

Community Advisory Committee Meeting
November 12, 2008
Soquel Union Elementary School District ~ Board Room
620 Monterey Avenue
Capitola, CA 95010
6:30 p.m.-8:30 p.m.

MINUTES

1.0 Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:35pm by Victoria George/Chair

2.0 Roll Call

- √ *Amanda Owens, Santa Cruz County Office of Education*
- √ *Kim Touson, Santa Cruz City School District*
- √ *Erica Sowder, Live Oak Elementary School District*
- √ *Jeff Darling, San Andreas Regional Center*
- √ *Suzie Christensen, Scotts Valley Unified School District*
- √ *Victoria George, Santa Cruz City School District (Chair)*
- √ *Carmel Weifert, Live Oak Elementary School District*
- √ *Tracy Marquart, Community at Large*
- √ *Janet Edwards, Soquel Union Elementary School District*
- √ *Rebecca Cernac, San Lorenzo Valley Unified School District, (proposed chair elect)*
- √ *Laurie Lewis, San Lorenzo Valley Unified School District*
- √ *Dan Cope, SELPA, Assistant Superintendent*
- √ *Cheryl Knox, SELPA, Administrative Assistant*

3.0 Review of Minutes from May 14 & September 10, 2008

There were two sets of minutes to review and act upon as we did not have a quorum at the September meeting.

- ▶ *May 14, 2008 Minutes – (M/S/C) Rebecca Cernac/Janet Edwards, all ayes*
- ▶ *September 10, 2008 minutes – (M/S/C) Rebecca Cernac/Janet Edwards, all ayes*

4.0 Additions/Deletions to Agenda

- ▶ *Victoria added an item (7G, SEPTA, Special Education Parent Teacher Association)*

5.0 Public Input (For items not on the agenda - Three minutes per person)

- ▶ *There was no public in attendance, therefore no public comments*

6.0 Reports

A. Chairperson – Victoria George

- ▶ *This is Victoria's last meeting as chairperson. She took this opportunity to share some of her past positive experiences with CAC.*
- ▶ *In her role as CAC rep to SECA she points out that she does feel that she has been able to bring parent and community opinions and ideas to the attention of the Superintendents throughout the SELPA. She reminded the CAC members that anyone can attend the SECA (Special Education Council) meetings which are held quarterly in the Soquel Union Elementary School District Board Room. As a direct result of CAC participation the Voc Ed program has been maintained at the Middle School level.*

- ▶ *At the state level CAC has had the opportunity to lobby in Sacramento regarding Special Education legislature. She pointed out that in her opinion government is run by the people that show up.*
- ▶ *And last but certainly not least she has enjoyed the opportunity to raise awareness SELPA wide by helping to introduce such programs as the Art Competition that has become an annual event. Special needs students SELPA wide are encouraged to participate in the art contest. The event culminates in a reception/viewing with the winning art being reproduced on a bilingual poster highlighting CAC. These high quality posters are displayed in Classrooms and school offices SELPA-wide.*

B. SELPA Administrator – Dan Cope

- ▶ *Dan also took this opportunity to reflect on the positive growth he is seeing with CAC, primarily under the leadership of Victoria. When he first came to CAC it was not a cohesive group and district representation on CAC was lacking and inconsistent. Throughout these last years he has seen parents and districts come together to work collaboratively with regard to programs, services and policies.*
- ▶ *Additionally, under Victoria's leadership he has seen the development workshops geared to support and education staff and families.*
- ▶ *There is an annual recognition ceremony in which special needs educators are selected by their peers for the outstanding work they contribute to our community. This alone has provided unprecedented goodwill throughout our community.*
- ▶ *Dan announced that directors and pupil data specialists SELPA wide are very busy with the December Count. All districts in California are responsible in reporting this data to the CDE (California Department of Education). This is a snapshot in time showing students and services in effect December 1. This report is used to provide information to Federal Government for funding and compliance monitoring, including whether or not districts are meeting the 60 day timeline on initial IEP's as well as holding the transition IEP's for students turning three.*
- ▶ *CMA is expanding from grades three and five to include third through eighth grade. This is a new assessment (part of the STAR program) designed to be appropriate for students whose abilities fall between CAPA (lower functioning) and the more common CST.*
- ▶ *State budget is not in good shape. The current proposal will cut 2-3 billion dollars out of education. They are looking at two to three hundred dollars per ADA. Districts in our SELPA are running pretty lean already so it is going to be very tight. Special Ed programs are likely to be less affected as they are mandated Programs. However, this will affect the General Fund for districts, as the money has to come from somewhere.*
- ▶ *SELPA has recently hosted three workshops which drew rave reviews and respectable attendance.*
 - *There was a BICM refresher Training as well as a full (three days) training for staff to receive their BICM certification for the first time. Leni Papatestas, our PENT representative provided both of these trainings.*
 - *Diagnostic Center, Rebecca Steinberger, provided a great training on "Positive Classroom Behavior" which was attended by about 30 staff.*
 - *Diagnostic Center also presented a workshop specifically for our Para-Educators in the SELPA. This was presented by Diann Grimm and was attended by 43 staff throughout our SELPA (two from PVUSD). These were district staff as well as ParaEducators employed by NPA's who serve our students.*

