

# MINUTES

## **SMMUSD Special Education District Advisory Committee Meeting Tuesday, March 8, 2022 6:30pm**

### I. CALL TO ORDER & INITIAL COMMENTS 6:36 PM

- Co-chair shared that Jerry Seiner had has a Chair SEDAC for the rest of the school year will agendize for next meeting, Jerry Seiner, will revisit the process at the end of the school year

### II. ANNOUNCEMENTS: Members & Public

- Attendees: Deanna, Jen Smith, Meredith, Payal, Jerry, Denise, Laura, Jamie, Grace, Deanne O. Julie Ginsberg

### III. APPROVAL of Meeting Minutes: Dec 2021, Jan 2022 and Feb 2022

- Payal: Motion to approve Dec' 21, Jan '22 minutes, 2nd Meredith Feldman, approved, zero abstentions and zero No votes

### IV. UPDATE: Special Education Director Deanna Sinfield

- Groups of elem parents singling out kids with special needs re: behavioral issues, sending emails to administrators and board members; Deanna expressed sadness that that parents don't understand that our kids are going through special challenges right now
- Mean spirited, underlying sentiment is troubling
- Similar situations have arisen on many campuses where gen ed families and spec ed families are writing letters to the board about specific children
- Member question: What is the course of action?
  - Site leads (Principals) get involved and reach out to the families whose children are being called out by name
  - What do we need to do to support the child being singled out?
  - Expressed the need to find the individual families that are perpetuating this and educate them: "we are a neurodiverse community, we honor all students and work with them where they are at"
- Personnel updates: Losing staff for next year, predict an "exodus", hard to find people, gen ed and special ed, tough to get SLP, tons of leaves of absence illness/family issues, spec ed teachers
- Suggestions around building more disability awareness:
  - Disabilities Awareness Week: ~15% of the district neurodiverse

- Member (Laura) had a meeting with Dr. Hawking, want Deanna and Carmen Duran to discuss; “disabilities around you” event, rename “neurodiversity” as opposed to “dis”
- Co-chair urged the need for district wide communication, Deanna to draft and run by Gail Pinsker; Expressed a need for parents to be on board; parents are very engaged in this community and we need them to appropriately engage, all children have had setbacks in covid
- Co-chair asked if there was access to free training related to this? Member expressed concern that people who need to go are the ones who don’t go
- Member expressed the need to have a culture where that behavior is not acceptable
- Discussion around the FB chat room where parents say bad things about the district, families posting that they are coming in with thick IEP folders because they can get what they want if they sue
- Member commented that there is no point in re-educating parents but important for site level expectation setting (by principals; asked about what can be done with class lists and expressed the need to hammer at the site level
- Member expressed the need for chair positions at PTA councils
- Based on recent events,
  - members suggested that SEDAC needs time at a PTA council meeting to present to urge them to have at a minimum diversity/inclusion chair voting member, urge to consider a new position
  - Suggestions for District letter to provide the narrative on what happened, what we (District) stand for
  - Suggestion for need for sites to come up with a protocol of what they should do; how should parents have communicated? Communicate protocols and expectations to parents.
- Update: SMMUSD spec Ed is NOT disproportionate this year!
- Human Resources Updates: Hired a new school psych for Lincoln, JAMS, Samohi (has 2 on leave); agency psych starting in a week or so, new agency helping us staff to keep positions full
- Co-chair asked if we have an in-house recruiter?
- Deanna, people like agency work bc they get higher hourly \$, even w/o benefits
- Update: Paraeducator newsletter highlighting outstanding paras, goes out to the whole district, will go out monthly
- Evening with the stars: SAMOhi transition program students present what they work on, workability teachers, community based instruction, all kids are employed with now, explain what the transition program is, where kids work in the community,
- Summer institutes: 2 weeks: math and English bootcamp 15 hours, reading and comp work, SLPs used PEERS curriculum into language learning, had 2 groups LY

with less verbal and more verbal; flipped English and MATH; intensive immersion but not goals specific, we are building to fit students that sign up this year; had 30-35 students LY, did an extra week LY for credit recovery on Samohi campus

- Member asked out: mask removal: may need to keep child home due to long term covid: how do we support IEP needs if we have to move to independent study: 300 ins a week have teacher available specific time for kids to log in, also have SLP & OT for services; you'd get whatever services you require; IEP has to offer FAPE even if its a temp IEP

