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The Role of the Community Advisory Committee (CAC)

San Diego County Office of Education
South County SELPA
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Presented by:
L. Carlos Villegas

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COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEES

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What are the responsibilities of the CAC?



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- The CAC's duties are specified in the Education Code and Local Plan.

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CAC Duties-Ed. Code



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- Education Code 56194:
 - (1) Advise the SELPA in the development, amendment and review of the Local Plan;
 - (2) Recommend priorities to be addressed in the Local Plan;
 - (3) Assist in parent recruitment and parent education;

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CAC Duties-Ed. Code, cont.



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- (4) Encourage community involvement;
- (5) Support activities on behalf of individuals with exceptional needs;
- (6) Assist with parent awareness on school attendance; and
- (7) Supporting community involvement in the parent advisory committee to encourage the inclusion of parents of individuals with exceptional needs

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What are the goals of the CAC?



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- The goal of the CAC is to work with families to:
 - (1) Provide a support group for parents and students;
 - (2) Provide an opportunity to talk with professionals who work with children with special needs;
 - (3) Increase awareness of available service options;
 - (4) Increase awareness of the importance of regular school attendance;

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CAC Goals, cont.



- (5) Encourage community involvement in the development and review of the local plan special education;
- (6) Provide parent education;
- (7) Support activities on behalf of children with special needs;
- (8) Provide an open forum for discussion, committee reports, and guest speakers through CAC informational presentations.

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CAC Duties- Bylaws



■ CAC Bylaws

- The purpose of the CAC is to:
 - To advise the policy and administrative entity of the Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) regarding the development and review of the Local Plan;
 - Recommend annual priorities to be addressed by the SELPA;
 - Assist the parent education and recruitment of parents and other volunteers to help implement the plan;
 - Encourage community involvement in the development and review of the Local Plan;
 - Support activities on behalf of individuals with exceptional needs;
 - Assist in parent awareness of the importance of regular school attendance through CAC activities and school district parent notification procedures.

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CAC Composition



- The CAC must be composed of:
 - parents of individuals with exceptional needs enrolled in public or private schools,
 - parents of general education pupils,
 - individuals with exceptional needs enrolled in special education programs,
 - adults with disabilities,
 - general education teachers,
 - special education teachers,
 - other school personnel,
 - representatives of public and private agencies, and
 - persons concerned with the needs of individuals with exceptional needs.

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Does the CAC Set SELPA Policy?



- No.
- The CAC advises the SELPA on policy issues.
- The SELPA and CAC must work cooperatively to update and develop the Local Plan.
- Ultimately, the SELPA need only consider the CAC's comments.

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Does the CAC Review the Local Plan?

- Yes.
 - The CAC must have at least 30 days to review the Local Plan before the SELPA adopts it.
 - Ed. Code section 56205.
 - The CAC may provide recommendations regarding the Local Plan.

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Does the CAC Revise and Rewrite the Local Plan?

- No.
- The SELPA must review and consider the CAC's recommended changes to the Local Plan.
- The SELPA decides whether or not to accept the CAC's recommendations.

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Who “Officially” Communicates with the CAC?



- The SELPA office is committed to open, regular communication with the CAC to ensure that stakeholders have input into the effective operation of the CAC.

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To Whom is the CAC Responsible?



- The school boards of member school districts.
 - The CAC does not have to take any affirmative steps to address its accountability to the member school districts.
 - A school board may request information on CAC activities.

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Must the SELPA Give the CAC a Separate Budget?



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- No.
- The Education Code sets forth the requirements for SELPA budgets.
- The Education Code does not require a separate CAC budget.

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Role of the Individual LEAs



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- The LEA superintendents through the Governance Council will ensure that the SELPA has appropriate fiscal and logistical support for the CAC.

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Roles and Responsibilities of the SELPA in relationship to the CAC



- The SELPA Governance Council reviews and considers comments from the advisory CAC.
- The governing board of each LEA has the responsibility to appoint members to the SELPA Community Advisory Committee.
- The Superintendents' Council, also known as the Governance Council, provides support to the SELPA Program Administrator and is the decision-making entity for the Local Plan.
- The Governance Council is composed of the superintendents from each participating LEA.
- The SELPA will collaborate with the CAC although it is not bound by the CAC's recommendations

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CAC Bylaws



- CAC bylaws may be amended by the membership consistent with the procedure specified in the bylaws. Any amendment to the bylaws approved by the membership must be submitted to Superintendents' Council for review and shall not take effect unless approved by the Superintendents' Council. The Superintendents' Council may periodically review the CAC bylaws. At its discretion, the Superintendents' may amend the CAC bylaws.
- CAC membership may be periodically reviewed by the Superintendents' Council. Any CAC member that takes action that is inconsistent with the Local Plan, CAC bylaws, or Education Code, or otherwise adverse to the mission or operation of the CAC may be removed from membership by the Superintendents' Council.

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CAC Bylaws, cont.



