

**Tulare County
COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
for Special Education**

**MINUTES
September 4, 2008**

The Tulare County Community Advisory Committee for Special Education met in the Board Room of the Tulare County Office of Education at 1:30 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dana Collins, Shelley Dever, Stephanie Caldera, Filomena Rocha, Gary Kenny, Tim Perrotta, Connie Acevedo, Steve Stafford, Ramon Cervantes, Amy McMahan

MEMBERS ABSENT: Randi Kestner

OTHERS PRESENT: Norma Erwin, Brenda Beatty, Renae Bendix; Parent Liaisons/ Tulare County Office of Education, Claudia Garcia, Parenting Network

WELCOME / INTRODUCTIONS: Chairperson Stephanie Caldera welcomed CAC members and everyone introduced themselves.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: No members of the public were present to address the Committee on agenda items.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS: Stephanie informed the CAC committee that she has chaired CAC for two years and said it has been a good experience and would like to see someone else share in this experience. Stephanie called for nominations for chair person. Steve Stafford nominated Shelly Dever. Shelly declined. There were no other nominations. Tim Perotta asked if Stephanie would serve another year and she agreed. Norma called for a vote and it was unanimous that Stephanie would Chair CAC one more year. Stephanie called for nominations for a new vice chairperson. Amy McMahan volunteered. The vote was unanimous that Amy McMahan would serve as Vice Chair of the Community Advisory Committee.

REVIEW AND DISTRIBUTION OF MEMBER INFORMATION: Stephanie Caldera reviewed the CAC Bylaws and purpose and function of CAC. Stephanie also reviewed the responsibilities of the CAC membership; providing input to DOSE, SGC and the SELPA administrator, promoting community awareness and participation in community events on behalf of individuals with exceptional needs. Norma Erwin pointed out that promoting regular school attendance was also a function of CAC and that this was done through CAC publications.

Stephanie reviewed the 2008 - 2009 meeting schedule and the CAC mailing list. CAC members made corrections to the list and Norma said that updated lists would be available at the next CAC meeting.

CAC MEMBERSHIP: The committee discussed the vacancies available on CAC. Steve Stafford said he would see about identifying a parent who might fill the “general education” slot. Amy McMahon said she would see if CVRC workers might have an individual who might be able to fill the vacancy for “Exceptional Individual”.

PROJECTS AND STUDY TOPICS: Stephanie Caldera reviewed the CAC projects and study topics for the year. The projects include the C.O.S. “Disability Awareness Day”, “Meeting Challenges” Calendar and the Annual Luncheon. Stephanie encouraged members to think about how they might take on a more active role. The study topics will allow members to study the issues they had identified as hot topics at the end of the year. Designated TCOE personnel will cover these topics each month. Norma Erwin pointed out that studying these topics of interest would promote community awareness and allow CAC the opportunity to provide input to the SELPA administrator, SGC and DOSE as needed.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT CALENDAR: Kay van Gilluwe reviewed the 2008 - 2009 staff development calendar explaining what would be offered at the district level and what would be offered by the county. Kay reported that the parent education workshops were very popular and that both morning and evening workshops would be offered in this year’s parent strand.

2009 “MEETING CHALLENGES CALENDAR: Brenda Beatty led a discussion on the kind of “parent involvement” photos to include in the 2009 “Meeting Challenges” calendar. Brenda posted several examples for members to review and invited feedback. Tim Perotta said he would like to see a teacher working with a student. Stephanie Caldera added that parent involvement at school would be good. Shelly Dever suggested showing the parent and student involved in a hobby together. Renae pointed out that the Tulare County Fair would provide an opportunity to showcase kids and parents with their animals. Ramon Cervantes said there is a designated Family Day and it would be good to picture the father and other members of the family unit. Filomena Rocha suggested picturing the physical therapist and family working together. Brenda encouraged members to contact her with other ideas and or names of parents who might be interested.

REVIEW OF 2008 ANNUAL LUNCHEON: The committee members remarked that the tribute to Linda Hess went very well. Several committee members reported that not everyone was satisfied with the medium rare cook level of their steak. The committee decided that entertainment should be decided well in advance so that the entertainment had enough time to prepare.

D.O.S.E. REPORT: Steve Stafford reported on the new State IEP form and said it was now in use. Steve informed CAC that the format was different and had a few changes. A question was asked about whether every county uses the same form and why changes are

made. Steve explained that forms vary and that adjustments are made when it appears that change is needed. The needs are studied and modifications are made to improve the process and ensure proper notification. Gary Kenny explained that sometimes there are legal aspects and forms must be kept current to reflect changes in the law.

Steve Stafford reporting on Commissioner, Charlotte Wittig's presentation at the DOSE meeting, said Judge Wittig discussed the educational rights of children in foster care. Steve said it was important to know who can sign the IEP and who can't because parental rights and educational rights are different.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: As part of community awareness, Steve Stafford recommended that CAC keep an eye on what's happening with the C.O.S. funded preschool stating that some parents are upset that the focus will change. Stephanie Caldera stated that the Head Start program was approached about the possibility of taking over the C.O.S. Child Development Center and said it is on the agenda to be voted on by the C.O.S. Trustees. Stephanie informed the committee that there are 12,000 children registered on the Centralized Eligibility List but there are only 176 program slots for kids with disabilities and those slots fill up quickly. The committee expressed concern and may choose to revisit the topic next month when the guest speaker will be Cara Peterson. Cara will focus on Preschool Programs.

Rena Bendix passed out fliers listing the upcoming parent workshops.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.