

CALAVERAS COUNTY SPECIAL EDUCATION LOCAL PLAN AREA

Calaveras County Office of Education
185 South Main Street / PO Box 760
Angels Camp, CA 95221
209.736.6020 FAX: 209.736.6048

Calaveras County Special Education Executive Council

MINUTES

December 15, 2008

I. Call Public Session to Order 9:02 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:

II. Approve Agenda

A motion was made by Mike Chimente to approve the agenda of December 15, 2008. Glenn Sewell seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

III. Public Comment

No public comment.

IV. **Flag Salute**

V. **Consent Minutes**

Glenn Sewell made a motion to approve the minutes of November 17, 2008. Lou Boitano seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

VI. **Discussion/Action items**

- A. **VUSD K-5 Program Transferred to CCOE or SELPA AU:** Robin Searway reminded the council members that this item was tabled at the November meeting and is being brought back for discussion and possible resolution. John shared that he had met with Glenn Sewell, Claudia Davis, Kathy Northington and Patty Haskell regarding this issue. They discussed having the structured class at VUSD become a county operated program, not under the auspice of the AU but overseen by AU staff. John noted that there would be no additional fiscal cost or savings to the SELPA. The cost would be a split between MTUESD and VUSD. Kathy Northington shared that a portion of Patty Haskell's time will be funded by the county office. John asked Robin if the AU staff, primarily Patty Haskell as Program Manager, could provide oversight to this program without diminishing current services throughout the county. Robin agreed that some of Patty's responsibilities could be shifted to the program specialists/psychologists in order to make her available for this program. Glenn Sewell stated that with this agreement, this item is no longer a SELPA issue, he withdrew his pending motion and Mike Chimente withdrew his second. As the motion had been seconded and was open for discussion at that time Jim Frost stated that his vote would have been no. Jim would like all of the shared programs throughout the county to go back to the districts with minimal county oversight. This disagreement was noted by the council members. Patty is pleased to take on this responsibility and both she and Robin feel this will be a positive move in the continuity of services for the two districts. Patty feels the best place to shift some of her responsibilities is in the infant/preschool arena. There is a program specialist for this portion of services and she can assume more responsibility for them which will allow Patty more time for her increasing duties at VUSD. Glenn Sewell praised Patty on her work in his district and the support he receives from Robin Searway and shared that it is greatly appreciated. Kathy Northington stated that her district is sharing in funding Glenn Sewell's programs and yet she has not been invited to the IEP meetings that directly involve her district. She feels that it would be advantageous to both districts and their students to keep the lines of communication open. Also Kathy shared her concern for the SELPA Director overseeing a program yet having no direct control of it. Robin assured the council that every effort will be made to involve appropriate staff to IEP's. Mike Chimente stated that he felt the local plan should reflect the need to include other district staff in IEP meetings if necessary. Mike asked Claudia if the CCOE ADA will increase and if this meant the districts would be paying an increased share into the SELPA cost. Claudia stated that it will increase the CCOE ADA and the district's cost will increase. Robin shared that she appreciates the support she receives from the district.
- B. **Review Disproportionality Reports Submitted by Superintendents to CDE:** Robin asked the council members to discuss this report and what input Ken Freedlander from CDE gave the Superintendents. Mike Chimente stated that when Robin attends the SELPA Administrators meetings she needs to ask the State to look at small school districts as he was asked to review the reason for not reporting enough Hispanic students identified as "Other Health Impaired". Kathy Northington noted that one of MTUESD's areas of correction focused on IEP's that are EL with no linguistically appropriate goals on the IEP. She also noted that although there are times that a bilingual interpreter is in attendance to assist family members in understanding the IEP process as it applies to their student and the IEP is signed, although this information is often left off the IEP.

Glenn Sewell remarked that if the students were reported as a SELPA rather than individual districts, disproportionality may no longer be an issue for specific districts. Kathy Northington would like a county-wide training on special education EL and or language deficiency issues that address the needs of EL students with appropriate goals, modifications and accommodations noted on the IEP. Robin stated that she is planning on providing this as a future staff development training that should be attended by certificated as well as administrative staff. Robin asked the Superintendents for a copy of the disproportionality reports they submitted to CDE. She also shared that she is preparing to contract with a bi-lingual psychologist in Stockton.

