

# CAC

## COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE for Special Education

ADVISING THE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
SAN DIEGO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

### General Membership Meeting: MINUTES

**Date:** Thursday, February 10, 2011

**Time:** 7:00-9:00 pm

**Location:** Harold J. Ballard Parent Center, 2375 Congress St. San Diego, CA 92110

#### WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

**Meeting called to order at 7:05 pm**

The Chairperson, Moira Allbritton, welcomed attendees and introduced CAC member, 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, Joyce Clark, Bill Cary, Mary Conroy, Christy Scadden, Teresa Michel, Belquis Anders, Raylene Dickinson, Dorene Dias Pesta, Stephanie Fimbres, Teresa Hilleary, Ellen Herroon, Meghann Hughes, Mina Kern, Pam McKinney, Nancy Stevenson

**Absent:**

**Ex-Officio:** Susan Martinez, Executive Director of Special Education, Jody Bon-Durant Strong, Director of Special Education

**Quorum Established**

#### "Soup to Nuts: The Complete Course on Special Education Early Childhood"

Lori Lillo gave a presentation of the SEEC program and process in the district

#### SARC Waiver-Dr. Peter Bell

Director of research and reporting addressed the waiver request to delay this year's SARC, school accountability report cards, by sixty days.

Moira Allbritton presented concerns from the CAC members:

*There seems little that a single advisory committee can do to change the course of a "done-deal" when the District's Board of Education voted to apply for the waiver -- in advance of formal feedback from its advisory committees -- and when CDE has already confirmed that waivers will be granted to those who submit them.*

*We find it problematic and unsatisfactory to proactively seek to waive an LEA's \*accountability\* and \*compliance\* mandates; it is notable that we are unaware of a single parent-led initiative to waive legislative mandates.*

*The CAC is cognizant that personnel cuts of non-teaching staff and circumstances at the state level beyond the District's control have impacted the District's ability to complete this task in a timely manner. We sincerely hope that the District, including its Board of Education, takes heed of our faltering ability to comply with regulations when contemplating impending budget decisions. Members expressed concern that this situation will become a perennial issue as the budget crisis persists and further staff cuts seem likely.*

*Specifically, CAC members are alarmed about the integrity of a budgetary dialogue in which stake-holders, including school personnel and site governance teams, are asked to allocate very limited resources to maximize efficiency while lacking a fundamental segment of information: How successful is a particular school at its core mission (i.e., educating its students)?*

*Likewise, CAC members are extremely troubled by the consequences of current school accountability report card data lagging behind Choice deadlines. The report cards are essential in order that families are able to identify and discriminate between options available under Program Improvement, VEEP, Magnet, and Charters. It is unfair to waive the District's obligation to provide the information without also offering an extension to families to utilize the tardy information in Choice applications.*

***We respectively recommend that the District immediately acts to extend its "School Choice" deadlines to afford students -- particularly those in non-performing schools -- adequate time to study SARC data once it is finally posted.***

Joyce made the motion to submit the CAC concerns as stated. Bill Cary seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

### **PUBLIC OPEN FORUM: Q & A**

**Q:** Bill Cary-SEEC-Is it still a district policy that a student with a 1 Dec birthday is required to move forward, while a 2 Dec. birthday would stay. The parent will not be able to choice to stay one more year?

**Q:** Emily Dolton-SEEC transition-Based on comments tonight, it appears the socio-emotional needs of parents with children in special education transitioning to kindergarten are not being met. As a parent of a recent transitioning student, I understand the fear and would have jumped at a "transition kinder" program if it was available. It has been reported that this used to exist. We feel as if our child's needs are being met and that every option was exhausted by our team. Perhaps more options could be made available.

**Q:** Rania Azzazi-Pershing Middle School-referral for a student to an Interim Alternative Educational Setting. According to the Procedural Safeguards, it states: if behavior does not involve a weapon the school district must request a hearing prior to any placement decision. This was not done. I do not agree with their decision for the IAES and plan on exercising my right to due process, but don't know where my student will receive his education pending this process? What are the rights of the parent to address this issue since the procedural safeguards have not been met?

**A:** Susan Martinez-have already begun discussion of this concern this afternoon and will continue involvement.

**Q:** Cherri Cary-Terminology use of mild/moderate, moderate/severe identification of classrooms which is not an internal use of these terms as originally presented when the changes of terminology was presented several years ago. Concerned with safety of the most vulnerable students to outsiders, as well as potentially affecting peer relationships or increasing the risk of bullying.

