

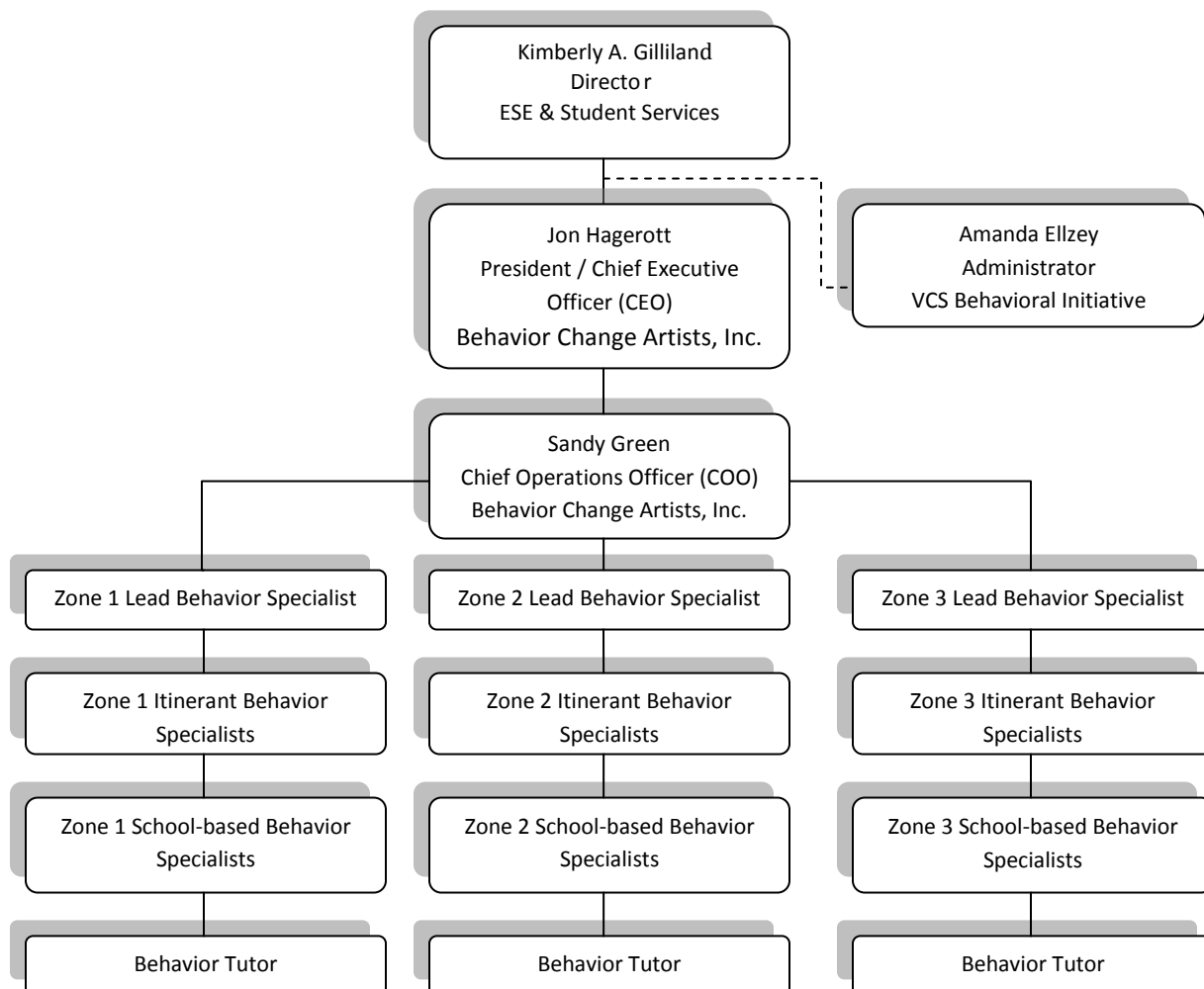
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS REGARDING: Behavior Specialists, Behavior Tutors, Functional Behavior Assessments & Behavior Intervention Plans

Purpose Statement: This Question and Answer guide will provide responses to commonly asked questions regarding the behavior specialist's and behavior tutor's duties and responsibilities in providing behavioral support to Exceptional Education Students. The document will also provide information regarding the development and implementation of a Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) and Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP).

Section 1: Behavior Specialist Supervision, Roles and Responsibilities

Who supervises the behavior specialists?