- C. **Possible Dates for General Education Teacher Training on IEP Process:** Robin included this item as there was some interest in providing another inservice for the general education teachers in the county that were unable to attend the October 31st training at CUSD. Robin would like to receive suggestions of a common date of availability for the districts. Patty Haskell researched possible dates and sent out an email that noted March 20, 2009 as a date when MTEUSD and VUSD are scheduled for an early release day. Both Kathy Northington and Glenn Sewell agreed to this date. Anne Sherlock from Kronick Moskovitz has agreed to provide training on two different dates to accommodate both the Elementary and High School teachers. Mike Chimente instructed Patty to decide on a date for BHUHSD with the Principal, Dean Way. Patty asked Mike if we could use his theatre facility for both afternoon trainings and he didn't see this as a problem but asked her to schedule that with David Duggan. Patty will follow up with an email to all staff once the dates are in place. Jan Kendall explained that she arranged for volunteers who were experienced with IEP process to be a part of a teacher panel at the end of the inservice to answer questions from their peers. Jim Frost and Jan Kendall agreed that this was a very positive end to the inservice and the teachers appreciated the panel's assistance.

Mike Chimente stated that he would like an overview of the regular education teacher's responsibilities in the IEP process and agreed with the panel at the end. Kathy Northington stated that she would research possible candidates for the elementary school inservice; preferably two general education teachers from each district.

VII. SELPA Directors Report

Robin Searway reported the following:

- Robin shared that Genesis Behavior Center provided the last of the series of autism trainings covering behavior support plans on Friday. Robin shared that she would like to ask Genesis to come back and provide this training again. Robin asked for a show of hands at the last meeting and found that 95% had attended all five trainings. Those staff will receive certificates showing twenty-five hours of training in autism. For those who were unable to attend all of the trainings, Robin stated that our office will provide them with certificates based on the number of hours that they were able to attend. There were very positive comments from staff. Some staff attended as a classroom team and all were able to use the materials and instruction provided. John Brophy shared that he had previously discussed the need for a special education brochure to provide to parents. He suggested that the brochure should include all of the training that staff has attended. This would assist with making the community aware of how we are keeping the staff in our districts legally and educationally current in order to provide the best service to our students. Kathy Northington suggested the possibility for all certificates earned by employees be placed in their personnel file. She feels this could possibly assist us in a due process case. Robin shared that we do keep the flyers and sign-in sheets on file for that particular reason. She offered to send a copy of these documents to the Superintendents at the end of every year. The Superintendents requested that this be done.

- Robin shared that recently she attended a presentation by a Modesto attorney; Marcy Gutierrez at SJCOE. Her presentation talked about best practices for autism. Robin feels that this type of presentation would be very beneficial to our county. We could then provide mandatory trainings to staff on research based programs that could also be included in our brochure and documented in the local plan. Robin shared that although we have faced some difficult cases, we are learning from each case and being proactive.
- Robin provided a handout from the last SELPA Administrators Meeting regarding an amendment to the federal regulations which allows parents to revoke consent to special education. The article discusses that the IDEA regulations have been amended to state that as of December 1, 2008, parents will have the right to withdraw students from special education services without the threat of due process. The summary also states that there should be a 'Prior Written Notice' form that is signed by the parent stating the service(s) that the student is being withdrawn from and the change in educational placement. Robin shared that a sample form was provided at the SELPA meeting and that she will review and revise it for the council to review at a future meeting. Once adopted, this form will be included in our SEIS document file and there will be a staff development planned to make sure our staff fully understands the process. The document further states that "non-attorneys" (advocates) can now attend any due process hearing in an advisory role to the parent. Robin will have the article scanned and emailed to site administrators. She also plans to bring an example of the form to the meeting with the Steering Committee in January and discuss this further with our attorney. The council members discussed the need for 504 training.
- At this time Robin introduced the Program Director of Genesis Behavior Center; Romina Kiryakous. Romina shared her organization's background and credentials in serving autistic students with the council members. She then went on to explain her progress on the cases she is currently working on in our county. The council members asked some questions and discussed situations regarding students in our county. The council members shared their appreciation of her hard work and dedication to our students and their parents.
- Robin also provided a handout to the council members of a summary regarding the "Settlement and Release Agreement Behavioral Intervention Plan (Hughes Bill) Mandated Cost Claim". She shared that San Diego USD, Butte COE, and San Joaquin COE pursued this matter for 14 years. Due to their hard work and the essential cost information from many SELPA's including our own, an agreement was reached. Robin stated that we will be receiving a stipend from the State funds. One of the contingencies is that by 2/28/09, 85% of all LEA's in California must sign a waiver document to waive their rights to contest the settlement and to file any BIP/Hughes Bill mandated cost claims. Robin asked the Superintendents to watch for this waiver, make sure it is signed and returned to Claudia Davis in order for it to be submitted to the State by our SELPA.

