

Community Advisory Committee Meeting
February 11, 2009
Soquel Union Elementary School District
Board Room
6:30 p.m.-8:30 p.m.

MINUTES

Roll Call

Victoria called the meeting to order at 6:33pm

- ◆ *Victoria George, chair, SCCS*
- ◆ *Rebecca Cernac, SLV*
- ◆ *Cheryl Knox, SELPA Administrative Assistant*
- ◆ *Dan Cope, SELPA Director*
- ◆ *Erica Sowder, LOSD*
- ◆ *Katie Merchant, LOSD Director*
- ◆ *Carmel Weifert, LOSD*
- ◆ *Tracy Marquart, Member at Large*
- ◆ *Janet Edwards, SUESD*
- ◆ *Suzie Christensen, Scotts Valley*
- ◆ *Kim Tucson, SCCS*
- ◆ *Amanda Owens, SCCOE*
- ◆ *Laura Lewis, SLV*

2.0 Review and approval of Minutes from 11-12-08 meeting

J. Edwards/C. Weiner/All approved

3.0 Additions/Deletions to Agenda

S. Christensen - SEPTA

S. Christensen – (CAC) Bylaws questions

They are placed at the end of the agenda

4.0 Public Input (For items not on the agenda – (Three minutes per person)

There was no public input

5.0 Reports

Chairperson - Victoria George

Ms. George noted that this will be her last meeting as Chair due to elections being held at this meeting. The SuperFlex workshop turnout was great and we are hearing good feedback from all attendees. Most attendees were staff although there were a few parents. Victoria apologized for missing a few emails from Stephanie Madrigal/presenter. She (Victoria) was having some email issues at the time. It meant that we were without handouts and a PowerPoint presentation. It turned out to be a great workshop none the less. The PowerPoint's were later received and made available via the home page in SEIS.

Victoria has many fond and satisfying memories of her ten years as a CAC member. She thinks she may have even outlasted the previous "record holder" of time served!

SELPA Administrator – Dan Cope

Mr. Cope, having just returned from his quarterly check up, announced that he continues to be Cancer Free (two years now!). He is retiring and will no longer be the SELPA director effective July 1, 2009. He will continue to be part time Special Ed Director for Soquel Union Elementary School District. His retirement and discussion of the recruitment process is on the SECA agenda for tomorrow (2/12/09). Dan suggested that CAC put together some attributes of what they would like to see in a SELPA director. They can present this to the SECA board, perhaps at the March meeting.

The Budget continues to be a source of grave concern for all of our districts and indeed for the entire state of California. It looks as if there will be 13 Billion allocated to support IDEA at the federal level. California will get about 1.3 Billion of this, which equates to an approximate increase from 17% to 27% per ADA in special education funding.

The state of California has come to the end of a 14 year long class action suit “Hughes Bill”. This settlement will provide for some significant funding for LEA’s, COE’s and SELPA’s throughout California. Approximately 14 years ago a few districts claimed that they were entitled to additional funds for services they were mandated by federal law to provide which were not completely funded by California, an “unfunded mandate”. Enough districts followed suite and it was turned into a class action suit. The statute of limitations is due to run out and California has settled. However, in order for the money to be disbursed at least 85% of the Districts and SELPA’s in California must pass a resolution and sign a waiver that they agree to abide by the final disbursement of funds and they will not re open this issue. The money is currently in the budget and perhaps we will see it as early as Spring 2009.

CAC Liaison - Katie Merchant

The Morgan Center Autism Workshops did need to be cancelled due to short turn around time. Remember, the Balance grant received earlier this year earmarked for staff development was to be used to support the subs so teachers could attend. The workshops are postponed until Fall 2009 allowing more time for teachers to plan to attend. Also the new COE building is scheduled to be operational by fall 2009 and since it is likely going to be an extension of the Chrysalis program, serving our Autistic population it will tie in nicely.

At the last SEC meeting the Special Ed directors discussed program options for the building which is located adjacent to Green Acres Elementary. The consensus was that it be a continuation of the Chrysalis program offering programs for our Autistic population in Elementary grades. We need to continue to address the ways we can successfully provide mainstreaming opportunities to these students.

Effective December 21, 2008 there is a significant amendment the IDEA regulations. In short a parent can choose to sever all special education services to their child at any time. Katie reminded everyone that with this comes some “loss of protection”, particularly with regard to discipline. There is an addendum that has been added to the Procedural Safeguards.

Dr. Merchant explained to the group that one fall out of the budget cuts will be the ESY program. In fact many districts are severely curtailing and even canceling summer school (for general ed students). However, Districts are obligated to provide ESY for students if it is on their IEP. The change that families are likely to see this year is that teams are likely to be much more stringent in following the guidelines to determine if ESY is necessary for a student. For example, in the past teams have tended to put ESY on most if not all students in SDC settings.

This year teams are going to be much more diligent in their data collections and determination of “measure of progress”.