With the exception of two Volusia County Teachers on Assignment, who are overseen by the ESE department, the behavior specialists are employees of Behavior Change Artists (BCA), Inc.. They are supervised by that company's CEO and COO and appointed supervisory staff. Decisions regarding assignments, contracts, and responsibilities are made in collaboration between Behavior Change Artist supervisors and Volusia County Schools district administrators. The final contract is approved by the school board. The sequence of supervision is as follows:



Are the behavior specialists required to attend IEP, Re-eval or Articulation meetings?

Behavior specialists are not *required* to attend, unless it is a legal meeting for which the behavior specialist has been requested to attend by the school board's legal or compliance department. A behavior specialist may adjust his/her schedule to attend some meetings. It is imperative that the behavior specialist have readily available for the team any documentation, data, graphs or other information by the meeting date. It is the responsibility of the teacher/case manager to inform the behavior specialist of meeting outcomes, especially when a Functional Behavior Assessment/Behavior Intervention Plan (FBA/BIP) has been requested.

Should the behavior specialist organize an FBA/BIP meeting?

It is the responsibility of the teacher/case manager to arrange a meeting to develop or amend an FBA/BIP.

Is a behavior specialist responsible for writing an FBA/BIP?

The FBA/BIP should **never** be written solely by the behavior specialist. The FBA/BIP should always be developed by a team with input from everyone working with the student, including the parents. The behavior specialist may choose to record input from everyone and develop a draft. When there is input from all team members, a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) will be better implemented.

Should the teacher always attend an FBA/BIP meeting?

It is best practice for a teacher to attend an FBA/BIP meeting. If the teacher is not able to attend, the school administrator and team may decide to proceed without him/her. Regardless if the teacher is present or not, if the team develops and approves a plan, the teacher is required to implement it. It is important that an absent teacher get important information, data and suggestions that had been made at the meeting.

Who is responsible for collecting data?

Anyone on the team can collect data. The teacher and/or paraprofessional will collect daily data, usually in the form of a scatter plot. Any member of the team may observe and collect Antecedent/Behavior/Consequence (ABC) data or use another appropriate data tool. A behavior specialist cannot be responsible for all data collection.

If a student comes from another school, county or state with an FBA/BIP, should the behavior specialist immediately plan a meeting to develop a new plan?

No, it is best practice to review the existing plan and take data on the target behaviors listed. The student should be given some time to adjust to his/her new environment to see if:

- the target behaviors have changed in the new environment
- the student's behavior improves significantly or escalates in the new environment
- a plan is necessary, needs to be amended or should be completely redone

What is the behavior specialist's role in preparing for a legal meeting?

The school-based behavior team needs to be sure that the plan is being implemented with fidelity and that there is data available to assess student progress. The behavior specialist is responsible for pulling together and graphing the data that will be shared with the ESE compliance specialist and the district's attorney. In some cases, a BCA Supervisor will attend the meeting with the behavior specialist assigned to that school.

Can a behavior specialist assist in a classroom?

If an ESE student's behavior is indicating the need for behavioral support, teachers and administrators are encouraged to let the behavior specialist observe and assist with behavior management in the classroom prior to

the request for an FBA/BIP. Frequently, a behavior specialist and a teacher working cooperatively can make positive changes in behavior without having to write an FBA/BIP.

The behavior specialist may not be supplanted as classroom teacher, paraprofessional, individual support assistant, or teacher substitute. He/she must work in concurrence with the classroom staff and **MAY NOT** be left alone with a class for any period of time.

What other duties can a behavior specialist perform?

A behavior specialist may conduct social skills lessons in classrooms. They can assist in de-escalating students. They can provide consultation and training to staff if requested to do so by administrators and if their schedules permit.

A behavior specialist may not:

- facilitate academic groups in the classroom
- proctor FCAT or other standardized testing
- administer consequences to discipline referrals
- do lunch duty (but they may observe a student during lunch)
- be responsible for monitoring In-School Suspension (ISS)

Can a behavior specialist work beyond their allotted hours?

Behavior specialists are allotted a specific number of hours based on their school assignments. Only the company CEO can approve extended hours. Emergency situations may alter a behavior specialist's hours at any school. Hours worked over the allotment must be adjusted within the pay period.

Can a behavior specialist be required to make up hours due to illness, vacation, etc.?

No, a behavior specialist does not get paid for time off and is not required to make up time.