- CAC action may only be taken in accordance with the Local Plan and CAC bylaws.
- No individual member may advocate, make representations, or take action on behalf of the CAC without prior written approval of the membership obtained through a vote during a CAC business meeting.

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Examples of Possible CAC Local Plan Activities



- Discuss a local plan review, make recommendations and ensure that the plan adheres to guidelines and includes the required components
- Facilitate organization and recruitment of committee members (parents, community members, and District staff) assigned to review the plan
- Invite key District staff to CAC meetings to discuss all parts of the Local Plan to provide a more complete understanding of the entire Special Education system
- Establish annual goals relative to implementation of the Local Plan
- Logistical support (involving organization and planning)
- Assistance with supplies
- Resource support, such as photocopying and mailing costs

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Examples of Parent Education and Recruitment



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- Facilitate parent training on Special Education programs, issues, rights, leadership, development, collaborative decision-making skills, and other topics identified by CAC
- Invite parents to school/District trainings as available
- Participate in electronic communications (e.g. Zoom, Microsoft Teams, etc.)
- Develop or access a parent library (Special Education related books and resources)
- Attend or sponsor conferences, fairs, special awards, and other outreach events
- Actively support local PTA, community agencies, and parent groups to broaden information base
- Develop and distribute a local SELPA CAC Handbook
- Recognize staff, parents, and community members with special awards

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Support on Behalf of Individuals with Disabilities



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- Establish a Special Education information network linking all groups in Special Education and publicize all events through the school system
- Create a process to gather and share information on Special Education areas of concern and success
- Sponsor parent/staff recognition events to recognize people who have contributed to making a difference for people with disabilities
- Participate in disability and advocacy events (ADA Celebration, Disability History Week, Ability Awareness activities.)

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Public Awareness for Importance of Regular School Attendance



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- Distribute policy statements related to school attendance
- Assist parents and educators in the development of strategies to improve school attendance
- Support local family engagement activities for parents and students to enhance attendance and participation in school activities

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Examples of CAC/SELPA Collaboration



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- Training the CAC and parents (including location and operational needs)
- Access to admin staff
- Access to connect with parents to assess parent education needs
- Resources to support the provisions of training
- Access to SELPA/District calendars of activities
- Ability to post information on the CAC webpage
- Access to SELPA/District communication methods
- Access to information about community, district, and statewide disability activities
- Access to information about community and statewide disability related award opportunities (CCE, ACSE, ACSA, etc.)

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What are Best Practices for SELPA/CAC Collaboration?

- As recommended in CAC Guidelines:
- Agendas: SELPA Administrator and CAC chair develop meeting agendas together and identify resources needed.
- Timelines: Work with the CAC to develop timelines, such as a yearly calendar of events, activities, and housekeeping issues.

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Best Practices, cont.

- Collaboration/Team Building:
- Communication – one of the most important things that CACs do.
- Effective CACs will build skills together as a team.
- Effective CACs meet the needs of their community and serve students with special needs.
- The most effective CACs collaborate and partner with the SELPA.

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Best Practices, cont.

- Leadership Training: Having a CAC that is well trained in leadership skills can aid with encouraging effective CACs.
- Needs Assessment: An annual needs assessment can help provide direction to the work of the CAC for the year. SELPAs may distribute this assessment through their e-mail lists for wider distribution and response.

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Conclusion

- CACs serve in an advisory capacity only.
- SELPAs must consider CAC input and work collaboratively with CAC members when reviewing and setting policy in the Local Plan, but are not bound by a CAC's recommendations, comments, or suggestions.

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Open Meeting Requirements

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CACs Are Not Subject to the Brown Act

Current law exempts CACs and certain councils and school advisory committees from Brown Act provisions but specifies other open meeting requirements. (Ed. Code § 35147)

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Education Code Section 35147



- CAC meetings shall be open to the public
- Any member of the public shall be able to address the CAC during the meeting on any item within the subject matter jurisdiction of the CAC
- Notice of the CAC meeting shall be posted at the schoolsite, or other appropriate place accessible to the public, at least 72 hours before the time set for the meeting.
- The meeting notice shall specify the date, time, and location of the meeting and contain an agenda describing each item of business to be discussed or acted upon.
- The CAC may not take any action on any item of business unless that item appeared on the posted agenda or unless the council or committee members present, by unanimous vote, find that there is a need to take immediate action and that the need for action came to the attention of the council or committee subsequent to the posting of the agenda.

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Education Code Section 35147



- Questions or brief statements made at a meeting by members of the CAC that do not have a significant effect on pupils or employees in the school or school district, or that can be resolved solely by the provision of information, need not be described on an agenda as items of business.
- If a CAC violates the procedural meeting requirements under the Education Code upon demand of any person, the CAC shall reconsider the item at its next meeting, after allowing for public input on the item.