V. UPDATE: Board Liaison Jon Kean or Jennifer Smith

- Board member Jen Smith: thank Deeanna for report to the board on disproportional
- Special board meeting tomorrow 3/9 for masks recommendations and new LACDH guidelines
- Highly recommended is not optional: mandate, highly recommended, suggested then optional: we are thinking about our neighbors and families and protecting everyone indoors, please come to the board meeting to express what it means for your families
- PTA council has an inclusivity group: special education is not on the minds of people when they are talking about diversity and inclusion, Jen supports us having a seat
- Board member Jen will text PTA council president: Liaison, will ask if it is included on committee, will ask site specific, whatever was in different times, privacy issues can mean exclusion but there it is "doable" at every site
- Member shared that she was not on PTA at Lincoln 1st year, 2nd year was spec ed liaison no voting rights very hard to add to your plate as a special ed parent but felt it was worth the effort, then member became the resource they asked things of after the first year of standing alone; you are only at the school site for so many years; having that voice at the council level keep it consistent; hard to do SEDAC, Council, PTA
- Member expressed the need for special ed rep must have a vote on PTA council, or it doesn't count
- Deanna: tomorrow the board is going to be voting to adopt a recommendation from Dr. Drati: life indoor mask mandate effective 3/14: logistics of the board meeting: could it be adopted to shift time frame back? How do vulnerable families children with disabilities are going to be able to make the decision to go in person or independent study without certain information; the vulnerable in our community with IEP/504 need time to get info, work with Anthony Fuller to have smooth transition into Independent study if needed
- Procedure for people moving into independent study

- Call an IEP meeting to see what services a student will need when they move to ISP
- Must offer FAPE
- Have been providing services but not 1:1
- Deanna not sure about how many families are affected; will determine the roll out
- Are there other ways on campus to protect our kids?
- Board member Jen: look at the dashboard this week: 20 cases last week, 12 cases in the entire district this week; testing will continue on campus
- Member thanked board for all of their hard work and dedication, speaking with the board about how parents can interact with the board; it is highly intimidating with the level of vitriol, adults not acting like adults, speaking up feels like a drop in the ocean when there is that level of animosity in the room, not often intimidated in activism but it silences so much potential for people to communicate; hopeful that you are hearing other voices than what is at the board meetings
- Board member expressed that she read all of her emails as did all board members, “We do hear you and you are in my thoughts when I am making decisions, being here really affects me.” The board considers the most vulnerable in our community
- Member expressed the need to take a common sense approach and make the mask change after spring break.
- Board member reiterated the low transmission and low incidence rates and continued and immediate action upon positive COVID test. Plan to continue testing.
- Another member suggested keeping masks for 2 weeks after spring break because home tests not as accurate as PCR
- Deanne expressed similar concern for the most vulnerable/ IEP/ 504 kids and their families: important for neurotypical and neurodiverse to give the grace of 2 weeks to go to ISP or not
- Current IEP: schools are still responsible for IEPs; same team does them; 504 is the same your school would meet and develop the 504
- Deanna didn’t think ISP is the best way to go; struggled to get kids back on campus and we are not recommending ISP, best for kids to be on campus whenever they can be safely
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## VI. DISCUSSION:

### A. 2021-22 SEDAC Charges Updates

- Sex Ed : Member (Grace) spoke with Dr. Koa/ UC Lend and they will participate

- Middle school science teacher who can participate, Dr. Kang?
- Grace proposed EOM May presentation
- Need more input on social work; we are giving input as to how the presentation should roll out:
  - Parents and kids separate
  - Speed of processing
  - Tough to get doctors together to out this together
  - No date for feedback session yet
- Social Justice: Laura: checked in last week with the ad hoc group
  - Timeline of disability rights activism: notable movements through american history: 1st school for the blind and deaf through disability/pride movement, will go to Dr. Hawkins and use for various departments to see how this can be used
  - “Neurodiversity around you” week/month events TBD
- Transition: Jerry: great work into the document
  - 1 more survey cavas the community to see if anything comes in on info that people are looking for in support of their transition need to figure out how to get that out to the community,
  - regroup with Deanna on how to do a survey and how to get this published into websites

VII. COMMENTS: Members & Public

Schedule for 4/19 6:30 pm, ad hoc chairs as needed 3/29

For the 2021-2022 school year, SEDAC meetings will be scheduled on the first Tuesdays of the month at 6:30 pm via Zoom and/or at the District’s Office Board Room.

Next Meeting is on Tuesday in April 19th, 2022 due to a 2 week break for SMMUSD Spring Break

If you will require accommodation to participate in the DAC meeting, please notify the Special Education Office at (310) 450-8338, ext. 70210, at least two business days prior to the meeting.