

SUPERINTENDENTS GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE TULARE COUNTY MASTER PLAN FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION

MINUTES

April 27, 2010

The Superintendent's Governance Committee met on Tuesday, April 27, 2010, in the Board Room of the Tulare County Office of Education.

MEMBERS PRESENT: **Howard Berger**, Superintendent, Tulare Joint Union High; **Stan Carrizosa**, Superintendent, Visalia Unified; **Luis Castellanoz**, Superintendent, Tulare City Elementary; **Dr. Joe Hernandez**, Superintendent, Dinuba Unified; **Tim Hire**, Superintendent, Woodlake Union; **Janet Jones**, Superintendent, Farmersville Unified; **Dr. Carolyn Kehrli**, Superintendent, Cutler-Orosi Unified; **Janet Kliegl**, Superintendent, Lindsay Unified; **Sue Sherwood**, Superintendent, Three Rivers Union Elementary; **Dr. Marcella Smith**, Superintendent, Earlimart Elementary; **Dr. John Snavely**, Superintendent, Porterville Unified; **Jim Vidak**, County Superintendent, Tulare County; **Renée Whitson**, Superintendent, Exeter Union; and **Dr. Marilyn Rankin**, Assistant Superintendent/SELPA Administrator, Tulare County.

MEMBERS ABSENT: **Dr. Gary Mekeel**, Superintendent, Burton Elementary; and **Terri Rufert**, Superintendent, Sundale Union Elementary.

OTHERS PRESENT: **ALTA VISTA ELEMENTARY:** **Lora Haston**, Superintendent;
VISALIA UNIFIED: **Dr. Craig Wheaton**, Incoming Interim Superintendent;
TULARE CITY ELEMENTARY: **Joyce Nunes**, DOSE Representative to SGC;
TULARE COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION: **Maxine Epperson**, Program Manager, Bright Start Parent/Infant Program; **Norma Erwin**, Parent Liaison; **Linda McKean**, Administrator, Mild to Moderate Programs; **Carol Sonier**, Special Assignment; **Kaye van Gilluwe**, Administrator, Student Support Services; and **Xay Xiong**, Special Services Technology Manager.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Janet Jones, Chairperson, opened the meeting to public comment. No public comment was made.

INTRODUCTIONS: Janet Jones, Chairperson, introduced Lora Haston, Superintendent, Alta Vista Elementary School District to the group and thanked her for attending. Lora indicated her district has approximately 500 ADA. Special Education services are provided by TCOE staff including a full-time special education teacher, an aide and also the services once a week of a psychologist and speech and language specialist. Lora indicated her district utilizes the Rtl model which enables a high number of students to be served and careful progress monitoring done with increasing levels of service as indicated. Students served in this manner are not identified as handicapped children and do not have IEP's until such time as the increased level of service (intensive reading instruction) is not having the anticipated impact on achievement. When this occurs the student is then tested for special education.

REVIEW OF SGC PACKET: Dr. Marilyn Rankin, Assistant Superintendent, Special Services, and SELPA Administrator, reviewed the Superintendent's Governance Committee agenda packet with the superintendents. Items included were:

- CASEMIS Special Education Enrollment Data – April – Marilyn explained in addition to students in the County severely handicapped program, infants and students at the juvenile detention facilities are reflective in the county-served yellow side of the report.
- State SELPA Legislative Priorities for Special Education – Marilyn highlighted the bills that are of particular interest in the Tulare County/District SELPA which include:
 1. SB1051 – This Senate bill would authorize a school district to provide employees with voluntary emergency medical training to administer Diastat to seizure students in the absence of a credentialed nurse.
 2. AB1802 – This Assembly bill would authorize the parent to designate school employees who may administer insulin during the regular school day. The bill clarifies the liability that is currently not written into law.
 3. SB383 / SB1283 / SCR91 / and AB2160 – All of these bills deal with Autism including screening, health care coverage, awareness month, and teacher credentialing.

GUEST PRESENTERS:

Carol Sonier, Special Assignment, Linda McKean, Administrator, Mild to Moderate Programs, and Maxine Epperson, Program Manager, Bright Start Parent/Infant Program provided the superintendents with an update on the findings of the study to review current practices in the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program both in and out of the County. They also made recommendations for program options for 2010-2011 for the superintendent's approval. Carol began the presentation discussing the current student demographics within the hard of hearing program in the County. There are 50 deaf students in county schools of which 10 are in the severely handicapped program and 40 have normal cognitive skills. School districts and TCOE currently employ 33 interpreters to provide sign language services to these students. There are no more than 5 deaf students in any one grade around the County. Currently there are fewer high school deaf students but this trend will change as the students get older. Linda McKean indicated there are 17 students from Tulare County that attend Fremont School for the Deaf. Most of these students are junior high and high school age. Linda reviewed the current staff that provides service to deaf students. One teacher of the Deaf provides service to both the Bright Start Parent/Infant Program and the Preschool Program. Two additional teachers provide deaf and hard of hearing service to students in districts. TCOE employs one classified employee who helps with FM systems for hard of hearing students freeing the certificated staff of this duty. The County Office also employs one board certified audiologist. In addition, the Speech and Language Specialists will begin receiving specialized training to enable them to provide service to students who have cochlear implants.