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Running an Effective Meeting



- Call the meeting to order at the appointed time
- Announce the business to come before the CAC in its proper order

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Running an Effective Meeting (cont'd)

- Recognize persons who desire to speak, and protect the speaker who has the floor from disturbance or interference
- Restrict discussion to the topic before the CAC

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Tips For Effective Communications Between CAC Members

- Be respectful; every member will have an opportunity to speak at an appropriate time
- Disagreement and respectful debate between CAC members at CAC meetings is appropriate; open disagreement outside of meetings can be divisive and damaging to the CAC

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Robert's Rules of Order

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IMPORTANCE OF ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER

A meeting without structure is like sailing without a compass- you spend a lot of time getting nowhere!

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What are the Basic Rights at Stake?



1. Right of majority to make decisions.
2. Right of minority to be heard.
3. Rights of individual members to participate.
4. Right of members to develop their Bylaws.

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Interplay of Open Meeting Requirements and Robert's Rules of Order



- Open meetings laws enforce transparency and provide for public input
- Robert's Rules promotes order and efficiency through meeting protocols
- Open meetings requirements are based in law
- Robert's Rules are procedural guidance
- If there is a conflict, applicable law controls
- Minor errors in following Robert's Rules are not violations of law
- ...and won't invalidate CAC action
- Robert's Rules are required under Article VII, Section 1, A.

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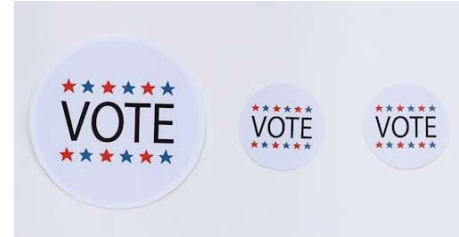
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Individual Council Member Rights



- To attend all meetings.
- To introduce and second motions.
- To speak on agenda items after first seeking recognition of chair.
- To raise "points of order."
- To vote.



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Point of Order



- To correct a breach in the rules
- Only used for major infractions
- Made at the time of the infraction
- Second not required
- Not debatable
- Ruled upon by the chair



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Motions



- Chair must open for motions
- Chair recognizes any motion made (if not germane, the motion is “out of order”)
- Must be seconded to discuss
- Moving council member gets first opportunity to speak
- Moving council member can also withdraw motion

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Amending Motions



- Must move to amend (any council member)
- State the amendment
- Need a second
- Chair calls for discussion
- Vote (majority amends)



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Procedural Motions



- Used for:
 - Postponing consideration of main motion
 - Referring matter to a committee or person
 - Limiting discussion/creating special rules for the motion
 - Divide the motion into smaller subtopics

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Postponement



- Once postponed, no further action is taken on the matter until re-opened.
- Unless specified, Chair determines when to reinstate the subject (not sooner than next meeting)

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Adjourning



- Council must motion to adjourn
- Any Council member may make motion to adjourn
- Must be seconded

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Reconsideration



- Motion to revisit a topic already voted on
- May occur in current meeting or in the 2 subsequent meetings
- Must be seconded
- Only one Motion for Reconsideration per subject

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Decorum

- Council members speak one at a time and do not interrupt unless the Council member who has the floor yields to someone else.
- Only Council members talk (staff can answer questions if asked)
- Chair chooses when to halt discussion on a topic.

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Statement of the Record

- Council members may request that written or oral statements be included in the minutes, within reason.
- Must be made before adjournment of the meeting
- One statement per subject

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Call for the Question



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- This results in end of Council discussion and puts the matter to vote
- Must be seconded

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Quorum



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- >50% of total Council members
- Lack of Quorum →
 - Chair recesses until quorum present
 - Adjourn meeting
- Abstention still counts for purposes of quorum

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Voting



- Rollcall by Secretary
- Done orally (Aye, Nay, Abstain)
- Secretary reads out results immediately afterwards
- No other business to conduct until Rollcall finishes
- Votes may be changed before final report out



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Representative and Council Member Responsibilities

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Representative Responsibilities

- The term of CAC District Representatives is for two (2) years.
- Each voting CAC District Representative shall be responsible for attendance at CAC meetings
- Each CAC District Representative shall be entitled to one (1) vote on each voting matter
- Representatives must be present to vote
- Every act or decision voted on before a quorum of CAC members will be decided by a majority of the voting members present

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CAC Officers

- Chairperson
- Chairperson - elect
- Secretary
- All terms are one (1) year.

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Chairperson Responsibilities

- Develop the agenda and preside over CAC meetings;
- Vote to break ties when necessary;
- With the guidance and input of the CAC, assign duties and make appointments to sub-committees/ad hoc committees (which may include students and non-members) for specific purposes whenever necessary;
- Make annual reports as required;
- Send out meeting notices.

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Vice Chairperson Responsibilities

- The chairperson-elect will assume the duties of the chairperson in his/her Absence and serve as the next chairperson;
- Vote to break ties when necessary;
- With the guidance and input of the CAC, assign duties and make appointments to sub-committees/ad hoc committees (which may include students and non-members) for specific purposes whenever necessary;
- Make annual reports as required;
- Send out meeting notices.

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Secretary Responsibilities



- Maintain minutes of all CAC proceedings and submit them for CAC approval;
- Keep committee and subcommittee reports;
- Perform all written correspondence of the CAC.

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