

# SUPERINTENDENTS GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE TULARE COUNTY MASTER PLAN FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION

## MINUTES

September 22, 2009

The Superintendent's Governance Committee met on Tuesday, September 22, 2009, in the Board Room of the Tulare County Office of Education.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** **Howard Berger**, Superintendent, Tulare Joint Union High; **Stan Carrizosa**, Superintendent, Visalia Unified; **Luis Castellanoz**, Superintendent, Tulare City Elementary; **Dr. Joe Hernandez**, Superintendent, Dinuba Unified; **Tim Hire**, Superintendent, Woodlake Union; **Janet Jones**, Superintendent, Farmersville Unified; **Janet Kliegl**, Superintendent, Lindsay Unified; **Terri Rufert**, Superintendent, Sundale Union Elementary; **Dr. Marcella Smith**, Superintendent, Earlimart Elementary; **Sue Sherwood**, Superintendent, Three Rivers Union Elementary; **Dr. John Snavelly**, Superintendent, Porterville Unified; **Jim Vidak**, County Superintendent, Tulare County; **Dr. Marilyn Rankin**, Assistant Superintendent/SELPA Administrator, Tulare County; **Renée Whitson**, Superintendent, Exeter Union.

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** **Dr. Carolyn Kehrli**, Superintendent, Cutler-Orosi Unified; **Dr. Gary Mekeel**, Superintendent, Burton Elementary.

**OTHERS PRESENT:** PALO VERDE UNION ELEMENTARY: **John Manning**, Superintendent; SEQUOIA UNION ELEMENTARY: **Larry Lakey**, Superintendent; TULARE CITY ELEMENTARY: **Joyce Nunes**, DOSE Representative to SGC; TULARE COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION: **Patty Blaswich**, Director, Internal Business Services; **Norma Erwin**, Parent Liaison; **Cara Peterson**, Program Manager, Preschool; **Kaye van Gilluwe**, Administrator, Student Support Services.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** Janet Jones, Chairperson, opened the meeting to public comment. No public comment was made.

**INTRODUCTIONS:** Janet Jones, Chairperson, introduced the new superintendents to SGC as Dr. Joe Hernandez, Dinuba Unified, Terri Rufert, Sundale Union Elementary, and Luis Castellanoz, Tulare City Elementary.

She also welcomed visiting superintendents, John Manning, Palo Verde Union Elementary and Larry Lakey, Sequoia Union Elementary and asked that they share a little about their districts. John Manning said thank you to Mr. Vidak and the SELPA for the special services staff providing services to students in his district. Vanessa De Jonge, Psychologist, has been an asset to the district in the way of behavior management plans, and Robin Hoffman, Speech and Language Specialist, has been providing speech and language services in Palo Verde for many years now. John values this consistency and is a benefit to the students receiving special education services.

Larry Lakey also thanked Mr. Vidak and the County Office for the consistency of staff for speech and language and psychological services in his district. He also thanked the SELPA for the reimbursement of labor costs for a classroom aide for the past two years.

**REVIEW OF SGC PACKET:** Dr. Marilyn Rankin, Assistant Superintendent, Special Services, and SELPA Administrator, reviewed the Superintendent's Governance Committee agenda packet with the superintendents. Items included were:

- CASEMIS Special Education Enrollment Data – September – Marilyn indicated this report is a quick view of trends in each district. The largest numbers for district served students (blue side) should generally be seen in SLD and Speech disability categories since this disability constitutes the majority of mildly disabled students. The report can also be an indicator of the philosophy behind special education services as this philosophy directly impacts the number of students identified in each disability category. Dinuba Superintendent, Dr. Joe Hernandez was asked to share the low student counts in the lower grades in his district in the Speech category. This is a direct result of the implementation of Rtl a few years ago.
- OAH Decision – *Redlands Unified School District* – Marilyn reviewed this case summary which stresses the need for districts to develop BIPs when a student exhibits inappropriate behaviors. While it is convenient to let a parent home school, this case indicated failure to develop a BIP amounted to denial of FAPE for a student with Asperger syndrome. We need to be cognizant to modify and intensify behaviors plans as appropriate.
- 2009-2010 SGC/DOSE Meetings Calendar – Joint Luncheon is May to be determined.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Minutes from the April 28, 2009 Superintendent's Governance Committee Meeting were presented for approval.

