

SMMUSD Special Education District Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, November 6, 2025, 9:30 am

Attendees: **Victoria Hurst** (Director of Special Ed), **Grace Lanzetta** (SEDAC Co-Chair), **Connie Gregory** (SEDAC Co-Chair), **Julie Ginsberg** (SEDAC Member), **Lily Ablon** (SEDAC Member), **Denise O'Connor** (SEDAC Member), **Payal Maniar** (community member), **Crystal Tapia** (community member)

SEDAC members absent: **Jon Kean** (Board Member), **Alicia Mignano** (Board Member), **Adriane Ransom** (SEDAC Member), **Deanne Ozaki** (SEDAC Member), **Laura Hernandez** (SEDAC Member) .

Guest Speakers: none

Minutes

- I. Call to Order and Initial Comments - **Grace Lanzetta** called the meeting to order at Meeting started at **9:42** am.
- II. Announcements (members and public) -
 - A. SELPA:
 1. SELPA Fair will be 1/31/26 at Culver City Middle School. It will be hosted on rotating school district schedule: 2027 will be hosted by Beverly Hills; 2028 will be back to Santa Monica-Malibu District
 2. IDEA Act: a letter has been sent out to all congress members of SMMUSD, BH, Culver City regarding two recently introduced US Congress bills (H.R. 2598 and H.R. 2333) which support IDEA; and encouraging those congress members to pass these bills
 - a) Discussion: Can we create an online petition to share through the community and SMMUSD to share our support and send it to Congress. (**ACTION:** Victoria to look up the process to send this)
 - B. Parent Academy:
 1. Connie attended. Found it very useful; many vendors and speakers participated. Approximately 20 parents attended; several district employees attended.
 - C. Holiday Potluck for Santa Monica Special Needs Network: 12/12/25
- III. Special Education Director Update -

- A. This week is parent-teacher conference for Elementary School
 - B. Training
 - 1. This week paras for Elem and Preschool received training on either CPI (program that teaches de-escalation and crisis management techniques) or Spire (teaching reading)
 - C. Hiring
 - 1. NTR
 - D. Community Workshops and Meetings
 - 1. Parent Workshops: next workshop is on 12/2 at 8:45am. This topic will be on the Role of Paraeducators.
 - 2. Next PRN meeting on 11/13 at 9:30am
 - E. Programming
 - 1. Currently in planning stages for programming for 2026-2027, primarily for TK and preschool. The District has 22 TK classrooms. Because of this growth in TK, looking in how to possibly change programming for preschool.
- IV. Board Liaison Update (Jon Kean or Alicia Mignano) -
- A. Absent
- V. Approval of October Minutes
- A. Motion passes
- VI. Discuss Potential Future Speakers
- A. Dr. Eric Medrano (New SELPA director)
 - 1. What is the program overview & vision?
 - 2. What are the services & support provided?
 - 3. How is funding from state & federal levels being allocated?
 - 4. What are SELPA's long-term goals for program development or improvement?
 - B. Dr. Ashley Benjamin (SMMUSD Director of Curriculum)
 - 1. How does curriculum get chosen?
 - 2. How do special ed teachers get included when developing curriculum?
 - C. Dr. Francisco Dussan (SMMUSD Director of Student Services)
 - 1. What is your role in discipline and suspensions? - Discipline generally at the site level with overriding policies. He said he reviews all suspensions/expulsions. Technically, he can override suspension decision, but says he never has (i.e., they sites are doing it right)
 - 2. Do all of the school sites have discipline policies and can you get us copies of the policies for each school site? He said, except for Lincoln and Samohi, the discipline rules are contained in the Student Handbook for each school which is on the school website

3. Do you take in consideration a student's IEP/504 when dealing with discipline issues? He says he does, but recommendation made at 12/5/24 SEDAC meeting to add a statement in the guidelines to include someone from IEP or Teacher of Record when deciding whether to suspend
4. Do you review disciplinary action plans from each school?
5. What do you hope to change or create as your new to this position?
6. Does review annually mean/happen at the District level (through review of ARs) or at the school site level? He will determine whether it happens at the district level and get back to us.

VII. Charges for 2025-2026 School year -

- A. Understanding the role of Para-Educators in Special Education
 1. Members: Connie, Grace, Denise, Payal, Lily
 2. Update: Met with Victoria and Jillian on 10/20 to review FAQ doc ([link](#)); team updated per discussion. Reviewed during November SEDAC meeting with rest of the SEDAC members. Next step: Victoria to share with Behavior Team and get their feedback on the doc on 11/10/25.
- B. Discipline and Restorative Practices in Special Education
 1. Members: Deanne, Julie
 2. Update: Team emailed Stacey Williamson for the longitudinal data; have not received yet.
- C. Communications: Examining the Alternative Diploma track and ensuring communications with all educational partners
 1. Members: Adriane, Payal
 2. Update: No update

VIII. Review Previous Action Items

- A. NTR

IX. Comments (members and public)

- A. NTR

Meeting adjourned at 10:47 am

TEMPLATE

Minutes

- X. Call to Order and Initial Comments - Victoria Hurst called the meeting to order at 9:40am.
- XI. Announcements (members and public)
- XII. Director Update -.
- XIII. Board Update -
- XIV. Charge Updates -
 - Understanding the role of Para-Educators in Special Education -
 - Discipline and Restorative Practices in Special Education -
 - Study the new Alternative Pathway for Diploma -
- XV. Approve minutes - September 2024
- XVI. Comments (members and public)
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Meeting adjourned at