Discussion/Action Items

A. Election of Chairperson- Action

- ◆ *Victoria George nominated Rebecca Cernac, Ms. Cernac has shown remarkable dedication to the CAC and the Special needs community. She has actively participated in all areas of the CAC.*
- ◆ *Janet Edwards seconded the motion.*
- ◆ *All members were in favor of the nomination and Ms. Cernac is now the CAC Chairperson,*

B. Election of Vice-Chairperson - Action

- ◆ *Rebecca Cernac nominated Victoria George*
- ◆ *Carmel Weifert seconded the motion.*
- ◆ *All members were in favor and Ms. George is now the CAC Co-Chair.*

C. Workshop Update - Discussion

Tracy Marquart, co-organizer of the upcoming workshop “Employment Options for Transition Age Students with Disabilities” let us know that the flyer is currently available on the SELPA webpage. Additionally flyers are going home with all the students in the SELPA and there are flyers available tonight for the group. This workshop consists of a panel of experts in this area. The panel will share information and their perspective in vocational training and options for students with disabilities who are of transition age. They will be ample opportunity for questions and answers from the audience.

D. Legislation Day/May 6, 2009 – Participants - Action

Dan reminded everyone that Legislative Day is coming up on Wednesday, May 6. This is a full day event with participation from SELPA’s and CAC’s from all over the state. The morning session is spent in meetings learning how to lobby and talk to legislators. Usually one legislator is recognized for their work on Special Education legislation. A workshop on how to lobby as well information about upcoming bills is presented. Last year it was all about budget and how to increase the funding to special education. There are not likely to be any bills to consider since the Governor has said that no bills will be considered until there is a budget. Lunch is served then everyone goes over to the Capitol Building. Dan makes appointments ahead of time and members meet with their representatives. This is a time for CAC to present issues of concern and where we would like support. People bring their kids, when appropriate or sometimes pictures of their kids. He says it really helps to put a human face to the issue at hand. This is a long day and rather than leave at the crack of dawn sometimes people go the night before. There is funding for this.

E. Membership – Discussion

- ◆ *Rebecca Cernac, SLV needs to be re appointed by the SLV Board.*
- ◆ *SCCS needs two more representatives. In addition, Victoria George will need to be re appointed by the SCCS board.*
- ◆ *Amanda Owens, SCCOE needs to be reappointed.*
- ◆ *Bonny Doon needs a member.*

- ◆ *Scotts Valley needs another member.*
- ◆ *PCS and DELTA are sharing a rep and PCS has supplied the member up till now as Kelly Venden Berghe is no longer able to serve. Delta now needs to supply a representative and Kris Neustadter, Director is aware.*
- ◆ *Jeff Darling, SARC, member at large is no longer able to serve. This is an opening.*

These membership needs were discussed at SEC in January and directors are actively searching for representatives.

F. Recognition Ceremony - Discussion

The nomination forms have gone for distribution to the districts. The form is revised to include School/District Administrator. The recognition ceremony will be held at Daubenbiss House on May 16, 2009 at 1pm.

G. SEPTA-Suzie Christensen added to the agenda

Suzie is heading up this organization in our SELPA. This is the Special Education Parent Teacher Association. There were more than 30 people at the "organizational" meeting. This meeting is a required element of the SEPTA. A representative from the main office was there who was able to run the first meeting. The program was explained and elections conducted. The first Meeting will be February 21, from 4:30 – 6:30 in Scotts Valley at the Sky Park Community Center. Look for an article soon in the Sentinel. Suzie explained that any parent can join from our county. In fact she has had inquiries from our neighboring San Benito and Monterey Counties. Any monies raised must be spent in the NSSC SELPA. Future meetings will consider how to raise and where to spend the money. Suzie explained that the organization is going to advocate for the children but want to support the teachers. In response to inquiries from the audience Suzie responded that she doesn't believe that SEPTA has to have teachers on the organization, however they are certainly welcome.

H. CAC By Laws – added to the agenda

One CAC member believes that CAC should be involved in all Program Evaluations. Dan reminds that they do get the input every 4 years as part of the SESR (Special Ed Self Review) .

Victoria questioned where we are on the Autism Task Force. Dan explained that that is currently under discussion at both SEC and SECA and continues to be on the agenda for both organizations.

7.0 Announcements

- ◆ *Victoria reminded us about the Art Reception on February 24 at the COE. The art is currently on display at COE. Flyers were handed out. There will be great music and food.*
- ◆ *The Human Race is May 9th.*
- ◆ *Lauri Lewis reported on a great organization that she and her family are a part of. It is "Angels on Stage", based in San Jose at the Hoover Theatre. The program is opened to all disabled students and everyone gets a part in the production. They run multiple casts to accomplish this. They are currently almost sold out, will go on hiatus soon for the summer and reconvene in October.*

8.0 Future Agenda Items

- ◆ CAC awareness
- ◆ Next business meeting is April 22, 2009 at 6:30pm and will be held at Soquel Union Elementary School District - in the lobby.
- ◆ Tracy Marquart – other options to access secondary age transition services in our area.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50pm