

**CALAVERAS COUNTY SPECIAL EDUCATION LOCAL PLAN AREA**

Calaveras County Office of Education  
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Calaveras County Special Education Executive Council

**MINUTES**

**September 22, 2008**

**I. Call Public Session to Order 9:00 a.m.**

Establishment of Quorum  
Attendance by Roll Sheet

**Executive Council Members:**

Mike Chimente, Superintendent  
John Brophy, Superintendent  
James Frost, Superintendent  
Kathy Northington, Superintendent  
Glen Sewell, Superintendent  
Joan Lark  
Lou Boitano  
Valerie Tudor  
Hank Nagle  
Evan Garamendi  
Diane Bateman  
Jill Bray

Bret Harte Union High School District (BHUHSD)  
Calaveras County Office of Education (CCOE)  
Calaveras Unified School District (CUSD)  
Mark Twain Union Elementary School District (MTUESD)  
Vallecito Union School District (VUSD)  
BHUHSD Board Member / President  
CCOE Board Member  
CCOE Board Member (substitute for L. Boitano when unavailable)  
CUSD Board Member (substitute for E. Garamendi when available)  
CUSD Board Member  
MTUESD Board Member  
VUSD Board Member

**Staff:**

Robin Searway  
Jan Kendall  
Patty Haskell  
Sue Harper  
Claudia Davis  
Debbie Koehler  
Debbie Scadden

SELPA Director  
CUSD Director of Special Education  
Program Manager  
Program Manager  
Assistant Superintendent, Business Services  
Director, Personnel/Administrative Services  
Administrative Assistant, SELPA

**Absent:**

Debbie Koehler  
Valerie Tudor  
Hank Nagle

Director, Personnel/Administrative Services  
CCOE Board Member  
CUSD Board Member

**Others:**

Emily Branscum  
Mark Campbell

Practical Behavior Solutions  
Assistant Superintendent/Curriculum

**II. Approve Agenda**

A motion was made by Glenn Sewell to approve the agenda for September 22, 2008. John Brophy seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. Jim Frost introduced Mark Campbell, the CUSD Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum. He shared that he would like to see Mark become the next CUSD Superintendent following his retirement.

**III. Public Comment**

No public comment.

#### **IV. Flag Salute**

#### **V. Consent Minutes**

John Brophy made a motion to approve the minutes of August 25, 2008. Glenn Sewell seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

#### **VI. Discussion/Action items**

A. **Practical Behavior Solutions:** Robin introduced Emily Branscum, the Clinical Director of Practical Behavior Solutions, the NPA we are currently contracted with to provide our behavior specialist services. Robin briefly shared with the council members the current cases that Emily and two of her associates are working on and how pleased she is to have Emily working for our county. Emily was then introduced to each of the council members. She then went on to explain her schooling, credentials and work history in detail. Emily started her business in 1994, became a Non-Public Agency in 2005 and currently has six consultants and a program manager working for her. She is working closely with Angela Barry, our behavior paraprofessional and shared that Angela has been very helpful. Emily and her associates are working on IEP driven assessments, behavior support plans, classroom management and behavior intervention programs in our county. She provided and reviewed with the council members a handout that explained the history of her business and the model of behavior services that they adhere to. The referral for service is to go through our Program Managers or Program Specialists and they will decide the implementation of the behavior services. The IEP team and parents meet to discuss services, modifications, accommodations and goals needed for the student's success. At this time the behavior services are recommended to Emily and/or her consultants. Emily shared a proposed model to the council regarding moving away from individual treatment and into a systems level treatment. In this model the psychologist would be in charge of monitoring the student's progress while allowing the teacher to do a better job and allowing the administration to better focus their resources. Robin shared that the effectiveness of this proposal for our county would be researched and discussed with staff. The council members were pleased with the presentation and thanked Emily for her time and effort.

B. **Availability of Large Training/Workshop Room for AU Use:** Robin Searway shared that there has been an increase in training and workshops for staff hosted by the AU. We have begun collaborating with Amador and Tuolumne and have invited their staff to join any training that we are hosting. As our attendance has increased and to be able to keep from turning staff away, we have found the need for larger rooms in which to hold these events. Robin asked the Superintendents if there are any district facilities that would be large enough to house the increasing number of participants comfortably at these staff development trainings. The following facilities were offered:

- Jim Frost offered the CUSD IMC room (120-130), CUSD board room (60-70), the Valley Springs Elementary Library (100), Toyon Middle School multipurpose room (120-200)
- Mike Chimente offered the BHHS learning center (50-60) or the Bret Harte Theater (150-200)
- Kathy Northington offered the multipurpose room at MTE (only after lunch or on early release days-maximum occupancy was not stated during meeting)

Robin shared her appreciation of the offers. She then reviewed the plans for the October 31<sup>st</sup> Core Development day. Anne Sherlock and Jennifer Postel from the law firm of Kronick, Moskovitz, Tiedemann and Girard will be presenting a training entitled 'Special Education IEP Meeting Training Designed for General Education Teachers' in two sessions. The morning session will be for the 7-12 grade general education teachers and the afternoon session will be for the K-6 grade general education teachers.