**A:** Susan Martinez-We don't speak of mild/moderate or moderate/severe in our classrooms. These are terms used for teacher credentialing and we will address this issue with schools to make sure they addressing these classrooms by their teacher names and not by a disability or inappropriate identification. We plan for individual students in their IEP's.

**Q:** Doreen Dias Pesta-remodel of Clairemont High School-moving the nurse's office, presently in the main office, to the "new special ed. wing". Is it the district goal to create segregated special education sections of schools and are we moving backward?

**A:** Susan Martinez- I will look into this reference and see what they are speaking of.

**Q:** Martha Jimenez-(translation)-CPMA- We are cognizant that our son has problems processing the information .... My question is why in things, as in programs or games he has no problem to understand and explain... We are worried because of his grades.

**Q:** Caroline Kelner-SEEC-If a child is not developmentally ready to transition from SEEC to kindergarten, or kinder to 1<sup>st</sup>, etc. and is not meeting state grade level standards, nor IEP goals and the district IEP team members do not agree to "hold the child back" and repeat the year, is this a placement issue requiring filing for due process?

**Q:** (anonymous) Transportation-Please, it is not the size of the district that causes the errors in the transportation, it is incompetent people. Please hold employees accountable, don't use the size of the district as an excuse. Thank you.

## **DISTRICT REPORT/PROGRAM/OPERATIONS UPDATE:**

Susan Martinez- working with the state department on looking at what the state department expects to see in IEP's within the district. There is a rubric applied to IEP's and there was an education of those attending the meeting about what is needed and why in IEP's. Two members will return in several weeks to train district staff on what does it mean to have "educational benefit" and how you write that into IEP's to ensure there is a benefit to the student.

Program Manager, Sam Coleman has left. Have had many applicants for the job and Susan and Jody have been handling the positions while the challenges of the budget weigh in on filling this position. An interim person will be found to fill in until June at which point they will hope to have the position filled for the upcoming year. It is an important job needing a fill.

Have been reviewing the transportation budget and have found a number of errors in the system through an audit. We are projecting to save \$3 million in the budget with corrections of these errors.

Most budget cuts are coming from the central office staff, mainly cluster support teachers, which will change the supports and services, provided to schools next year. We are not expecting any cuts to schools unless there are lower numbers of students at those schools. Will be down at least 55 Para educators next year when the federal stimulus funds run out for funding them. They will be looking at how to utilize the remaining Para's efficiently next year.

## **CAC BUSINESS**

### **Approve CAC meeting minutes (action)**

Doreen Dias Pesta made a motion to approve the January 2011 minutes as submitted. Christy Scadden seconded the motion. Motion passed with 2 abstentions.

### **Chair Report**

Moira Allbritton addressed the subject of "encroachment", the concept that special education is stealing money from general education. This is not a correct concept. Special education funds come from federal and state funds and are not intended to supplant general education funds in supplying a per student general level of funding from local taxes. Special education students are still entitled to their fair share of the general education funds and additional supports and services needed to provide a student with an IEP the same "educational experience" come from additional income provided through special education funding. These are discriminatory terms/labels and special education students are not a burden to the system. There are many subsets of students that receive specialized funding. Public education funding is there is to serve all students. Please help the CAC in putting forth this message.

Joyce Clark and Moira Allbritton have met with three board members and are educating these new members about the concerns of the CAC, particularly the Hehir report and the recent proclamation. The board has recommended Chris Pikus for membership and his name, along with renewing members, Moira Allbritton, Christy Scadden and Michelle Crisci, will be put before the board of education meeting on 22 February.

The Board is working to tweak the public input/open forum form for easier use for all. Above and Beyond Awards will be run by Raylene Dickinson and she will receive pass down information this month.

### **Announcements:**

San Diego Autism Society Resource fair for sports activities for spring and summer-Tuesday, February 15, 2011 for more information go to [www.sdautism.org](http://www.sdautism.org)

IEP Day is coming up, March 19, 2011- a full day of workshops with resource fair and translation services. Scholarships are available. For more information go to [www.iepday.org](http://www.iepday.org)

Next CAC meeting- March 10, 2011, 7:00pm at the Ballard Center.

Belquis Anders made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Stephanie Fimbres seconded the motion. Motion passed.

## **MEETING ADJOURNED AT 9:00pm.**

Respectfully submitted by the secretary,  
Mary Conroy