

# CAC

## Community Advisory Committee For Special Education

Advising The Board of Education  
San Diego Unified School District

### General Membership Meeting Minutes

**Date:** Thursday, January 12, 2012  
**Time:** 7:00 – 9:00 pm  
**Location:** Lindbergh-Schweitzer Elementary – West Auditorium, 4133 Mt. Albertine Ave.  
(92111)

#### **WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS:**

Meeting called to order at 7:02pm.

The Chairperson, Moira Allbritton, welcomed attendees and introduced CAC members, district staff and administrators, and acknowledged parents. The Chair reviewed the agenda, meeting format and structure, and process for providing public comment.

#### **ROLL CALL/MEMBER ATTENDANCE:**

**Present:** Moira Allbritton, Mary Conroy, Mina Kern, Dorene Dias Pesta, Belquis Anders, Raylene Dickinson, Meghann Hughes, Christy Scadden, Ellen Herroon, Nancy Stevenson, Bill Cary, Michelle Crisci, Chris Pikus.

**Absent:** Teresa Michel, Joyce Clark, Teresa Hilleary, Pam McKinney.

**Ex-Officio:** Dr. Joe Fulcher – Chief Student Services Officer. Susan Martinez – Executive Director of Special Education. Bill Kowba – Superintendent of Schools.

**Quorum established.**

#### **PRESENTATION:** (Superintendent Bill Kowba)

A hardcopy of Superintendent Kowba's PowerPoint presentation can be found in the CAC meeting minutes' binder.

Presentation notes:

Flat funding means no cost of living adjustment.

Deferrals will go straight to paying off loans needed to cover the gap from when we got money last year.

The ballot measure will not bring in new money for education, only social services.

91-92% of our budget costs are people, so new cuts will have to be staff.

March 15 is the deadline the Education Code requires the district to decide on layoff notices. The State has until June 30<sup>th</sup> to set the budget. That is why the district has taken back layoff notices in the past.

### **Q&A:**

Q: What exactly is over-identification?

A: There have been research trends that show that children from certain ethnic groups have been over identified as needing special education, but in reality that was not the case.

Q: Rather than laying off teachers? Is there another alternative? Like a golden handshake?

A: We did that in 2003/4 and 2008. About 1000 people did it in 2008. It's a good tool, but you can't do it back-to-back years; you need about a 4-5 year gap to do that. Maybe we can do another in 2013, because you are using future dollars to pay off the teachers leaving.

Q: Do you see an increase or decrease in enrollment?

A: I am not sure. It's a generational trend. In the decade of 2000, enrollment began to decline across the board. Low birth rates dictate that. Between 2010-2020 should be a growth period, but the bad economy may dictate otherwise.

Q: How do you decide when looking at your current budget?

A: We have a demographer that runs the numbers to try to have an accurate projection.

Q: On slide 12, how many students are in special ed?

A: (Joe) We have 15,200 students.

Q: What tests are these numbers based on?

A: This is a combination of CST, CMA, and CAPA.

### **OPEN FORUM:**

Q: What does the special education budget look like?

A: We are looking at a \$3million dollar budget reduction next year. We are trying to not cut anything in the classroom. We will have a better idea in a week or so.

Q: But it looks like it's going to be staff?

A: Teachers positions are based on the number of students that we have. The teachers would have to change the contracts that they have.

Q: \$3 million is a lot, so what sorts of things are you looking at cutting?

A: We have a budget of over \$260 million, so \$3 million is not that large of a cut. It won't have an effect on an IEP mandated service.

Q: Have any programs being identified as not as necessary? What would happen if IEP services won't be met?

A: We haven't identified any programs yet. We will make sure that IEP mandated services are met.

Q: What kind of a notice we will get about specific decisions? Will we have to watch for public announcements?

A: We were told by the Board that CAC and the district would have to discuss cost savings. So the CAC is a good place to get information. A public statement will be made about cuts.

Q: What about medically fragile students? Is it a luxury vs necessity for children with special medical needs?

A: We will ensure that the students receive the services that their IEP mandates. We have about 37 nurses that are funded by special ed, they make sure those IEP medical needs are being met. We may reduce the nursing staff by 16, which makes me very nervous.

Q: How can we change the process of getting a one on one? The current process takes too long as does finding a suitable aide. The child then suffers.

A: We try to find suitable substitutes to mitigate the time it takes. Speak with either Susan or Joe to discuss your specific case.

Q: Are the CST scores a fair assessment of my son's progress (and other special ed children)? Are these tests appropriate?

A: If there are some accommodations and modifications, then yes it can be an accurate indicator. There isn't a perfect test. We have other measures that we can use to assess their skills. But those measures are not standardized so that the state can get a good idea of where that student is. We try to make it as fair as possible for them to be as good an indicator. No Child Left Behind mandates that we test every child, we don't have a choice. By 2015 CA will be moving toward a Common Core Standards; they will be assessed on a computer and the questions will get harder or easier depending on how they answer. Check CDE's website.

Q: My son's report card always shows Below Basic performance. How does that report card show an accurate assessment of where my child is at?

A: When teachers are reporting to parents they need to report on how they are progressing towards their IEP goals. Teachers should be able to show how the student is learning and growing.

Q: Isn't the type of test decided at the IEP?

A: Yes, but the state has a set criteria needed.

Q: Can a parent opt-out of the testing? Can a parent be present at the time of testing?

A: Yes you can opt-out. But a certain percentage of the school must be tested. (Susan) I don't know if the parent can be present or not. (Joe) Generally that answer is that the parent cannot be present.

### **DISTRICT UPDATE:**

BoE Workshop – the Board seemed to be more interested in the fiscal matters rather than operational issues. The Board wants a figure attached to the cost-saving recommendations, they also want specifics on where we will cut \$3 million, they also want information on why children are leaving for charter schools, and lastly the Board wants the district and the CAC to come together for discussions. Feb 19<sup>th</sup> is when the next meeting is.

Q: Can we have the Board members go on tours of certain sites to see what special ed looks like?

SELPA Directors meeting – CTC

Advisory Commission – there is concern across the state that certain SELPA directors are not working with CAC's; there will be a memo going out encouraging that to change.

Q: How can you ensure that special ed kids are getting their fair share of the budget?

A: Each district reports differently, they are trying to standardize that reporting so that there can be fair comparisons made.

### **COMMITTEE BUSINESS:**

Mary motions to approve December meeting minutes; Nancy seconds. Aye:8 Nay:0 Abstain:2. Motion carries.

BoE presentation: How can we get the Board to engage the principals (if they can't be mandated)? Members that were present liked that the CAC Chair drove home people first language.

Above & Beyond Awards will be in May 2012. Raylene will head that again with Chris helping.

Subcommittees will meet at 6:15 before the February CAC general meeting.

Please like us on Facebook.

Mina gave a brief update on the status of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Education Committee.

Feb 9 7pm next CAC meeting.

Jan 17<sup>th</sup> 4pm BoE meeting.

Jan 24<sup>th</sup> 9:30am Budget Workshop.

Feb 7<sup>th</sup> 1 & 5pm BoE Meeting

Fen 11 & 12<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> Century Education Symposium 619-594-7408

March 17<sup>th</sup> IEP Day [www.iepday.org](http://www.iepday.org)

Feb 2 – Area Board 13 assistance clinic on accessing Medi-Cal and IHSS. 619-688-3323

Information is also available on support groups and a lecture concerning Asperger's syndrome.

Bill motions to adjourn; Mary seconds.

**MEETING ADJOURNED AT 8:50PM.**

Respectfully submitted by,

Mina Kern - Secretary