***A motion was made by Dr. John Snively and seconded by Sue Sherwood to approve the minutes as presented. The motion carried unanimously.***

**CASEMIS Reports:** Cara Peterson, Program Manager - Preschool, reviewed the pie chart presented annually which reflects the program placement for special education students in the SELPA and the change from the previous year. SLD and Speech categories are down while Autism and ED are up. Overall the County percent of students identified as handicapped remained fairly steady from prior year at 7.7% which is below the state average of 10%. This percent also includes infants which excluding this age group would cause the percent identified to drop even further to 7.0%. Marilyn explained that transition from the infant program to preschool begins at age 2.6 and that there are different eligibility requirements from Part C (Infant) to Part B (Preschool and above). Kaye van Gilluwe also noted that Michael Vanderwood, presenter for Rtl workshops around the state has complimented our County on its success in leading the State in the implementation of Rtl in districts. Diana Browning Wright, PENT co-founder, will be presenting a workshop in October on Rtl - Behavior.

**ANNUAL CHILD FIND CAMPAIGN/COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC) FOR 2009-2010:** Norma Erwin, Parent Liaison, introduced herself for the benefit of new and visiting superintendents. There are 4 parent liaisons on staff at TCOE. Norma is bilingual and all four liaisons are parents of a child with a disability.

Norma presented the draft Child Find Campaign for 2009-2010 and asked for approval of the SGC to move forward with the formation of a Child Find Committee with final approval of the campaign by DOSE at the October meeting.

***A motion was made by Renée Whitson and seconded by Janet Kliegl to approve the proposed Child Find Campaign process. The motion carried unanimously.***

Norma also presented the superintendents with the current membership of the CAC. She indicated Aimee Miculian, DOSE, Exeter Union School District, is the new DOSE representative to CAC with the retirement of Steve Stafford. There was also a vacancy in Region IV which will be filled by previous member-at-large, Dana Collins. The committee is reviewing the applications for additional at-large parents and will seek final approval by the local District Superintendents.

**DISCONTINUANCE OF THE LOW VISION REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM:** Kaye van Gilluwe, Administrator, Student Support Programs and Assistant SELPA Administrator, discussed the discontinuance of the low vision reimbursement program. The Clearinghouse for Specialized Media and Translations (CSMT) is no longer offering the Braille, low vision, or reader services for legally blind teachers programs. The funds previously allocated for this purpose were part of the flexibility package; therefore, it will be the districts' responsibility to purchase large print state adopted material for visually impaired students. Kaye stressed that usually for K-8 there is no cost for textbooks, but once the student reaches high school the cost of each textbook set is in excess of \$1,500. This is due to the fact that textbooks for high school are not standardized and subject to local adoption. Kaye also indicated that TCOE had recently purchased magnification equipment and also refurbished computers to allow the staff providing services to the visually impaired students to download large print textbooks. This will defray some costs to districts. The equipment was purchased utilizing low-incidence funds.

**OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY/PHYSICAL THERAPY COUNTY MODEL:** Kaye van Gilluwe, Administrator, Student Support Programs and Assistant SELPA Administrator, reviewed effective school-based practices for occupational therapy. A study done by the Center on Personnel Studies in Special Education by the University of Florida showed a consultation model to be more effective in most cases than direct services with regard to occupational therapy. A second presentation at the statewide school-based OT/PT conference also indicated that occupational therapy should not be focused on handwriting due to lack of evidence to support effectiveness of sensorimotor and motor learning approaches. Districts need to be aware of the difference between a medical and an education model when providing occupational therapy services. Working collaboratively through consultation proves to be a better delivery system.

**SPECIAL EDUCATION SELF-REVIEW 2008-2009 (SESR):** Dr. Marilyn Rankin, Assistant Superintendent, Special Services, and SELPA Administrator, reminded the superintendents that Tulare County/District SELPA is part of the 2008-2009 Special Education Self-Review taking place in this fiscal year and that their directors will be involved in this review.

**DOSE REPORT:** Joyce Nunes, representative from the Directors of Special Education Committee to the Superintendent's Governance Committee, reported on the September DOSE meeting (*See September 14, 2009 minutes*). Key items discussed outside the items covered at SGC were the self-review, the CAHSEE no longer being required for special education students, and a draft board policy for Rtl brought before DOSE by Dinuba Unified.

