California Association of Health and Education Linked Professions,
Joint Powers Authority (CAHELP, JPA)
DESERT MOUNTAIN SELPA COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
September17, 2026 – 4:30 p.m.
Desert Mountain Educational Service Center, 17800 Highway 18, Apple Valley CA 92307
(Virtual)

MINUTES

MOUNTAIN SELPA MEMBERS PRESENT:

Academy of Academic Excellence/Norton Sciences and Language Academy –Valerie Graham, Apple Valley USD – Susan Bennis and David Wheeler, Bear Valley- Leigh Anne Drake, Helendale SD – Viviana Bravo, Hesperia USD - Diana Robertson-Ramos and Shannon Erath, Norton – Andre Humphrey, Options for Youth – Christina Leal, Silver Valley USD – Kaitlyn Garrity, Snowline Joint Unified SD – Ashley Alvarado, Southern California Flex Academy- Stephanie Van Epps, Trona Joint Unified- Nicole Yeager, VESD- Kimberly Parson VVUHSD - Maria Pena,

CAHELP, DM SELPA, AND DMCC STAFF present:

Heidi Chavez, Michelle Lindenmuth, Veronica Rousseau, Yazmin Medina, Vianca Padilla, Marysol Hurtado, Jessica Soto, Tish Macaraeg

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the California Association of Health and Education Linked Professions, Joint Powers Authority (CAHELP, JPA) Desert Mountain SELPA Community Advisory Committee Meeting was called to order by Heidi Chavez at 4:33 p.m.

2.0 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

3.0 ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

3.1 BE IT RESOLVED that a motion was made by Susan Bennis, seconded by Ashely Alvarado, to approve the September 17, 2026, Desert Mountain SELPA Community Advisory Committee Meeting Agenda as presented. The motion carried and approved unanimously.

4.0 CONSENT ITEMS

It is recommended that the Desert Mountain SELPA Community Advisory Committee consider approving the minutes. Consent Items are routine in nature and can be enacted in one motion without further discussion. Consent items may be called up by any Committee Member at the meeting for clarification, discussion, or change.

4.1 BE IT RESOLVED that a motion was made by Valerie Graham seconded by Kaitlyn Garrity, to approve the following Consent Item as presented. The motion carried and approved unanimously.

April 16, 2026, Community Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes.

5.0 ACTION Items

No Action Items.

MINUTES

6.0 Information/ Action Items

6.1 CAC presentation for the 2026-2027 school year

Heidi reviewed the topics planned for the current school year and provided an overview of each upcoming item.

She discussed the Local Plan, including how the SELPA operates, the process for becoming a SELPA, and SELPA funding. She also reviewed information related to the Desert Mountain SELPA and Charter SELPA. An internal committee will work collaboratively to review the Local Plan and ensure all required components are in place.

Heidi demonstrated how to navigate the SELPA website and highlighted available resources. She discussed the podcast, including topics related to social-emotional health, behavioral health, and special needs. She also reviewed the Padlet and shared several informational flyers and resources available to participants.

7.0 PRESENTATION

7.1 Presentation: Navigating Special Education: A Roadmap for Parents by Veronica Rousseau, Program Specialist and Michelle Lindenmuth, Program Specialist.

Veronica Rousseau and Michelle Lindenmuth, Program Specialists, presented "Navigating Special Education: A Roadmap for Parents." The presentation provided families with an overview of the special education process and their rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), including Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE), Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), Least Restrictive Environment (LRE), and parent participation rights.
The presenters reviewed the Student Study Team (SST) process, differences between an IEP and a Section 504 Plan, the IEP referral and assessment process, eligibility requirements, and timelines for completing assessments. They also discussed the different types of IEP meetings and the roles of parents, educators, service providers, and other members of the IEP team.
The presentation explained the main components of an IEP, including present levels of performance, identified needs, accommodations, measurable annual goals, and special education services. The importance of educating students in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) and determining placement based on each student's individual needs was also emphasized.
Parents were encouraged to actively participate in the IEP process, ask questions, communicate regularly with school staff, and collaborate with the IEP team. The presenters also reviewed steps families can take when they have questions or disagreements, including Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), and shared CAHELP resources available to support parents and students.

8.0 MATTERS BROUGHT BY THE PUBLIC

There were no matters brought by the public.

MINUTES

9.0 ADJOURNMENT

BE IT RESOLVED that there was a motion made by Valerie Graham, seconded by Andre Humphrey to adjourn the Desert Mountain SELPA Community Advisory Committee Meeting at 5:50 pm. The motion carried and **approved.**

The next regular meeting of the Desert Mountain SELPA Community Advisory Committee will be held on **Thursday, November 12, 2026, from 4:30 – 5:00 p.m. CAC Representative Business Meeting and 5:00 - 6:00 p.m. Presentation:** ***Helping Your Teen Prepare for Adulthood: Life Skills and Transition Planning*** by Agustina Garcia, Program Specialist, Bobbie Taylor, Project Manager, and Isaac Medina, Project Manager.

Individuals requiring special accommodation(s) for disabilities are requested to contact Tish Macaraeg at (760) 955-3552, at least seven days prior to the date of this meeting.