



SPECIAL EDUCATION COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

October 26, 2023

CAC Meeting Minutes

October 26, 2023

CALLED TO ORDER (Agenda Item A)

The October 26, 2023 regular meeting was called to order at 6:02pm by Chairperson Ryan Digman

MEMBERS PRESENT: Katherine Morash, David Martasian, Lisa Sotelo, Tina Cooper, Veronica Guzman, Azadeh Turki, Ryan Digman, Lacey Martinez, Kimber Rice, Heather Taylor

MEMBERS ABSENT: Emily Getz and Daniel Hicks

STAFF LIAISONS PRESENT: Dr. Debra Calvin, Ben Avey on behalf of Zima Creason, Dominic Covello, Trent Allen

BOARD REMARKS (Agenda Item B)

School Board Member Ben Avey gave appreciation for participation from the CAC and other committees. Mr. Avey shared the first report back on test scores received and special education scores were particularly low. Mr. Avey also shared his optimism for the rest of the school year.

VISITOR COMMENT (Agenda Item C)

None.

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES (Agenda Item D)

Dr. Debra Calvin shared transition in leadership and announced Dominic Covello as interim Director of Special Education and former Director of Special Education, Vanessa Adolphson, has taken on the role as interim Principal at Will Rogers Middle School. Dr. Calvin also discussed the ongoing Special Education Leadership Teams that are working through this school year in the areas of: 1) responding to student behaviors 2) hiring and retaining qualified staff.



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PUBLIC COMMENTS (D)

None.

MEMBER DISCUSSION (D)

Ryan Digman shared his appreciation and openness of Mr. Covello's work. Ryan expressed the need for clarification on the interim role and how long the role will last. Mr. Digman emphasized the importance of building onto the partnership between parent and district. Mr. Digman would also like to understand what the district's vision for universal design for learning is.

Dr. Debra Calvin shared about interim role and when a mid-year appointment happens, it allows for the person to be in the role until springtime when recruitment happens. She also noted that the Superintendent can appoint leaders.

Katherine Morash asked about Mr. Covello's teaching history as well as how we are addressing the LCAP in the Special Education Department.

Lisa Sotelo shared that she is a parent of a student in the district and expressed how she is excited to work together in the future.

Kimber Rice shared her excitement as well as concerns about staffing and co-teaching in classrooms within the district.

Azadeh Turki shared she has 3 kids in the district and feels strongly about building bridges and interdisciplinary support for students within the classroom. Ms. Turki also asked about IAs and strategies to hire, train and retain staff.

Katherine Morash shared how they surveyed students over the summer when they were working ESY and would be happy to share findings from their data collection.

THOUGHT EXCHANGE (AGENDA ITEM E)

Trent Allen reviewed a summary of findings from Thought Exchange which took place in the spring. Mr. Allen shared the findings in this Thought Exchange from focus groups including parents, students, teachers, and staff, totaling to 853 participants. Mr. Allen shared the prompts for the exchange, topics were shared and engaged with the most, and how this data is



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categorized into theme areas. Theme categories included: caseloads and workloads, IA support and staffing, communication and trust, IEPs, collaboration and community, training for special education staff and general education teachers, safety, inclusion, wages and compensation, and lastly importance of leadership.

PUBLIC COMMENT (E)

Anita Tucket, parent from LeGette, shared concern about her student and not enough available services at student's school. Parent would like to know more about services and resources for her student that are available.

Shufen Huang, parent of a student at Del Dayo shared about her experience between student and speech therapist and lack of communication. Parent gave suggestions on how communication can take place on a more frequent basis between speech therapist and parent.

Alex Langer, parent from Del Campo, shared about his student's experience at Del Campo and lack of inclusion within the school.

MEMBER DISCUSSION (E)

Ryan Digman shared that this data collected is very important and asked what are the areas of focus and actionable goals that are coming from the Thought Exchange as well as steps we are taking so we can improve by the next time we initiate a Thought Exchange.

Ben Avey shared comments regarding member responsibilities listed on member nameplates in regard to Local Plan and making recommendations to annual priorities.

Katherine Morash shared Local Plan and priorities come directly from Ed Code and IDEA so language cannot be changed in plan.

Tina Cooper made a comment about how the committee is allowed to advise on Local Plan but not necessarily make changes to plan.

Kimber Rice showed appreciation for Thought Exchange and ongoing listening sessions but shared her concerns about the transparency and follow-up on how this data is implemented.

Veronica Guzman echoed thoughts from other members regarding inclusion and shared her thoughts on additional services needed for students and more extracurricular activities involving students with special needs.

Katherine Morash shared that IEPs were high on the list from Thought Exchange and how the IEP process is not satisfactory for families. They also shared how IEPs are not frequently evaluated.



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Dr. Debra Calvin shared IEPs are audited and evaluated by the state.

Tina Cooper asked about the IEP process, parent's participation/rights, support for parents and where information is provided regarding parental rights in the IEP process.

Lacey Martinez shared about her experience at her student's school (Cameron Ranch) and how she can have her voice heard by volunteering at the school often. Lacey also made comments about the IA hiring and placement process.

David Martasian shared his own experiences with the IAs at General Davie and the staffing issues we are experiencing. He emphasized the need for qualified training for IAs.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS (Agenda Item F)

Chairperson Ryan Digman led discussion on potential subcommittees/workgroups.

Kimber Rice asked for interested parties to lead the You Light The Way Committee. Lacey Martinez and Lisa Sotelo shared an interest in supporting the You Light The Way workgroup.

Establishing and voting on SPAC representative, Recommendations and IEP workgroup, Legislative Day workgroup is tabled for next month's meeting.

Official subcommittee/workgroup appointments will take place on November 15th CAC meeting.

Minutes from September 27th, 2023, CAC Meeting were not approved. September 2023 Meeting Minutes will be tabled for approval on November 15th, 2023, CAC Meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT (F)

Shufen Huang asked about communication and parent engagement within school and if there is an opportunity to create a monthly automated letter where parents can share comments and concerns.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS (Agenda Item G)

Establishing and appointing sub committees/workgroups

Review of April, September and October Minutes

Introduction to Local Plan - Local Plan and structure for the rest of the year's meetings



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ADJOURN (Agenda Item H)

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:16pm