Linda indicated the parent survey generated 40 responses. The biggest concern stated by parents was the isolation their children experienced and also the lack of opportunities to learn sign language themselves. Carol indicated the audiologist provides services to 200 deaf and hard of hearing students. She indicated the team solicited input from Fresno County, Kings County, Fresno Unified, outside sources and also conducted site visits within the County. 65% of the deaf and hard of hearing students' parents are Spanish speaking only. Maxine continued the presentation indicating concentration for the young children needs to be on pre-literacy skills and early intervention to ensure full inclusion later on in the child's education. She indicated that within the Parent/Infant Program, intake meetings are held to familiarize families with staff and provide support to families in

making necessary appointments, etc. Carol indicated the goal is to have the deaf students on grade level when entering Kindergarten. Linda recommended no changes currently be made in the K-12 program, however the study team recommends that the preschool students be clustered in a regular preschool program and that intensive services be provided to insure academic progress and the readiness for kindergarten is achieved by the Cochlear implant students and other deaf preschoolers.

A motion was made by Janet Kliegl and seconded by Dr. Marcella Smith to approve the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program for 2010-2011 as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Minutes from the March 23, 2010 Superintendent's Governance Committee Meeting were presented for approval.

A motion was made by Dr. John Snavely and seconded by Dr. Carolyn Kehrli to approve the minutes as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

PARENT LIAISON REPORT: Norma Erwin, Parent Liaison, shared with the superintendents a success story created through the efforts of the parent liaison staff. The story she shared focused around helping parents to understand the data presented to them at IEP meetings.

AUTISM ADDED AUTHORIZATION IN SPECIAL EDUCATION (AASE): Kaye van Gilluwe, Administrator, Student Support Services and Assistant SELPA Director, reviewed the status of the Autism Added Authorization in Special Education (AASE). She indicated upon passage of Assembly Bill 2160, universities would have more time to prepare programs to ensure teachers are able to obtain the added authorization to teach students on the Autism Spectrum. The bill would extend the deadline for certification from 2011 to 2013. She also indicated the County Office is taking a wait and see attitude. It appears after a recent Webinar with the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) that many of the staff may already have the necessary credential (Resource Specialist certificate) to authorize service to students on the autism spectrum and will not be required to have this additional authorization.

STATE SPECIAL EDUCATION IDENTIFICATION PROCESS: Dr. Marilyn Rankin, Assistant Superintendent, Special Services, and SELPA Administrator, indicated the 2008-2009 State Performance Indicators for Special Education will arrive in Districts in June. She discussed how superintendents might want to look at the data presented. With the Rtl emphasis in the County, less students are identified, which means many indicators, such as proficiency measures, are hard to meet because the students that are tested are the more severe students. She also indicated students who are in the County Severely Handicapped Program are included in the Least Restrictive Environment count which causes this number to be skewed when Rtl is successfully being implemented in districts. She pointed out that sometimes the test measurements are not aligned with best practices. Kaye van Gilluwe will work with the DOSE on any responses needed as a result of the findings.

REQUESTS FOR INDEPENDENT STUDY: Linda McKean, Administrator, Mild to Moderate Programs, reviewed the guidelines for recommending student placement in independent study. An IEP team meeting must convene to consider a recommended change in placement and to determine if independent study is an appropriate placement for the student.

REQUESTS FOR REIMBURSEMENT FOR SUPPLEMENTARY SERVICES TO HEARING IMPAIRED STUDENTS IN DISTRICT PROGRAMS FOR 2009-2010:

Linda McKean, Administrator, Mild to Moderate Programs, presented to the superintendents the requests for reimbursement of hearing impaired interpreters providing services to Hearing Impaired students in District Programs for 2009-2010 which totaled \$895,713.35 for 29 interpreter/notetakers.

She also indicated there are three expenditures highlighted that are not being recommended for reimbursement as they are not within the guidelines of the SELPA policy authorizing reimbursement. The County Audiologist has reviewed on requests for validity of services.

