

**TULARE COUNTY COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION**

**MINUTES**

The Tulare County Community Advisory Committee for Special Education met December 2, 2010 in the Board Room of the Tulare County Office of Education, 2637 West Burrel at 12 noon.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Cyndi Ward, Blanca Florez, Tim Perrotta, Gary Kenny, Stephanie Caldera, Randi Kestner, Joyce Nunes, Connie Acevedo, Filomena Rocha, Amy McMahon

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Dana Collins, Tiffany Stark, Claudia Garcia

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Brenda Beatty, Norma Erwin, Lori Collins; Parent Liaison/ Tulare County Office of Education

**WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS:** Tim Perrotta, Chair opened the meeting and welcomed all the members.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** There were no members of the public present to address the committee on agenda items.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** The motion to accept the minutes of the November 4, 2010 CAC meeting was made by Randi Kestner and seconded by Filomena Rocha. The minutes stand.

**REPORTS:**

1. The 2011 CAC Calendar, "The Bright Future Program: Meeting the Challenges of Autism": Brenda Beatty provided the committee with a distribution report stating that 5,600 calendars were repacked, labeled and distributed. Brenda Beatty credited Lori Collins and Cyndi Ward for their "hands-on" support and helping her get the job done ahead of schedule. Brenda Beatty reported that the distribution list includes local school districts, county programs and the medical community. This year new avenues of interest have been developed to widen the circle of the medical community and to include theatres in hopes that down the road local theatres might be more open to hosting audiences with Autism.

2. DOSE Report: Joyce Nunes, DOSE representative reported that Dose will not meet until December 6, 2010 and will provide that report at the next CAC meeting.
3. Guest Speaker: Lori Collins shared her perspectives on ABA therapy and its impact on raising children with Autism through personal experience. Lori Collins and her husband have three sons with Autism, ages sixteen, fourteen and eleven. They also have nine year old, neuro-typical twin daughters. Lori provided the CAC with copies of her discussion.

Lori stated that ABA therapy provides the child with Autism with the skills necessary to function, learn and even excel in a classroom of their peers. Lori shared how they synchronized ABA therapy at home with what was going on at home and at school. Lori stated that these shared goals helped to keep her children focused and to learn quickly. She shared that “Many parents do not realize that ABA does not stop when the child enters school. ABA Therapy is ongoing. While a child may not always need forty more hours of intensive ABA training, a routine is typically necessary even after enrollment in school. For this reason, it is important for parents and school teachers and counselors to be in contact before school begins and to maintain close communication.”

Lori stated that ABA not only prepares a child for school but also for life. “The behaviors and learning methods learned through ABA Therapy are designed to carry a child throughout their lifetime.” “With proper training and effective teaching methods, ABA can truly help children prepare for life and to succeed not just academically, but in social and emotional settings as well.” Lori commented on her own personal experience and said, “It has made a difference in everyday life.”

Lori Collins is contracted through TCOE to provide support to other parents raising children with Autism.

4. Annual Luncheon: Preliminary Discussion: Norma Erwin informed the CAC that the date of the annual joint luncheon meeting for Community Advisory Committee, Directors of Special Education and the Superintendents Governance Committee

has been set for Tuesday, May 10, 2011. Norma Erwin queried the CAC concerning their thoughts on décor, entertainment and seating arrangements. It was the consensus of the committee that orchestra music during the meal and performances by students continues to be appropriate. The CAC approved of fresh flowers for the center pieces and discussed leaving seating arrangements open.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** There were no further announcements.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:30 p.m.

Next Meeting: February 3, 2011