**FISCAL UPDATE:** Patty Blaswich, Director, Internal Business, and Dr. Marilyn Rankin, Assistant Superintendent, Special Services, and SELPA Administrator, provided information on the following fiscal items including updated allocations for 2009-2010.

**State Budget Update and ARRA:** Patty indicated that the first quarter reporting for ARRA expenditures to CDE is complete with 9 jobs created or saved. The superintendents were presented with updated allocations for the stimulus funds (ARRA) both for regular special education and preschool. The total allocation represents 50% of the total funding and individual district

allocations are based on 2008-2009 P-2 ADA. Preschool ARRA is based on K-8 ADA only. It is our understanding that the 10% restriction on equipment and supplies does not apply to the ARRA preschool funding. The superintendents would like a portion of the October meeting to be dedicated to discussion on potential uses of the ARRA funds. ***A motion was made by Janet Kliegl and seconded by Tim Hire to approve the ARRA stimulus funding allocations as presented. The motion carried unanimously.***

**2009-2010 Special Education Allocations:** The per ADA amount is down from \$475 to \$470 from the spring estimate due to a couple of factors. Group Home funding is down and total SELPA ADA is up 1.6% resulting in less dollars per ADA.

***A motion was made by Dr. John Snavely and seconded by Stan Carrizosa to approve the special education allocations for 2009-2010 as presented. The motion carried unanimously.***

**2009-2010 Preschool Funding Allocations:** Patty reviewed the 2009-2010 preschool allocations. There was no change in estimated grant amounts since presented to SGC at the end of last year. ***A motion was made by Tim Hire and seconded by Janet Kliegl to approve the preschool funding allocations for 2009-2010 as presented. The motion carried unanimously.***

**Reimbursement for Supplementary Services for Hearing Impaired Students in Districts for 2008-2009:** Marilyn presented the 2008-2009 reimbursement requests for supplementary services for hearing impaired students in districts to the superintendents for review and approval. It was noted that the difference in hourly rates by district depends on whether the district has succeeded in hiring their own staff or are using the services of an independent contractor at a much higher hourly rate. Current level of certification required is a Level 4 or above; however, at this time, waivers are still being issued for the interpreters not meeting the standard. The total reimbursement to districts is up substantially from the prior year, mostly due to the increase in number of deaf children being served in districts. Marilyn indicated she would like the Hearing Impaired Program to be the topic of study for the SELPA this SY. The study would include the educational progress of these students, options offered to families and suggestions for improving the service.

***A motion was made by Sue Sherwood and seconded by Luis Castellanoz to approve reimbursement requests as presented for supplementary services for hearing impaired students in district for 2008-2009 for payment. The motion carried unanimously.***

**Current Indirect Cost Rates for 2009-2010:** Marilyn presented the 2009-2010 indirect cost rates published by CDE by district for Tulare County and also surrounding county offices. The TCOE rate is down .6% from the prior year.

**Low Incidence Costs for 2008-2009:** Marilyn presented the final low incidence equipment/material requests for the 2008-2009 school year. While up from prior year, funding is available to cover these requests. This equipment is supplied to students with a qualified disability such as Hard of Hearing, Deaf, Visually Impaired, and Orthopedically Impaired.

**Due Process Attorney/Settlement Fees for 2008-2009:** Marilyn presented a summary of the Legal Fees/Settlement Agreement costs for 2008-2009 to the superintendents for review. Costs were not paid from AB 602 dollars.

**Transportation Services Information Update:** Marilyn reviewed information on transportation services provided by the County Office. There are 68 routes to 54 different school sites in 17 different districts. Expenses for 2008-2009 totaled \$4,086,582 and are expected to remain stable for 2009-2010. Due to the current economic conditions, the route rates were not adjusted for any CPI increase this year; however, the vendor was given a \$200,000 lump sum to offset the fuel increases

since 2004. Marilyn indicated she feels we have a good system with a good carrier. Porterville Unified utilizes the services of this same vendor and John Snavelly also expressed satisfaction with STA, the company providing service to TCOE and PUSD students.

**Balance of Preschool Funding:** Patty presented the superintendents with balance of preschool funding for 2008-2009 which must be spent by September 30<sup>th</sup>. Patty indicated most district business officials have been in contact with her to make sure the funds are spent. It would be the intent to reallocate any unspent funds to those districts that overspent rather than send back the money.

