



## SPECIAL EDUCATION COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

### February 25, 2026

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#### Community Advisory Committee

#### Meeting Minutes

February 25, 2026

#### A. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:15 p.m.

#### B. Member Roll Call

Welcome Aaya!

Members present: Ryan Digman, James Moraga, David Martasian, Kimber Rice, Lisa Sotelo, Aaya Al-Tataee, Emily Getz, Kaylin Boyce, Nicole Harrigan, Luc Taylor, Sean Owens, Makenzie Guye, Heather Taylor

Members absent: Lacey Martinez, Tanya Morgan, Cordelia Haines, David Burbridge, Daniel Hicks

#### C. Board Remarks

Mr. Bloise shared that he is now serving as the Board Liaison for the CAC. He expressed that he is happy to be part of the group and is looking forward to hearing from families. Mr. Bloise also shared that he has family members connected to the community and wants to be supportive in any way he can. He can be reached at [nick.bloise@sanjuan.edu](mailto:nick.bloise@sanjuan.edu)

#### D. Visitor Comments

Caroline Digman, a parent and teacher, shared an update on [sanjuanreadsandwrites.club](https://sanjuanreadsandwrites.club) and discussed next steps related to the statewide early literacy screening initiative. She explained that screenings focus on identifying whether students can read words accurately, providing clearer and more direct data than broader standardized testing. The goal is to strengthen foundational reading skills, beginning with word reading.

Tiffany Hart, a parent of students in the district, shared concerns about the current bus situation. She noted that while transportation services have been improving, there are still challenges. On one occasion, her student was not picked up until 4:20 p.m., which created concern. She emphasized that communication and timing continue to be major issues and expressed the importance of better information and communication with parents regarding bus schedules and delays.

Sofia Goldsby, a parent of a student at Dewey, shared her experiences navigating services after coming from outside the district. She explained that her student was diagnosed later, and previous settings were unable to fully meet his needs, which led to several transitions. Sofia emphasized that there are still many changes needed, particularly around DHH inclusion, access to resources, and greater visibility of available supports. She noted that teachers often do not receive enough support and that parents also need clearer guidance and assistance.

Ally Grimm shared her experience as a parent in the district and expressed concern that many families feel they must become strong advocates or legal experts to secure appropriate support for their children. She emphasized that families should not have to take on that role to be heard. Ally shared pride in the special education community and stressed that students and families deserve thoughtful attention, with special education treated as a true priority through meaningful action.

Rachael Greve, a parent in the district, shared concerns related to due process and public access to student data. She explained that she has requested measurable data multiple times and noted that this is the fourth time she has received responses with blank data sheets. Rachael emphasized that the information provided is not sufficient to support her child's progress monitoring. She stated that

under IDEA, data should be measurable and graphable so families can clearly understand student progress and she expressed that the current documentation is not adequate.

Marsha, a parent in the district, shared that she feels conflicted because her family is currently having a better experience, but she strongly relates to the feedback from other parents. She noted concerns about inconsistency and families receiving the same information without meaningful change. Marsha emphasized that these repeated cycles need to be broken, as they can create lasting trauma for families. She also shared that her older son has had a difficult experience and is now struggling, including with drug abuse, which she believes is connected to the challenges they faced in the system.

#### E. Equity and Student Achievement Update (D)

Crista Koch, Director of Equity and Student Achievement, shared a presentation providing an overview of the Equity Department. She explained that the department works collaboratively with multiple departments across the district to support equity initiatives and promote student success. Ms. Koch also described the roles of team members and highlighted several programs and initiatives led by the department to support students and families across the district.

- Public Comment (regarding Item E)

Niki shared her experience participating in equity listening sessions and reflected on the importance of creating spaces where families and community members can share their perspectives and experiences.

Kacey shared concerns that the WorkAbility program is not always taken seriously and discussed challenges related to accessibility and staff not being properly trained to support students and noted that these experiences can be discouraging for students who are trying to access opportunities and supports.

A parent shared that they had spoken with their child's teacher about the IEP process and asked whether there might be a teacher who could help support their student's transition into high school. The parent noted that their student is very bright and expressed interest in ensuring the appropriate supports are in place for a successful transition.

Caroline shared her experience participating in equity listening sessions and expressed that, while these conversations are important, the underlying attitudes toward children with disabilities still need to change.

- Member Discussion

Heather shared that conversations about equity can be very emotional. She provided insight into her personal experiences within the district and noted that how equity is addressed can vary from site to site.