Section 2: Behavior tutor

What is a behavior tutor?

The behavior tutor is a position funded through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). This position is intended to provide short-term training to teachers, paraprofessionals, and other school staff by modeling the implementation of proactive behavioral strategies that are components of a teacher's classroom management plan or a Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP) designed for an individual student. Tutors are not assigned to provide technical assistance in crisis management strategies that involve physical intervention. He/she may model the use of de-escalation strategies in pre-crisis stages. The behavior tutor is typically assigned for a period of one to ten school days. The length of the assignment is determined based upon the number and complexity of the intervention strategies to be implemented.

Specific duties of the behavior tutor include:

- keep accurate data as indicated in the BIP
- model appropriate implementation of BIP to school and classroom staff
- collaborate with the supervising Behavior specialist and Administrator regularly
- develop a schedule of how allotted hours will be used
- monitor hours - behavior tutors may not exceed allotted hours
- complete all related tasks as designated by Behavior specialist

Roles and Responsibilities

<i>The behavior tutor may:</i>	<i>The behavior tutor may not:</i>
Provide the allotted amount of time for support as approved by the ESE Leadership Team and the CEO of Behavior Change Artists, Inc.	Extend their hours without prior authorization from the CEO of Behavior Change Artists, Inc.
Start their hours on the same day that the assigned behavior specialist is at the school.	Attempt to begin services without prior instruction from the assigned behavior specialist.
Start their hours if a Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) is in place and ready to implement.	Begin their hours without a FBA/BIP signed and ready to implement.
Model the behavior intervention strategies to school staff.	Act as an individual support assistant or additional paraprofessional to the student.
Assist in crisis intervention as a member of the team.	Be the sole individual providing crisis intervention. <i>The behavior tutor/tech should never be left alone with a student.</i>
Provide input to the behavior intervention plan strategies.	Be required to attend IEP, Expulsion or Suspension Review meetings.
Collect some data as directed by the behavior specialist.	Be responsible for all data collection regarding the student.
Model the Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) for a period and then coach staff in the implementation of the plan.	Be ultimately responsible for the implementation of the Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP).

How is a behavior tutor requested and assigned?

When the school-based team determines that a behavior tutor is needed, the program specialist assigned to the requesting school will facilitate the completion of the Behavior Tutor Request form. This form should be a collaborative effort between the IEP/Behavior team and must be approved and signed by the principal. The requests are reviewed and approved/denied by the ESE Leadership team.

Most frequently, tutors are assigned to schools in order of their approval. However, some case assignments may be prioritized based on severity of the individual case. It should be noted that when multiple requests are approved schools may experience some wait time before a behavior tutor is assigned.

Who supervises the behavior tutor?

Just as a behavior specialist, a behavior tutor is supervised by the Behavior Change Artists CEO, COO or appointed supervisory staff. The behavior specialist assigned to the school where the behavior tutor is assigned supports him/her to ensure consistency in the implementation of the FBA/BIP.

Is it the job of the behavior tutor to handle all crisis situations with the student during assignment?

No, a behavior tutor is assigned to the school to *model* the implementation of a plan before *fading* support in order to observe and provide feedback while the teacher and other staff implement the plan. At no time should a behavior tutor initiate physical intervention or be the sole person responsible for physical intervention. Additionally, at no time is the behavior tutor to be left alone with students.

If a behavior tutor's time is extended, does it change their role?

No, a behavior tutor is assigned to ensure the fidelity of the implementation of the FBA/BIP. If time is extended, he/she will continue to model and provide feedback with regard to the FBA/BIP. It should be noted that time can only be extended with approval of the ESE Leadership Team.

Section 3: The Functional Behavior Assessment / Behavior Intervention Plan

What is Functional Behavioral Assessment?

Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) is a problem-solving process that leads to a useful understanding of why a student engages in challenging behavior. The process identifies the specific contexts in which a behavior does and does not occur, as well as the *function(s)* or purpose(s) that the behavior serves for the student. This information is necessary to design effective positive behavioral interventions to address behavior problems of individual students.

By identifying the specific *contexts* in which behavior problems occur, as well as the features of those contexts, environmental changes can be made to reduce or prevent the occurrence of problem behavior. By determining the *function* or purpose of the student's problem behavior, the student can be taught appropriate alternative behavior(s) that serve the same purpose as the inappropriate behavior.

Why conduct a Functional Behavioral Assessment?