The Superintendents shared their planned Core Development workshops but stated that if their general education teachers wanted to attend the training at CUSD they would be given permission to do so.

John Brophy interjected that he would like all county special education teachers to make a point to attend all district staff development and open houses on their campuses.

- C. **Advocate/Parent Classroom Visitation Time Limit:** Robin asked the council members for direction as to the policy concerning classroom visitation. She shared that recently there has been undo stress on classroom staff regarding these visits. Robin has made sure that the teachers and school sites have been informed that no parent or advocate is allowed in classrooms without her knowledge and pre-approval. She has also made every effort to make sure an AU staff member accompanies the visitors. The council decided that a visitation should last no more than forty five minutes unless the visitor needs to view a specific activity. In this case the visitor may stay in the classroom up to one and one half hours. John Brophy also stated that visits should be limited to one student\one site per week. The council decided that this decision should be made part of the local plan re-write. Robin was asked to add to draft a policy regarding these visitations with our attorney's input and bring it to the council for review at a future meeting. Once this policy is in place Robin was directed to share it with school office staff and Principals.
- D. **ESY Dates for Districts Beginning June 15, 2009:** The proposed dates are as follows: ESY dates begin June 15th to July 10<sup>th</sup> (4 weeks) with the 4<sup>th</sup> of July as a holiday. This item was noted as discussion only and will be brought back to the October meeting for a vote.
- E. **Low Incidence Funds-AU Funds \$50.00 and Under:** Robin shared that the low incidence committee meets on a regular basis to discuss specific equipment needs for our students. The L.I. funding last year was \$21,000.00 but has dropped to \$15,000.00 this year. In the past, any item under \$100.00 was to be paid by the district. Robin requested that this amount be dropped to \$50.00 and under so that districts can further benefit from the L.I. funds. After some discussion Mike Chimente made a motion to decrease the amount as requested. Kathy Northington seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.
- F. **Use of Revised Suspension Form:** This item has been brought back to the council for approval. A copy of the form was provided with the two suggested changes highlighted. Sue Harper shared that she incorporated special education and regular education referrals. The specific Ed Code has been referenced on the form and this form has been made available for use online with the ability to print a hard copy for records. Glenn Sewell made a motion to approve the use of this form. Jim Frost seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.
- G. **October 31<sup>st</sup> Core Development Day Presentation-For CUSD Only:** This item was discussed during Item B.

## VII. SELPA Directors Report

Robin Searway reported the following:

- Robin shared that she has had many compliments on Molly Teale's presentations at SELPA meetings. Molly is very enthusiastic, well received at school sites and Robin believes that Molly will have a significant and positive impact on our county.
- Robin stated that Jan Kendall has been at the AU working collaboratively with staff and joins as many program manager meetings as possible.
- Robin shared that she has continued to work with different agencies and law firms to present various training and workshops in order to keep our staff current and compliant in all education arenas.
- Robin and her staff are working on the Local Plan and have scheduled October 14<sup>th</sup> as a day dedicated to continuing the review and revision. She has hired an attorney to assist with the revision to ensure legal compliance.

**Patty Haskell:**

- Patty shared that she has been meeting with VMRC staff monthly regarding infant cases. VMRC serves only at risk infants and the AU serves low incidence infants. Patty stated that the State mandates that ten infants receiving low incidence is the maximum that we can serve per year. VMRC would then be required to provide low incidence services. However, we have not reached that maximum to date. Although VMRC and the AU provides different services for these infants, these meetings are held to collaborate and discuss all students to keep all involved up to date.
- Both San Andreas and Michelson preschools are doing well. There have been minor technical difficulties but they are being worked out.
- The Mark Twain SBC class is going well. There is one student being integrated back into the class which has caused some issues but the staff from Practical Behavior Solutions is providing support.
- The Mark Twain Structured class is also going well and is more of a functional program now. Molly Teale is in the classroom four days a week to support the students.

