

# SUPERINTENDENTS GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE TULARE COUNTY MASTER PLAN FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION

## MINUTES

November 14, 2023

The Superintendent's Governance Committee met on Tuesday, November 14, 2023, in the Cedar Conference Room.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** David Shimer, Superintendent, Burton Elementary; Yolanda Valdez, Superintendent, Cutler-Orosi Unified; Dr. Joe Hernandez, Superintendent, Dinuba Unified; George Eddy, Superintendent, Exeter Unified; Sherry Martin, Superintendent, Kings River Union; Heather Pilgrim, Superintendent, Oak Valley Elementary; Dr. Nate Nelson, Superintendent, Porterville Unified School District; Paula Adair, Superintendent, Tulare City Elementary; Lucy Van Scyoc, Superintendent, Tulare Joint Union High; Kirk Shrum, Superintendent, Visalia Unified; Tony Casares, Superintendent, Woodlake Unified; and Tammy Bradford, Assistant Superintendent/SELPA Administrator, Tulare County.

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Ron Hudson, Acting Superintendent, Earlimart Elementary; Dr. Sergio C. Chavez, Superintendent, Farmersville Unified; Tom Rooney, Superintendent, Lindsay Unified; and Tim Hire, County Superintendent, Tulare County.

**OTHERS PRESENT:** ALPAUGH UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT: Troy Hayes, Superintendent; MONSON-SULTANA JOINT UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT: Roberto Vaca, Superintendent; TULARE COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION: Jody Arriaga, Director, Internal Business Services; Fernie Marroquin, Deputy Superintendent, Administrative Services; and Malinda Furtado, Parent Liaison.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** Dr. Joe Hernandez, Chairperson, opened the meeting to public comment.

**INTRODUCTIONS:** Dr. Joe Hernandez, Chairperson, introduced guest superintendents, Troy Hayes, Alpaugh Unified School District and Roberto Vaca, Monson-Sultana Joint Union School District.

Troy Hayes shared that the Alpaugh Unified School District enrollment is roughly 400 students. The district has a full time special education teacher provided by the SELPA. A school psychologist and a social worker provide services to approximately 30 students on Individual Education Plans (IEP). Speech services are provided to 12 students. The SELPA is always willing and able to help. We do reach out often and the SELPA is always willing and available to help.

Roberto Vaca disseminated the Data Profile 2023-2024 for Monson-Sultana and shared that the mission and vision statement are directly from the community. MTSS and social emotional wellness are very important at Monson-Sultana. All students will achieve one year or more of growth. The district has made great strides in creating partnerships with local agencies to make sure all students are connected and feel safe. Partnership with the SELPA has been great, one full time special education teacher and one school psychologist is provided one day a week. Currently, 433 students are enrolled and the district is pleased to announce that due the focus on SARB, absenteeism has been decreased by 50% putting the district below county and state averages. Lastly, Mr. Vaca thanked superintendents for the opportunity to present information regarding Monson-Sultana.

**REVIEW OF SGC PACKET:** Tammy Bradford, Assistant Superintendent, Special Services, and SELPA Administrator, reviewed the Superintendent’s Governance Committee agenda packet with the superintendents. Items included were:

- Special Education Report – Tammy Bradford reviewed the county served special education report and informed superintendents that infant numbers have increased drastically and will continue to increase as DDS has lowered their qualification standards in the past a deficit of 80% was necessary however now a deficit of only 22% qualifies a student for an IFSP. Random case studies may help ensure that students qualifying actually have a need. Discussion followed.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Minutes from the September 26, 2023 Superintendents Governance Committee Meeting were presented for approval. *A motion was made by George Eddy and seconded by Heather Pilgrim to approve the minutes as presented. The motion carried unanimously.*

**PARENT LIAISON REPORT:** Malinda Furtado, Parent Liaison, presented the ‘Meeting Challenges: Finding Success Through Support,’ Community Advisory Committee 2024 Calendar. This year’s theme highlights Tulare County students with exceptional needs who are meeting challenges in the general education classroom through appropriate accommodations and modifications. Mrs. Furtado thanked superintendents for helping all children succeed in their districts.

**DOSE REPORT:** Dr. Joe Hernandez, Chairperson, tabled this item until February 27, 2024.

**SELPA EXPENDITURES/REVENUES:** Jody Arriaga, Director, Internal Business Services, presented the 2022-2023 Special Education Revenue and Expenditure Summary and stated that the total revenue for the year was \$124,062,447 with expenses totaling \$125,033,324 with an ending balance of \$1,324,487 after deducting \$970,877 from the fund balance for excess in expenses.

Tammy Bradford held a discussion and requested feedback from superintendents regarding funds that remain in the ending balance. Superintendents mutually agreed that a reduced reserve of \$500,000 would be acceptable. Lastly, Ms. Bradford agreed to draft a policy with attorneys for the agreed upon fund reserve.

Secondly, Jody Arriaga presented the 602 Revenue-Expenditure Comparison for 22/23 versus 21/22, which demonstrates the variances. Expenses for AcCEL services, transportation, and nursing were discussed as expenses vary depending on student needs. The bar graph and pie chart demonstrate the percentage of funds for TCOE versus funds disseminated to school districts.