A motion was made by Dr. Carolyn Kehrli and seconded by Janet Kleigl to approve the requests for reimbursement of supplementary services to hearing impaired students in District programs as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

LOW INCIDENCE EXPENDITURES FOR 2009-2010: Xay Xiong, Special Services Technology Manager, reviewed the low incidence expenditures to date for 2009-2010 which include equipment and material requests for students with low incidence disabilities. The total this year is \$79,468.30 which is covered by the low incidence funding.

A motion was made by Renee Whitson and seconded by Dr. Carolyn Kehrli to approve the low incidence expenditures for 2009-2010 as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

DUE PROCESS ATTORNEY/SETTLEMENT FEES FOR 2009-2010: Dr. Marilyn Rankin, Assistant Superintendent, Special Services, and SELPA Administrator, presented the legal fees/settlement agreement costs related to special education issues for 2009-10. The total to date is \$69,676.58. These expenses are being covered outside of 602 funding. Expenses are up this year due to the settlement on a case that has spanned two fiscal years.

A motion was made by Stan Carrizosa and seconded by Sue Sherwood to approve the due process attorney/settlement fees for 2009-2010 as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

ANNUAL OUT OF HOME CARE FACILITIES LIST: Dr. Marilyn Rankin, Assistant Superintendent, Special Services, and SELPA Administrator, presented the Annual Out of Home Care List for facilities within Tulare County as required by State law.

CONNECTIONS ACADEMY (ALPAUGH UNIFIED): Dr. Marilyn Rankin, Assistant Superintendent, Special Services, and SELPA Administrator, reviewed with the superintendents a request from Capistrano Connections Academy (Southern California) to join the Tulare County District SELPA. The Central Valley Connections Academy chartered by Alpaugh Unified currently is funded for 96 ADA. As a LEA, they provide their own special education services. They hold IEP meetings when this independent study program is being recommended to ensure the program is an appropriate placement. Capistrano Connections Academy had 726 ADA for 2008-2009. Bringing them into the SELPA would put the total for the LEA to over 850. Marilyn indicated recent legislation has allowed charter schools who are LEAs to shop for a SELPA. The superintendents requested a special meeting and tabled the discussion until that time for a decision. A presentation will be made by the administration from Connections Academy detailing the risks versus the benefits of this arrangement. This special meeting will be held Tuesday, May 25, 2010, in the Tulare County Office of Education Board Room.

ELECTION OF SGC CHAIRPERSON FOR 2010-2011: Janet Jones, Chairperson, opened the meeting for nominations for SGC Chairperson for 2010-2011. After a short debate, Janet agreed to return for a third year as chairperson for the Superintendents Governance Committee.

A motion was made by Luis Castellanoz and seconded by Dr. Carolyn Kehrlı to nominate Janet Jones as chairperson of the SGC for 2010-2011. The motion carried unanimously.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Stan Carrizosa introduced Dr. Craig Wheaton to the superintendents. Craig will be assuming the position of Interim Superintendent at Visalia Unified and joining the Superintendents Governance Committee for the 2010-2011 school year.

ADVANCED PLANNING: Janet Jones, Chairperson, requested from the superintendents agenda items for the next regularly scheduled SGC meeting to be held on September 28, 2010. A Special SGC Meeting was called for Tuesday, May 25, 2010, in the TCOE Board Room to discuss the proposal from Capistrano Connections Academy to join the Tulare County/District SELPA and finalize a vote.

NEXT MEETING: The next meeting will be the Annual Joint Luncheon Meeting of the Superintendents Governance Committee, Directors of Special Education Committee and the Community Advisory Committee on Wednesday, May 12, 2010, at 12 noon at the Holiday Inn.

HANDOUTS: AGENDA ITEM HANDOUTS: Tulare County Office of Education Deaf/Hard of Hearing Study Recommendations; Draft minutes of the March 23, 2010 Superintendent's Governance Committee meeting; Assembly Bill 2160 – Relating to Teacher Credentialing and instruction to pupils with autism Legislative Counsel's Digest; Summary of Reimbursement Requests for Supplementary Services for Hearing Impaired Students in Districts for 2009-2010; Low Incidence Equipment and Material Requests for 2009-2010 to date; Legal Fees/Settlement Costs Related to Special Education Issues for 2009-2010 Fiscal Year to Date; Tulare County/District SELPA Out of Home Care Facilities List - 2009-2010 .

MISCELLANEOUS HANDOUTS: CASEMIS Special Education Enrollment Data – April; State SELPA Legislative Priorities List for Special Education.

Janet Jones, Chairperson
Superintendents Governance Committee

Marilyn Rankin, Chief Administrative Officer
Superintendents Governance Committee