Sue Harper:

- * Sue shared that she has processed the paperwork for the Contractor to begin work on the wheelchair ramp for the Transition House and weather permitting she is hoping for the project to be done by the end of the holiday break. She also shared that one of the aides has unilaterally moved to another program and although the vacancy is being advertised, the hours for this aide will be reduced from 7 to 6 hours per day.
- * She shared how valuable the monthly meetings with the Transportation Directors have been. Opening that communication has solved a number of issues and been extremely productive.

- * Sue is one of the staff members attending the BICM (Behavior Intervention Case Manager) trainings. These trainings are being presented on six different dates between December 2008 and March 2009. The other staff members participating are Mike Harrison, Andria Pyle and Lisa Shaw. Sue stated that the participating staff will return from the training and train the other psychs so that they can benefit from each training as well.
- * Sue shared that the Gold Strike class is doing well due for the most part to the teacher; Mrs. Smiley. Sue is pleased with the student's progress and shared that Mrs. Smiley is using class.com.

Patty Haskell:

- * Patty holds a monthly meeting with VMRC regarding the infants in our county. They discuss the specific cases and work to make a smooth transition for these children into the preschool programs. There are three new preschoolers starting in the San Andreas program. Due to the increasing size of the program, Patty shared that an additional aide will need to be hired to support the class. She shared that the students are doing exceptionally well in the program and the integration between the two classrooms has been very positive. She reported that parents are noticing quite a difference and have commented on the change in their children's social skills. John Brophy asked if this is a model that we would like to introduce in the Head Start program over time. Patty shared that this idea has been brought up and is at the first stages of discussion. She is planning to visit two other preschool programs in the valley to collaborate and share ideas with staff in those programs.
- * Patty stated that there are two more PECS trainings that have been scheduled with Genesis. She reminded the council that all staff is invited to attend. Patty will be sending out a flyer to all staff soon but reported that the following dates have been tentatively scheduled:
 - February 13, 2009 will be Level 3 and 4
 - April 24, 2009 will be Level 5 and 6
- * There have been some changes at Mark Twain mainstreaming to assist with some of the impacted classes at that site. An aide and three of the students that were mainstreaming into the 6th grade class are now going to the Kindergarten class to assist those students. This has been working out well and both the teachers and the students are enjoying this change.
- * A twenty hour PRO ACT training will be held on February 27, 2009 (8 hours), March 6, 2009 (8 hours) and March 13, 2009 (4 hours).

IX. Finance Report

Claudia Davis reported there is no new budget information at this time. She is waiting for the State to release a budget. Claudia attended a meeting on Friday with her peers from the valley and the seriousness of cash deficits for the upcoming year was discussed. She advised the council members to work closely with their business staff and avoid spending unnecessarily. Claudia stated that we will get through the fiscal year, however over the next twenty four months the State will make significant cuts to the budget. She shared that the State budget deficit stands in the 40 billion dollar range at this time.

X. Personnel and Payroll Report

Debbie Koehler was unable to attend this meeting. Robin Searway shared that we are advertising the four hour aide position at the San Andreas Preschool and the six hour aide vacancy at the Transition House.

XI. Comments from Council Members

Jim Frost stated that regarding the differential in funding, the revenue limit districts are going to struggle during this time. At the next CUSD board meeting there is going to be discussion regarding the needed cut of 1.8 million dollars out of the budget. This means that all programs will need to be studied, including special education and lay offs off teachers and classified staff are a reality at this time in order for the district to survive.

XII. Comments from the Public

None

XIII. Advance Planning & Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:58 a.m.

Closed Session

The closed session began at 12:10 a.m. and ended at 12:30 a.m. This was an information only discussion.

Next Executive Council Meeting

January 12, 2009 – 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Calaveras County Office of Education Main Conference Room (CCOE 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)