Instead of using the "trial and error" methods of the past, behavioral support teams use the FBA process to identify environmental factors that both trigger and reinforce the student's use of problem behavior. This allows behavioral support teams to develop effective, individualized behavioral interventions that result in desired changes in student behavior.

When should a Functional Behavioral Assessment be conducted?

According to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), state regulations/recommendations, and Volusia County's *Special Programs and Procedures for Exceptional Students*, an (FBA) should be conducted and an individual Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP) should be developed and implemented when:

- a student's behavior impedes the learning of himself or others (e.g., behavior that places the student or others at risk of injury or devaluation, results in substantial destruction or loss of property, or exclusion from participation in settings and activities with peers.);
- a student has been suspended for 10 cumulative days during one school year;
- a student's behavior has required the use of physical crisis management procedures twice in twenty school days;
- a change of placement is considered due to a student's behavior.

When is it unnecessary to conduct a Functional Behavioral Assessment?

If the criteria specified in the previous question have not been met, it may be unnecessary to conduct an FBA to design behavioral strategies to address behaviors that:

- are new and are not dangerous to the student or others;
- have resulted in multiple suspensions of a student that do not total 10 cumulative days in one school year.

Before completing an FBA in these situations, it may be more practical to first attempt strategies such as:

- troubleshooting and modifying classroom management plans and routines;
- extending classroom management strategies to include additional positive interventions, such as behavioral contracting, self-monitoring strategies, and visual supports that emphasize classroom rules and routines.

Is an FBA / BIP required for students suspended for ten cumulative days who are gifted only (not disabled)?

No, students who have been identified as Gifted only (do not have an accompanying disability) do not require an FBA when suspended for ten cumulative days within a school year. Although an FBA is not required, it would be beneficial to informally develop positive behavioral strategies to address the student's behavior. The Problem Solving Team (PST) process that includes an FBA should be used for a gifted student being evaluated to determine if s/he has an accompanying disability under IDEA.

How should an FBA/BIP be developed when needed for a student with a 504 Plan?

The Problem Solving Team (PST) process should be used to conduct the FBA and to develop the BIP when an FBA / BIP is required by a student with a 504 Plan.

How is the FBA process initiated for ESE students?

The FBA process is initiated for ESE students through a re-evaluation meeting. The re-evaluation process outlined in the *IEP Handbook* should be followed.

How is parent / guardian consent obtained?

Parent / guardian consent is required before completing an FBA. This permission is obtained at a re-evaluation meeting. If the re-evaluation committee recommends an FBA, the parent / guardian gives permission by signing the *Consent for Formal Evaluation/Reevaluation Parent/Guardian Notice*. If a parent / guardian does not give permission to conduct an FBA, follow the process outlined in the *IEP Handbook*. Also, contact the district placement specialist for assistance.

If the IEP/Reevaluation committee has requested an FBA and parent permission has been obtained, must the FBA still be conducted if a student is no longer experiencing behavior problems?

If the student has not been suspended for ten cumulative days, the IEP committee may reconvene to determine if there is continued need to conduct an FBA. If the committee determines that an FBA is no longer needed, the decision and rationale for not conducting the assessment must be documented on the IEP. If the student has been suspended for ten cumulative days within a single school year, the FBA must be conducted and a BIP developed for implementation.

Who develops an FBA when one is needed?

A behavioral support team is developed to complete the assessment and develop a behavioral intervention plan. Parents / guardians and other individuals knowledgeable of the student's behavior and special needs should compose the behavioral support team. Additionally, people who have special areas of expertise or who are knowledgeable about resources and support services may be needed. Team members might include: family members, teachers, therapists, administrators, the school psychologist, the school social worker, the behavior specialist, the guidance counselor, representatives from community agencies, and others.

Where are FBA/BIP and related documents kept?

In the ESE Audit file (pink folder), the following documents are filed:

- Original FBA/BIP
- Record of Review and Monitoring
- FBA/BIP Amendments

In the student work folder maintained by the classroom teacher, the following documents are kept:

- Copy of FBA/BIP (All teachers working with a student should have a copy of the FBA/BIP.)
- Record Review(s)
- Interviews
- Scatterplots
- ABC Recordings
- Documentation of Progress

Who should I contact if I have questions regarding an FBA?