- ▶ *Dan and the Special Ed Directors are meeting this Friday with the San Andreas Regional Center casemanagers and Oscar Torres (director). They will address ways to more effectively notify districts about students who may be transitioning from SARC infant services to IEP public school services. An audience member expressed interest in participating. Dan remarked that this was not a meeting open to the public.*

C. SEC Liaison- Katie Merchant

Katie was absent from both the last SEC and this CAC meeting. Dan, however, has kept in touch and had her report to share:

- ▶ *Staff is using the most current state approved forms in SEIS.*
- ▶ *Cheryl and Dan attended the bi-annual CASEMIS meeting in Elk Grove in late October. They brought back the most recent updates in data reporting and have shared it with Special Ed directors SELPA-wide, who have in turn shared it with their staff.*
- ▶ *Dan and Cheryl presented this same information SELPA wide in two separate meetings with the Pupil Data Specialists for the SELPA.*
- ▶ *Good news for the ED middle school classroom. After an exhaustive search for an appropriate space we have located a classroom on the New Brighton Middle School campus. There were a few locations that had the “footprint” for a classroom, but no actual space. A portable could have been placed but that would be expensive and time consuming. The classroom also needs to be placed on a middle school campus in order to allow for mainstreaming opportunities for the students. This further narrowed the options. This will be the 2nd ED classroom on the New Brighton campus and the 4th COE classroom. Thank you to Dan for helping to facilitate this arrangement with the New Brighton principal, Rob Martin and Kathleen Howard, the superintendent for Soquel Union Elementary School District. The classroom will be open right after winter break. This arrangement is for this year only. Dan will be taking this item back to SECA in December as we will continue to have the need next school year.*

7.0 Discussion/Action Items

A. Informational CAC Workshops for 08-09/Review Topics/Action

- ▶ *Rebecca Cernac reported that the Dental Workshop held this past October was very good, offering lots of good tips, tools, and handouts for parents of special needs students. It is unfortunate that it was so poorly attended.*
- ▶ *Victoria reports that we are on track for the January 14, 2009 workshop “Superflex” with Stephanie Madrigal. There was discussion about where to hold the workshop. The members feel that it will be highly attended so would like to confirm that the Multi-Use room at Santa Cruz Gardens Elementary School. Cheryl will check the room availability and let Victoria know.*
- ▶ *In regards to the 3rd workshop of the year. Victoria opened the floor to discussion. She noted that SPIN had just presented a workshop for parents about understanding IEP’s. Victoria has become aware that parents are not highly aware of the availability of Voc Ed for their students. She and Tracy Marquart have begun a discussion about the importance of introducing students to the workforce. Studies have shown that students who participate in Voc Ed are able to make the transition much more smoothly than those who are not, and are more likely to remain employed. Tracy feels it is critical that we educate our families about this important transition opportunity. Rebecca pointed out that this is a strong focus with the Autism Center. Many of these autistic students will be hitting the job market at the same time.*

- *Victoria asked if anyone wanted to present a motion that we table the IEP workshop currently scheduled for March 11, 2009 and instead present the Voc Ed workshop. This new workshop for families and staff would consist of a panel of Voc Ed professionals, including Tracy Marquart and hopefully Sally Beck and Debbie Nargi Brown.*

M/S/C (Carmel Weifert/Laurie Lewis/All ayes)

Stephanie and Victoria will get to work on the composition of the panel and draft a flyer.

