



Newport-Mesa

Unified School District

**Community Advisory Committee
(CAC) Parent Meeting**

October 23, 2025

Special Education Administrative Team



Sara Jocham, Ed.D
Assistant Superintendent,
Special Services



Heather Cash, Ph.D
Director, Special Education
Elementary



Rob Nichols
Director, Special Education
Secondary



Juliana Sauvao
Director, Special Education
SELPA

Special Education Coordinators



Elke Day
Preschool Coordinator,
Special Education



Gina Kasper
Elementary Coordinator,
Special Education



Amy Nagy, Ph.D.
Elementary Coordinator,
Special Education



Ellen Thomas
Elementary Coordinator,
Special Education



Clara Valdez
Elementary Coordinator,
Special Education



Kim Doyle
Secondary Coordinator,
Special Education



Mike Tincup, Ph.D.
Secondary Coordinator,
Special Education

Agenda

1. CAC Overview & Business

1. Presentation

1. Questions and Comments

What is CAC?

- Partnership between the community, parents, and the SELPA/School District
- Assists in advising the District about the Local Plan, annual priorities, parent education, and other Special Education related activities
- Ensures that the full continuum of services is available to all eligible students within its boundaries

Who can be a member of the CAC?

- Parents comprise a majority of the CAC membership, typically parents of children with disabilities
- Other members may include teachers, other school personnel, other parents, other pupils, and adults with disabilities
- There is a sign up sheet for individuals to become an official CAC member

What are the responsibilities of the CAC members?

Board Member:

- Advises the policy and administrative entity of the District and SELPA on the Local Plan
- Provides support to other parents
- Meets frequently to plan the CAC meetings and activities

Member:

- Encourages community and parental involvement
- Supports activities on behalf of individuals with exceptional needs
- Assists in parent awareness of the importance of school participation
- Provides families an opportunity to share resources and support

How can the CAC help you?

- As parents of students with exceptional needs, you can utilize the CAC to gain parent information and training on Special Education topics
- Reach out to the District administrative staff and/or SELPA Director for support with your child's Individualized Education Program (IEP)
- Become more involved with community activities that support students with exceptional needs

Current CAC Officers



Emily Norton
Chairperson



Melissa Winberry
Vice Chairperson



Leila Cesario
Secretary

What is the role?

Chairperson

- Preside at all meetings
- Prepare agendas
- Appoint committees
- Act as a liaison
- Implementation of CAC decisions
- Assume other responsibilities

Vice-Chairperson

- Conduct meetings in the absence of chairperson
- Responsible for execution of by-laws
- Assume other duties

Secretary

- Maintain membership and attendance records
- Seek committee approval of minutes
- Keep minutes and distribute to committee
- Attend to correspondence

Nominations of Officers

Chairperson

Vice-Chairperson

Secretary

CAC Officer Voting

Each voting member shall be entitled to one vote and may cast that vote on each matter submitted to vote to the committee. In order to assure active committee participation, absentee ballots shall not be permitted.



Presenters



Dixie Borys M.A. CCC-SLP
Speech Language Pathologist



Justin Micka
Autism Specialist



Vanessa Valenzuela, PhD, NCSP
Behavior Specialist



Behavior Supports & Ideas

Behavior is Information



Every behavior is a clue –
a signal telling us what the
child needs, feels, or is
trying to say.

When we look for the WHY
instead of the WHAT, we
uncover solutions.

Antecedent and Triggers



Every behavior has a setting*,
and the what/where/when/who
can lead us to the root cause.

*technical term - antecedent

Consequences & Functions

All learned behavior accomplishes one of four outcomes (functions):

- To escape or avoid
- To acquire or access
- To gain attention
- The sensation of it



Connecting the Dots



The relationship between
the **ANTECEDENT**, the
BEHAVIOR & the
CONSEQUENCE reveals the
key to cracking the
problem.

Calm Then Solve

You can't solve a problem when you are seeing red.

During crisis, focus on getting calm first.



Antecedent Strategies



- Priming/Frontloading
- Task Analysis/Steps
- Environment Changes
- Choices

Consequence Strategies

- Reinforcement/Rewards
- Extinction
- Functional Replacements
- Functional Communication



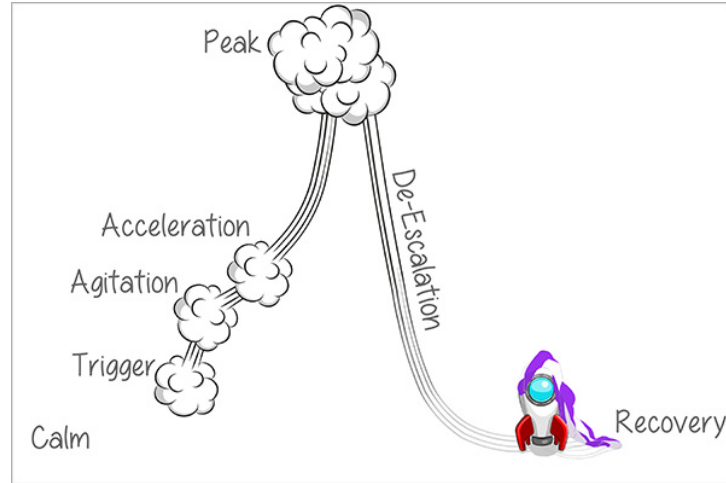
Strategies to Reinforce Communication

- Offer the AAC – Don't Force It
- Model Calm Communication
- Reflect & Repair



Debriefing

- What happened?
- Why?
- Triggers?
- Plan of action for future
- What the child needs in the moment



Tips for Parents

- Universal strategies used at school and home
- Encourage increased communication
- Maintain consistent expectations across routines and settings
- Provide choices
- First/then contingencies
- Anticipate challenges and plan ahead

Questions?




25/26 CAC Meeting Dates

- December 4, 2025
- February 12, 2026
- April 20, 2026

Location:
District Office
Sanborn Assembly Room
2985 Bear Street, Costa Mesa

You can find all presentations and the parent handbook at web.nmusd.us/CAC.



A
special thank you
to CAC Chairperson Emily Norton
for the generous donation that
made these refreshments
possible.

Special Education Service Exploration



Please be sure to fill out a topic suggestion card to help us plan future meetings.