The district ESE program and / or placement specialist assigned to your school will be able to help answer questions regarding district policies and procedures related to the Functional Behavioral Assessment process. The behavior specialist assigned to your school will be able to answer questions related to the process of FBA, as well as the tools used to conduct an FBA. If additional information is needed, the program and/or placement specialist will assist you in locating the proper resource.

When there has been an isolated incident that results in 10 day suspension and the student has no prior history, can the committee collect data and recommend that an FBA/BIP is not necessary?

Yes, the outcome of the FBA might show that this was clearly a one-time offense and that there isn't a need for a BIP. However, suggested strategies should be offered.

Should every child with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) have an FBA?

No, children with ASD have a wide range of skills. Although they may need accommodations (i.e. visual supports, modifications to assignments, etc.) all do not exhibit behaviors that merit an FBA. Providing supports and accommodations should be part of their services and do not require an FBA. In addition, providing school staff with information and strategies is an important factor in the success of ASD students.

Should a student with multiple referrals have an FBA?

Not necessarily. The behavior team should look at reasons for the referrals, who gave the referrals and where the student was at the time of the referrals. In many cases, simple behavioral strategies can remedy the situation.

Can data be collected prior to the consent for an FBA?

Data cannot be collected on one specific student prior to getting consent. Class wide data, referrals and case notes can be reviewed and anecdotal notes may be taken to assist the teacher in developing strategies that may be used with a student.

Should an FBA/BIP that was requested at an articulation meeting be completed before the student leaves the current setting?

In cases with extenuating circumstances (behaviors are escalating, there is enough time before school ends, etc.) the *team* may decide that an FBA/BIP should be completed while the student is still in his/her current setting. In most cases, though, it is best practice to wait until the student makes the change, observe him or her in the new setting, and decide whether or not an FBA/BIP is merited. If the FBA/BIP is not completed, any relevant information and data is included in the student's work folder and follow him to his new school/placement.

What happens if data indicates the original target behaviors are no longer concerning, but in the assessment process new behaviors develop?

The behavior team should meet to discuss behaviors and take data on the new behaviors so that an appropriate FBA/BIP can be developed. This may require some additional time for data collection.

If an FBA/BIP has not been amended in over a year, do we have to start over again with a 3 year re-evaluation?

No, the student already has an FBA/BIP in place. The plan will need to be reviewed by the behavior team and any review and/or amending the plan should be done. The case manager for the student should inform the parent.

How frequently should an FBA/BIP be amended?

The FBA/BIP should be monitored and reviewed at IEP meetings, so at least annually. Amending a plan is a committee decision made at the IEP or behavior team meeting. The following should be kept in mind when writing an amendment:

- A change of placement may indicate a need for an amendment
- A change of schools/articulation may indicate a need for an amendment
- A plan that is a few years old with no amendments may be considered for amendment, particularly as the student progresses through grades

What if a General Education student has a PST FBA/BIP and is moving to an ESE setting?

If a student moves from a general education setting to an ESE setting they should have an e-PST FBA/BIP. In the new setting data should be collected on the target behaviors before developing an ESE FBA/BIP. In some cases, the change of placement extinguishes the behavior and there is no longer a need for a formal plan. If the data indicates that a plan is still needed then the team should develop an appropriate ESE FBA/BIP.

Do all students with an Emotional/Behavioral Disability (E/BD) label require an FBA?

It is **not** mandatory, but highly recommended and best practice, that a student with an E/BD label has a FBA/BIP. However, students receiving services within a *Self-Contained E/BD* (SC-E/BD) unit do require a current FBA/BIP.

If parent permission has been given, but parents do not attend the final FBA meeting, can a plan be implemented without a parent signature on the FBA/BIP?

Yes, as long as the parent has been informed and there is documentation of parent notification.

When a student transfers from outside of Volusia County and the IEP indicates behavior problems, do we look for FBA permission?

After a period of time, the team should meet and discuss the types of behaviors and recommended strategies and interventions to implement. The team, including administrators and parents will decide if an FBA/BIP is necessary.

What is the duration of parent consent?

Parent consent is good for one year.

Section 4: What About 504 Students?

Can a Behavior specialist attend a PST meeting for a 504 student when an FBA/BIP is going to be requested?

The Behavior specialist may provide support and technical assistance to the PST; however, because he/she serves only ESE students they are not considered a member of the PST team.

What forms are used for FBA/BIPs for students with a 504 Plan?

A student with a 504 plan is considered a general education student. The e-PST process should be used to develop the FBA/BIP.