**Sue Harper:**

- Sue shared that we recently picked up the new van for the Transition class. Sue will train the staff on the van including the wheel chair lift. The Transition class is doing well in the new house.
- The Workability staff has needed to be more creative due to decreased funding. This includes volunteer service and possibly working with food service. Sue is pleased with the ideas.
- The Gold Strike classroom is progressing nicely. There is one student fully mainstreamed and another partially mainstreamed at this time. The classroom academics are going well and students are doing their work in class. There have been a couple upheavals which interrupt the class.
- Sue shared that she plans to meet with the CPS foster agency to discuss solutions for students that have been placed in our county recently. The concern is that since the beginning of the year, eight level 14 foster E.D. students have arrived and need to be placed immediately. Sue stated that the placement often fails because they are either blowing out at school or blowing out in their new foster placement. Sue believes these students are being moved here just to change their demographics, not for educational purposes. Sue wants to protect the integrity of her programs and staff. She asked the council to look at possible solutions for students whose placement is obviously unacceptable after thirty days. Non Public School is costly but she has to look at the safety of the teacher and other students.
- Sue shared that once a foster family decides that a child needs to be placed elsewhere, the foster agency has two weeks to make other arrangements and remove the child from the home. On average, a placement is found just before the two week time period is up and this leaves no time to notify the receiving county office of the child's arrival. Sue said that sometimes these kids go through up to 25 foster homes. Sue asked the County Superintendents if they can look into arranging an agreement with county agencies regarding receiving notice prior to the arrival of foster children. To date we are only notified when the children have already arrived and then have to rush to place them appropriately.
- Sue shared that in further research she found that both she and Patty can provide Pro Act trainings to the district staff. Sue asked the Superintendents to contact them with the staff that would be interested in training. She also stated that this would need to be a team effort and both teachers and their paraprofessionals should train together. The training would take a total of 20 hours. Sue and Patty would be flexible for the training hours, whatever would fit the districts needs.

**IX. Finance Report**

Claudia Davis shared that the State budget may be signed this week. Currently there are no changes to the special education funding and she shared that we need to be extremely frugal this year. This will be difficult because prices are rising for supplies every day. She has scheduled a finance meeting to review Maintenance of Effort which she will bring to a future executive council meeting. They will also be reviewing last year's expenditures which did come in higher than anticipated which meant a reduction overall and a pass through of \$50,000.00. The primary reasons for this was unanticipated legal costs due to a settlement, a reimbursement to a parent for transportation to our structured preschool and overall NPS costs. Claudia shared that vacancies in our staff funds has created a cushion of funds and she does not see any changes for the 2008-09 budget at this time.

Claudia will also be discussing private schools with her finance committee tomorrow. She submitted our local entitlement with a portion of it showing that we had not spent any money on private school placement last year. As per the State requirement, Claudia showed the carryover of \$2900.00. It was agreed that there should be some discussion as to how this money is going to be applied. At this time this only affects MTUESD, however, Claudia is responsible for reporting expenditures to the State. The real burden on the district in which the child resides is the Child Find piece which requires finding and identifying the child prior to spending any of the preschool funds. In addition, there is a timeline and maximum amount of funds allowed to be spent. Claudia will discuss this with the business managers at the Finance Committee meeting and bring back fund allocation recommendations to the council members for review and upon approval it will be added to the local plan.

**X. Personnel and Payroll Report**

Debbie Koehler was unable to attend this meeting but Robin Searway shared that the Mentor Aide position is still being advertised. The job requires a certain level of experience and flexibility. Robin also asked staff at a recent training if anyone was interested in the ten hour portion of this position working with a student in his home in the Arnold area. One person showed interest and Robin will be meeting with her in the near future. Debbie Koehler offered to contact the districts directly to see if any of the paraprofessionals would be interested, Robin is waiting for these results.

**XI. Comments from Council Members**

Due to a letter Mike Chimente received from the CDE State Director of Special Education, he wondered if our county was up for another self review. Robin shared that we are up for another self review next year (2009-2010). This will be the same format as last time, i.e., records review and interviews with parents.

Glenn Sewell would like to have a Behavioral Health staff member come to a CCSEEC meeting to discuss current policies and concerns. Robin will invite Rita Downs to a future meeting to review the 26.5 law and policy and to address our county needs. Claudia shared that the Behavioral Health agency has not spent their full allocation of funds since 2006 and that unused funding is not carried over from year to year. The council is concerned that there is a question as to why services are withheld.

John Brophy shared that in reviewing previous CCSEEC meeting information; he found that on November 19, 2007, a decision was made on the classroom visitation policy. The policy reads that parents/guardians/advocates are to provide written notice of the visit, register at the school office and can visit for thirty minutes, one time per month.

**XII. Comments from the Public**

None

**XIII. Advance Planning & Adjournment**

**The meeting adjourned at 11:48 a.m.**

**Closed Session**

There was no closed session needed.

**Next Executive Council Meeting**

**October 27, 2008 – 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

**Calaveras County Office of Education Main Conference Room (MTUESD Hosting)**

Any individual, who requires disability-related accommodations or modifications, including auxiliary aids and services, in order to participate in the board meeting, should contact the SELPA office in writing.

(Gov. Code 54953.2, 54954.1)