- ▶ *Victoria suggests that they post flyers around town for the workshops. She said they used to and it worked.*

B. Membership for 2008-2009

- ▶ *Membership needs are noted below:*

- *Bonny Doon needs one representative*
- *Santa Cruz City Schools needs two representatives*
- *Scotts Valley needs one representative*

Victoria reminds everyone that anyone can take a name to the Special Ed Director for consideration. The volunteers name is then taken to their school board for official action. Victoria will contact the Special Ed Directors of each of these districts and let them know representation is needed.

C. Update on Autism Task Force – Suzie Christenson

- ▶ *Suzie is concerned that people aren't attending the Task Force meetings. It is as if they feel there is nothing left to be done now that Morgan Autism Center has done such a good job getting the Chrysalis program turned around. There is still work to be done. Chrysalis will continue to need oversight and support. And what about the transition from preschool to kindergarten and beyond? This is yet to be addressed. The presentation from ACES was fabulous but people left throughout the meeting. She also mentioned that it seemed to her that last year the task force did not have the opportunity to actually make any suggestions. Dan said that yes, due to timing and circumstances the decision of what to do with Chrysalis was taken out of the hands of the task force. This was because towards the end of the year it was found out that Listen Foundation was leaving. This meant a fast and vital decision had to be made. SECA went with the Morgan Autism Center based on their reputation. Suzie believes that this decision and last years experience contributing to take some of the wind out of folk's sails.*
- ▶ *Dan reminded the group that if they stick with the task force they will be able to provide a recommendation to the SECA in regards to the overall future Autism programs in the SELPA.*

D. NPS/NPA Regulations – Proposed Revisions – Dan Cope

- ▶ *Please see attached handout which was provided for all at the meeting. Dan pointed out Section 3065 (e)(2)(B) which states, in part "...has been amended to increase the educational qualifications for staff providing behavioral interventions to students with special needs to include 12 semester units in applied behavior analysis from an institute of higher learning". This proposed new language will affect NPA's, NPS's and Public schools.*
 - *Dan and Michael Watkins met with Cabrillo administration and learned that it would take up to 1.5 years to put a class in place to address this regulation. Dan*

doesn't think that Cabrillo will offer these classes, it is a very time sensitive issue. This new standard is for the people that work directly with the students.

E. Art Competition - Victoria George

The poster art deadline is November 30. Please email Wendy Harrison or Victoria and they will arrange to pick up the art. Teachers are contacting Wendy or Victoria directly. The art exhibit will be held at the new offices or the Santa Cruz County Office of Education at 400 Encinal Street in Santa Cruz. Music and Food will be provided.

F. April CAC meeting date

The April Business meeting has been rescheduled for April 22 at the Soquel Union Elementary School District Board Room starting at 6:30pm

G. SEPTA-Victoria George

- ▶ *Victoria introduced this topic and asked Suzie to explain what SEPTA's are. Suzie met with Dan Cope and the SEPTA area representative last week to go over the program. SEPTA (Special Education Parent Teacher Association) is just that. It is a PTA for parents of Special Education students. It is run the same as the mainstream PTA with all the rights, responsibilities of the PTA. Suzie will be spearheading this organization and will keep the group updated as she proceeds. She does not anticipate making a big membership push till after the holidays.*

8.0 Update from the General Attendance Committee- Carmel Weifert

- ▶ *Carmel read a statement for the group that she proposes everyone take to their district administrators (usually school principals) and ask that they place it in the newsletter that goes home to students. It simply states what CAC does and announces meeting dates.*
- ▶ *This led into some discussion about some issues that CAC members ran into when they were distributing the CAC information posters to sites just recently. Many secretaries and even some of the newer principals were not aware of CAC and its role in the community.*
- ▶ *Laurie Lewis brought up that she is concerned that folks are not getting the CAC brochures with their IEP paperwork.*
- ▶ *Dan will remind Special Education directors that they do need to remind their staff to distribute CAC brochures with parent rights.*

9.0 Future Agenda Items

The next meeting is in January. It is the SuperFlex workshop on January 14. It will be either in the board room at Soquel Union Elementary School District or the Multi Use room at Santa Cruz Gardens Elementary School.

10.0 Close

*The meeting was adjourned at 8pm.
M/S/C (Rebecca Carnac/Carmel Weifert/all ayes)*