Lisa shared that equity is not only about having access to services and resources, but also about creating a true sense of belonging for students and families. She noted that while access may exist, families are not always fully informed about the supports, opportunities, and processes available to them.

Ryan shared observations about changes that have occurred over time, as well as areas where he feels progress has not yet been made. He discussed differences in curriculum and instructional approaches and shared some of his personal experiences. Ryan also asked why students with disabilities were not included or specifically represented in the presentation and emphasized the importance of ensuring their inclusion in conversations about equity.



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James raised concerns about funding and the ongoing challenge of not having enough resources to adequately support special education programs and services.

Luc shared his experience trying to get involved in school clubs and noted that he encountered several barriers in the process. Heather added that it could be helpful for parents to share information about their students' interests, which could help schools better connect students to activities and improve access to clubs and extracurricular opportunities.

Ryan shared frustration regarding the availability of resources within the district and discussed experiences where students encountered barriers when trying to access services, supports, and opportunities. He noted that there can be a disconnect from site to site in terms of accessibility and available supports. Ryan also expressed concern that families are often expected to act as the primary experts in navigating the system, which can create additional challenges for parents trying to advocate for their students.

Lisa shared her experiences at different schools and noted that student experiences can vary from site to site. She suggested that the Equity Department could help support more consistency across schools to ensure students have a more common and equitable experience throughout the district.

Kimber shared that staff may not always know how to best support students, which can result in parents feeling like they have to initiate requests for help. She also discussed multilingual support, noting that while the state provides definitions and guidelines, equity should go beyond those requirements. Kimber emphasized that equity is not only about services, but also about culture, community, representation, and identity, and ensuring those elements are reflected in how support is provided to students and families.

#### F. Staff Report - Department/SELPA Updates (R)

Rebecca Foster, SELPA Director, shared updates regarding several ongoing workgroups. She noted that the teams are continuing to gather feedback from both parent groups and practitioners, and that the work is still evolving as they move toward a final product. The workgroups are focusing on developing classroom strategies, teacher guidelines, administrative guidance, and procedural guidance related to instruction. Rebecca also shared that the team is working on a proposal for a flex diploma pathway.

- Public Comment (regarding Item F)  
None.
- Member Discussion  
None.

#### G. Workgroup Updates (D)

Legislative Sharing Day: May 6, 2026

You Light the Way: April 8, 2026

Community Outreach:

DHH Workgroup: An in-person meeting March 12 with members of the DHH parent community. opportunity for parents and district staff to connect, share perspectives, and discuss priorities related to supports and services for Deaf and Hard of Hearing students.

- Public Comment (regarding Item G)



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None.

- Member Discussion  
Makenzie asked whether new positions would be added if the district opens new classrooms. In response, it was shared that the district is continuing to review caseloads and overages to determine staffing needs.

### H. Approval of Minutes, December 10, 2025 (A)

It was moved by Heather Taylor, seconded by Lisa Sotelo, that the minutes of the December 2025 meeting be approved. Ayes: all members; Opposed: none.

### I. Events of Interest (D)

*An opportunity for committee members or staff to share information on upcoming events that may be of interest to the committee or special education community.*

Tomorrow, February 26

FACE Community Care Hub at San Juan HS from 3-4:30

Again on March 26 at EL Camino HS

[www.sanjuan.edu/familyed](http://www.sanjuan.edu/familyed)

Saturday, March 7

GiGi's Educator Symposium: Teaching Strategies for Individuals with Down Syndrome

8-12:45 Virtual Presentation

<https://gigisplayhouse.org/educator-symposium/>

Tuesday, March 17 (and again in Spanish on Tuesday, Apr. 21)

Understanding Special Education and Your IEP, Presented by WarmLine

6 - 7:30 pm at the San Juan Unified District Office

[www.sanjuan.edu/familyed](http://www.sanjuan.edu/familyed)

Thursday, March 26

Parent Advocacy: Tips for Advocating for Your Child in Special Education

9 - 10:15 am Webinar presented by Alta Regional

<https://www.altaregional.org/alta-sponsored-event/parent-advocacy-tips-advocating-your-child-special-education>

- Public Comment (regarding Item I)  
Dewey Dinner Auction: [deweyPFO.com](http://deweyPFO.com)  
Playmakers Inclusive Sports Basketball at Mesa Verde HS: [theplaymakers.org](http://theplaymakers.org)
- Member Discussion:  
None.

### J. Future Agenda Items (D)

March 25, 2026: Modernization of Laurel Ruff and Ralph Richardson presentation

Follow up with equity

### K. Adjournment

With there being no further business, this meeting was adjourned at 8:06 p.m.