**APPOINTMENT OF SGC AD HOC COMMITTEES:** Janet Jones, Chairperson, reviewed the current membership for the Fiscal, Mental Health Services, and Legal Fees Ad Hoc Committees. There is currently one vacancy on the Legal Fees Committee. Dr. Joe Hernandez, Superintendent, Dinuba Unified, will fill the vacancy.

***A motion was made by Dr. John Snavelly and seconded by Renée Whitson to approve the Ad Hoc Committees as presented for 2009-2010 with the addition of Dr. Joe Hernandez to the Legal Fees Reimbursement Committee. The motion carried unanimously.***

**PRIVATE SCHOOLS MEETING:** Dr. Marilyn Rankin, Assistant Superintendent, Special Services, and SELPA Administrator, advised the Superintendents of the scheduled SELPA meeting to be held Wednesday, October 21, 2009, with representatives of private schools regarding the provision of special education services to parentally placed special education students for this year. This meeting will satisfy the federal reg requirement for timely and meaningful consultation with private school representatives. She also provided the estimated calculation of Part B funding the SELPA is required to spend to provide these services and reminded the superintendents that the cost of providing the services now needs to be reported at the district level for roll-up to the County Office and CDE.

**SELPA MONITORING 2009-2010:** Dr. Marilyn Rankin, Assistant Superintendent, Special Services, and SELPA Administrator, advised the superintendents of districts selected this year for random SELPA monitoring activities which are Burton Elementary, Earlimart Elementary, Exeter Union, Sundale Union Elementary, and Visalia Unified.

**ADVANCED PLANNING:** Janet Jones, Chairperson, requested from the superintendents agenda items for October SGC meeting. Suggested items included a presentation on the rules and regulations for expenditures for preschool funding and also ideas for uses of ARRA funds.

**NEXT MEETING:** The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 27, 2009, at 12 noon in the Board Room of the Tulare County Office of Education.

**HANDOUTS:** AGENDA ITEM HANDOUTS: Draft minutes of the April 28, 2009 Superintendent's Governance Committee meeting; SELPA Student Disability Summary – Pie Chart; SELPA Disability Summary Backup with Prior Year Comparison; 2009-2010 Draft Child Find Campaign – Tulare County/District SELPA; Community Advisory Committee Membership – 2009/2010 School Year; Notice of Discontinuance of Braille/Low Vision/Reader Services for the Legally Blind Teachers Reimbursement Programs by CSMT; Occupational Therapy: Effective School-Based Practices within a Policy Context Prepared for the Center on Personnel Studies in Special Education by the University of Florida; Using Systematic Reviews to Inform Practice prepared for Statewide School-Based OT/PT Conference in 2005; 2009-2010 Special Education Stimulus Estimate (ARRA) from Basic Local Assistance Grant; 2009-2010 Special Education Stimulus Estimate (ARRA) from

Preschool Local Entitlement and Preschool Federal grants; Special Education Estimate Allocations for 2009-2010; 2009-2010 Estimated Preschool Grant Allocations; Reimbursement Requests for Supplementary Services for Hearing Impaired Students in Districts – 2008-2009; CDE Indirect Cost Rates for K-12 LEAs in Tulare County – Five Year Listing; CDE Indirect Cost Rates for Surrounding County Offices of Education; Low Incidence Equipment/Material Requests – 2008-2009 School Year; Legal Fees/Settlement Agreement Costs Related to Special Education Issues – 2008-2009 Fiscal Year; Tulare County Office of Education Special Services Division Transportation Services Information Update; 2008-2009 Preschool Allocations with Carry-Over from 2007-2008 to be spent by 9/30/08; 2009-2010 Superintendent's Governance Committee Ad Hoc Committees (Draft); Tulare County/District Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) Private Schools Meeting Agenda for 10/21/09; Estimated Private School Funding Calculation for 2009-2010; Districts Selected for 2009-2010 SELPA Monitoring.

MISCELLANEOUS HANDOUTS: CASEMIS Special Education Enrollment Data – September; Case Summary March 17, 2008 – *Redlands Unified School District* – Behavior Plans; DOSE/ SGC Meeting Calendar – 2009-2010.

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Janet Jones, Chairperson  
Superintendents Governance Committee

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Marilyn Rankin, Chief Administrative Officer  
Superintendents Governance Committee