Lastly, Jody Arriaga presented AB 602 State Funding and shared that \$682,434 was taken off the top and given back to districts. The difference in costs as listed on the 2023-2024 SPED 1<sup>st</sup> Interim Off the Top Comparisons was reviewed. Discussion followed. *A motion was made by Nate Nelson and seconded by Sherry Martin to approve the AB 602 Funding Estimate for 2022-2023. The motion carried unanimously.*

**SELPA POLICY #9350 – NONPUBLIC SCHOOLS AND AGENCIES (SECOND READING) –** Tammy Bradford presented SELPA Policy 9350, Nonpublic Schools and Agencies for a second reading and request for approval. Superintendents were informed that the policy was updated to reflect current federal and state regulations however, it does not affect funding. *A motion was made by George Eddy and seconded by Nate Nelson to approve the revised SELPA Policy 9350 – Nonpublic Schools and Agencies. The motion carried unanimously.*

**SELPA POLICY #9700 – SERVICES TO STUDENTS ENROLLED IN PRIVATE SCHOOLS (SECOND READING)** – Tammy Bradford presented the new SELPA Policy 9700, Services to Students Enrolled in Private Schools for a second reading and request for approval. *A motion was made by Yolanda Valdez and seconded by Heather Pilgrim to approve the revised SELPA Policy 9350 – Nonpublic Schools and Agencies. The motion carried unanimously.*

**SELPA POLICY #9020 – TRANSPORTATION FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES (SECOND READING)** – Tammy Bradford presented SELPA Policy 9020, Transportation for Students with Disabilities for a second reading and request for approval. Superintendents were reminded that this is a way for the SELPA to come up with opportunities or scenarios to bill back per student, per district, moving forward. This policy was shared with directors and they were encouraged to have conversations with their respective superintendents regarding any concerns they may have. Discussion followed. *A motion was made by Kirk Shrum and seconded by Lucy Van Syoc to approve the revised SELPA Policy 9020 – Transportation for Students with Disabilities for the 2024/2025 school year. The motion carried unanimously.*

**SELPA POLICY #2540 – RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT CENTER (RTC) COST POOL (SECOND READING)** – Tammy Bradford presented SELPA Policy 2540, Residential Treatment Center (RTC) Cost Pool for a second reading and request for approval. Superintendents were reminded that this policy would set funds aside to reimburse districts for costs related to Residential Treatment Centers. If approved, the policy will not take effect until the 2024/2025 school year. Districts who take their mental health funds would not be able to submit for reimbursement for the Educationally Related Mental Health Services (ERMHS) portion. The cost per student is between \$450,000 to \$600,000 per year. Discussion followed.

Dr. Joe Hernandez tabled this policy until February 27, 2024 to allow for more discussion.

**SELPA POLICY #8040 – INDEPENDENT EDUCATIONAL EVALUATIONS (FIRST READING); POSSIBLE SOURCES FOR IEE’S)** – Tammy Bradford presented SELPA Policy 8040, Independent Educational Evaluations (IEE) for a first reading. This policy is updated every couple of years as parents do request independent evaluations and this policy outlines the process and includes a list of current independent evaluators approved by the SELPA.

**SELPA POLICY #2520 – LEGAL FEES REIMBURSEMENT (FIRST READING)** – Tammy Bradford presented SELPA Policy 2520, Special Education Litigation and Due Process Hearing Costs for a first reading. Minor changes have been made to the policy such as the deductible and the date all documentation is due to the SELPA for reimbursement. This policy outlines what needs to be submitted by the district to the SELPA in order to be considered for reimbursement. In the event that the district is not provided with invoices by the due date, the district may submit the OAH and give the SELPA a heads up of the reimbursement. Discussion followed.

**PUSD LEGAL REIMBURSEMENT** – Tammy Bradford shared information regarding legal fees submitted for reimbursement by Porterville Unified School District in the amount of \$21,462.35 for a Due Process case during the 2022/2023 school year. Documents were not received until October however the SELPA has always stood strong on the August 1<sup>st</sup> date. PUSD disagreed and questioned the policy therefore this item is being presented to SGC to decide. That being said, there are a few other districts that would also qualify for reimbursement should PUSD be granted approval for reimbursement. Discussion followed. *A motion was made by Tony Casares and seconded by George Eddy to approve the 2022/2023 Legal Fees Reimbursement during the 2023/2024 school year. Motion carried with the following votes: Ayes: 8. Opposed: 1, Abstained: 1.*

**NEXT MEETING:** The next Superintendents Governance Committee Meeting will be held Tuesday, February 27, 2024 in the Tulare County Office of Education, Cedar Conference Room.

**HANDOUTS:** AGENDA ITEM HANDOUTS: Draft minutes of the September 26, 2023 Superintendent’s Governance Committee meeting; ‘Meeting Challenges: Finding Success Through Support,’ Community Advisory Committee 2024 Calendar; 2022-2023 Special Education Revenue and Expenditure Summary; 602 Revenue/Expenditure Comparison 2022-2023 versus 2021-2022; 602 Expenditure Bar Graph; AB 602 Expenses Pie Chart; AB 602 State Funding; 2023-2024 SPED 1st Interim Off the Top Comparisons; SELPA Policy #9350 – Nonpublic Schools and Agencies (Second Reading); SELPA Policy #9700 – Services to Students Enrolled in Private Schools (Second Reading); SELPA Policy #9020 – Transportation for Students with Disabilities (Second Reading); SELPA Policy #2540 – Residential Treatment Center (RTC) Cost Pool (Second Reading); SELPA Policy #8040 – Independent Educational Evaluations (First Reading); Possible Sources for IEE’s; and SELPA Policy #2520 – Legal Fees Reimbursement (First Reading).



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Dr. Joe Hernandez, Chairperson  
Superintendents Governance Committee



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Tammy Bradford, Chief Administrative Officer  
Superintendents Governance Committee