

Tulare County  
COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
For Special Education

MINUTES  
March 5, 2009

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

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Filomena Rocha, Gary Kenny, Tiffany Stark, Ramon Cervantes, Tim Perrotta, Jeff Higgins, Claudia Garcia, Stephanie Caldera, Connie Acevedo

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**  
Eric Sinclair, Shelley Dever, Dana Collins, Amy McMahon

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

**WELCOME / INTRODUCTIONS:** Chairperson, Stephanie Caldera welcomed the CAC members.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** There were no members of the public present.

**MINUTES:** The minutes of the February CAC meeting were approved.

**D.O.S.E. REPORT:** Jeff Higgins reported on the following areas of interest discussed at the March Directors of Special Education meeting:

- 1) RTI – An increased number of districts have expressed interest in RTI.
- 2) Emergency Behavior Report – Must be reported to the county within 24 hours.
- 3) Preschool Funding – Additional funds will be available.
- 4) Surprise Exits – Discussed exit criteria of a child leaving special education services, and giving proper notification to parents prior to the IEP meeting.
- 5) Occupational Therapy – TCOE may be hiring an Occupational Therapist.
- 6) Prior Written Notice – A clearly defined process will now be in place.
- 7) Special Education and Title I projections look good.

Norma Erwin briefly discussed the two changes made to the revised edition of the “Special Education Rights of Parents and Children” dated January 2009.

**ANNUAL LUNCHEON REPORT:**

The CAC members selected the following menu for the annual luncheon: Parmesan Encrusted Tilapia, Chicken Da La Sol, or vegetarian Grilled Garden Burger and Chocolate Layer Cake for desert.

Entertainment for the luncheon will start off with Danielle Marks who will play flute music during the meal. Following the introductions, the entertainment will include; a) Claudia Garcia's son, Salvador will sign the song "My Wish for You," and b) Two students from Linda Chester's Special Day Class at Tulare Western High School will lip sync a song. The entertainment will end with the video on Parent Involvement that Leslie Berry is producing. These parents represent children with different disabilities and ages who are enrolled in a variety of special education programs in Tulare County. Parents interviewed will share their perspective on what makes parent involvement so meaningful for them.

Norma Erwin informed the CAC members that an item needed to be selected for the recipient of the Linda Hess Award. The committee members reviewed copies of the Master Teacher Awards Catalog and selected the "*Making a Difference*" faceted round paperweight. Committee members received a list of criteria in preparation for the selection of the Linda Hess Award at the next meeting. Norma reported that letters were sent to Directors of Special Education and Superintendents Governance Committee members and program managers requesting nominees for the CAC recognition awards and the Linda Hess parent award. The CAC members expect to have names of nominees by the next CAC meeting on April 2, 2009.

Norma Erwin reported that Leslie Berry designed a place card for each person with a colorful visual symbol of their meal choice. This arrangement will assist CBI student servers in determining the correct dish for each attendee. Norma Erwin presented to the committee members a copy of the luncheon invitation designed by Leslie Berry. CAC members volunteered to assist during the luncheon. Members will be greeters, assist attendees to their table and assist in presentations of the awards.

**STUDY TOPIC:** Ron Pekarek, Board Certified Behavior Analyst and Program Specialist, discussed "Addressing Behavior in Educational Settings in California" by Diana Browning Wright. Ron stated that approximately 70 to 80 % of students benefit from strategies designed to create positive school environments and specific classroom strategies and support for at-risk students. Approximately 15% of students meet criteria for individualized behavior support planning when behavior is impeding learning and full adult attention is required. Plans are developed through an SST, IEP or a 504 team with family and staff. Functional Analysis-Based Positive Behavior Intervention Plans are reserved for the remaining 5% of students with pervasive maladaptive behaviors, assaultive behavior, self-injury behavior, vandalism of property, etc. Additional expertise and refinement may be required to reach a level of effectiveness in some cases.

Ron reported that the Bright Future Program offers intensive early intervention services for children with a diagnosis of autism and/or other developmental delays. Children are referred by CVRC. The PECS program and principals of Applied Behavior Analysis are used followed by three years of ongoing consultation. All Behavior Intervention Specialists possess, or are working toward a Master's level BCBA. 80% of the Behavior Interventionists possess a Bachelor's degree in psychology or a related field and 50 % are Spanish speaking. There is on-going competency-based training provided and there has been very little staff turnover. Ron answered questions from CAC members following his presentation.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Flyers were made available for the following parent training opportunities: “Effective Autism Treatments” on March 24, 2009, “The Ring of Safety: Teaching your child abuse prevention skills,” and “Transition to Adulthood” workshop on 3/18/2009.

An opportunity to participate on a parent panel was presented. Interested members are to contact Norma. The parent panel is a part of the Tulare County Child Care Summit to held 9/11/09. The theme is “Turning Disabilities into Possibilities.”

Next Month’s meeting will be held at the Social Vocational Services building located at 3140 West Caldwell.

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