities.</b> When a student who is ESE or perceived to be ESE is in a DCF licensed residential facility a surrogate must be appointed for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) students in foster care for whom a determination has been made that reunification with their parents is not a goal;</li> <li>a) students in foster care for whom the court has terminated a parent's rights;</li> <li>b) children, as determined on a case by case basis, who are entitled by law to a surrogate but who do not fit the criteria for children identified in (a) or (b).</li> </ul>	SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS	The SBBC personnel reported that surrogate parents were appointed when foster care students were identified for the ESE program or were perceived to be eligible for ESE and the student was in a DCF licensed residential facility. The SBBC personnel pointed out that surrogates were appointed when it was determined that the whereabouts of the student's biological parent was unknown or when the rights were terminated through the court system.

	INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT ITEMS	LEVEL OF PROGRESS	FINDINGS
2.17	<p><b>Training for surrogate Parents.</b></p> <p>a) SBBC agrees to provide training for potential surrogate parents. The training will include eligibility, IEP, and placement processes for students with disabilities as well as the impact of abuse and neglect on said student's education</p> <p>b) Guardians Ad Litem and foster parents may attend surrogate parent training offered by the SBBC.</p>	SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS	<p>The SBBC personnel reported that as surrogate parents were appointed throughout the year, training was held when three or more new surrogates were identified. The SBBC personnel reported that overall, twelve new surrogates were trained during the summer. The SBBC personnel pointed out that the surrogate parent training seminar addressed the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Procedural safeguards for ESE students including the IEP process,</li> <li>• The role of surrogate parents,</li> <li>• Procedures for initiating contact with students, DCF caseworkers, and ESE specialists and,</li> <li>• The impact of abuse and neglect on the education of children.</li> </ul>
2.20 (e)	<p><b>Sharing of Information.</b> Pursuant to the Legislative intent as enumerated in section 23.20, Florida Statutes, each party agrees:</p> <p>e) The DCF shall provide to the Superintendent of Schools an updated monthly list of children in foster care residing in licensed residential settings.</p>	SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS	<p>The SBBC personnel reported that during the 2002-03 school year, DCF personnel provided the Superintendent's Designee with current monthly listings of foster care students who resided in licensed residential settings. The SBBC personnel pointed out that the up-dated monthly lists were provided. The Superintendent's Designee reported that the first part of the 2002-03 contract year through January was spent reconciling data to increase accuracy.</p>
2.20 (g)	<p>g) SBBC shall provide information on youth truancy to the DCF designee on a biweekly basis in order to support continued school attendance and agency collaboration.</p>	SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS	<p>The Superintendent's Designee reported that the SBBC Department of Educational Technology Services (ETS) submitted bi-weekly truancy data to the DCF Department of Management Information System (MIS) during the 2002-03 school year. The information included foster care students' school, grade, attendance, and external suspensions. The Superintendent's Designee noted that the process had operated smoothly.</p>

	INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT ITEMS	LEVEL OF PROGRESS	FINDINGS
2.20 (j)	j) DCF shall ensure that the DCF School Registration Form and its attachments are provided to the SBBC foster care designee at the time of the status change or no later than 72 hours subsequent to the change. The DCF School Registration Form ensures that school personnel have all necessary information to provide for the health and safety of the child and evidence that leads to the application for transportation services. Any delay in the receipt of the DCF School Registration Form delays the application for transportation and could place the child's safety in jeopardy.	PROGRESS NOTED	The SBBC and DCF Court Liaisons reported that the DCF School Registration Forms and attachments were not always presented to SBBC Foster Care Designees at the time of or within 72 hours of the status change of foster care students. Less than one-third of the DCF case workers reported that they always submitted the completed DCF School Registration Forms and attachments within 72 hours of the foster care students entering foster care or at the time of status change. The data also revealed that 12.8% of the SBBC Foster Care Designees always received the DCF School Registration Forms and attachments within 72 hours of a child's change of status. An additional 17.6% of the Foster Care designees reported that they received the DCF School Registration Form most of the time.
2.20 (k)	k) DCF shall institute a protocol to monitor the delivery of the DCF School Registration Form as recommended in the 2002 evaluation of this Agreement Evaluation.	PROGRESS NOTED	The DCF personnel reported that at the beginning of the 2002-03 school year, DCF designed and implemented a protocol for logging and tracking the School Registration Forms for foster care students. The DCF personnel further stated that the tracking log had two functions: first, to serve as a master list to verify the names of foster care students and second, to verify the dates that the DCF School Registration Forms were delivered. The DCF personnel stated that the second objective was not realized. The survey revealed that 65.6% of DCF Contracted Caseworkers and 53.7% of DCF Caseworkers reported that DCF personnel had implemented a protocol to monitor the delivery of the DCF School Registration Form.

	INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT ITEMS	LEVEL OF PROGRESS	FINDINGS
2.21 (a)	<p><b>DCF Intake Facility.</b> The SBBC agrees to provide a guidance counselor and a clerk at the Putting Families First Center or at a successor facility to:</p> <p>a) prepare an educational records review for each child that is processed through the Center. The review shall be made a part of the daily early intervention services determination or provided to the Sheriff's Office, Children's Protective Services Unit.</p>	SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS	The Superintendent's Designee reported that a guidance counselor and a clerk were appointed to work at the Putting Families First Center. The SBBC personnel reported that the counselor submitted placement and educational reports on all foster care students that were processed through the Center.
2.21 (b)	<p>b) assist in the stabilization process by providing DCF/DCF Contracted Caseworkers with educational record reviews on students in foster care as needed and appropriate.</p>	SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS	The SBBC personnel reported that the guidance counselor assisted in the stabilization process by providing DCF Caseworkers/Contracted Caseworkers with educational record reviews on each foster care student. The SBBC personnel pointed out that as of January 31, 2003, the guidance counselor submitted 864 reports.
2.21 (c)	<p>c) act as a liaison between the SBBC and agencies participating in the Putting Families First Center; and</p>	SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS	The SBBC personnel reported that the guidance counselor sent educational record reviews as needed and appropriate to the DCF Caseworkers/Contracted Caseworkers and the Children's Protective Investigation Unit of Broward Sheriff's Office. In addition, the guidance counselor provided daily reports to the SBBC Court Liaison.
2.21 (d)	<p>d) participate in the Comprehensive Behavioral Health Assessment and the Multidisciplinary Staffing.</p>	SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS	The SBBC personnel reported that the guidance counselor participated in Comprehensive Behavioral Health Assessment and Multidisciplinary Staffing. The SBBC personnel reported that as of January 31, 2003, 232 Comprehensive Behavioral Health Assessment and Multidisciplinary Staffing reports were submitted.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The Director of the Office of Alternative Education/Dropout Prevention and the DCF District Program Manager of Family Safety for DCF, District 10, will revise the 2003-04 Interagency Agreement to reflect the four recommendations outlined below and present the new agreement to the school Board for approval.

1. The Director of the Office of Alternative Education/Dropout Prevention and the District Program Manager of Family Safety for DCF, District 10, will collaborate with ETS to investigate an online implementation of transfer of school registration and transportation requests. The process of transferring school registration and transportation reassignment information on-line will assist the DCF to track and monitor the DCF case workers' compliance with the delivery of the DCF School Registration Forms to the schools, the DCF case workers requests for reassignment and transportation for out-of-school boundary foster care youths, and the SBBC transportation arrangements for these foster care youths.
2. The Director of the Office of Alternative Education/Dropout Prevention and the District Program Manager of Family Safety for DCF, District 10, will investigate an online posting of the Fostering Student Success Training Manual. Notifications of updates to the manual should be sent electronically to affected SBBC and DCF staff. The inclusion of an online manual will ensure all staff members have access to the latest version of the document, irrespective of staff turnover.
3. The Director of the Office of Alternative Education/Dropout Prevention in cooperation with the DCF District Program Manager of Family Safety for DCF, District 10, will review the training that is presently provided. For areas discovered to be deficient in training opportunities, staff will identify, acquire, and implement appropriate training programs. Particular attention shall be placed on educational issues for Guardians and Attorneys Ad Litem, and the Child Welfare Legal Service Attorneys of the Attorney General's Office. In addition, periodic update training for SBBC Foster Care Designees and DCF Caseworkers shall be provided.
4. The Director of the Office of Alternative Education/Dropout Prevention will develop and implement a tracking system that will identify and track the special needs of foster care ESE students. More specifically this tracking system will identify foster care ESE students who require the appointment of surrogate parents, those who will not be reunited with their parents, and ESE foster care students for whom the courts have terminated parental rights.

## REFERENCES

- Eastwood, T., & Clement, R. (2003). *Foster care research brief*. Research Brief to the School Board of Broward County, Florida.
- TRA Associates, & Green, M. (2002). *Interagency agreement between Department of Children and Families, District 10, and Broward County Public Schools Evaluation Report*. Evaluation report to the School Board of Broward County, Florida.