

Capistrano Unified School District

Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Minutes

September 28, 2023

In Person & YouTube Live

Meeting called to order at: 9: 33 AM.

Attendance:

Rachel Niemeyer-Sutherland
Steve Burke
Mina Carson
Beth Davis
Michele Ploessel-Campbell
Danielle Schmiesing
Kimber Smith
Janelle R Stever
Carol Atkinson-Smith
Julie Cole
Whitney Zolna
Sonia Moser

CAC members absent:

Nicole Lindstron
Jillian Stewart

Officer and Committee Reports

Beth Davis called the meeting to order. She asked attendees to please sign in. Rachel Niemeyer-Sutherland motioned to approve the agenda and start the meeting. Steve Burke seconded. No corrections to the April minutes. By raising of hands, the group approved the motions. All in attendance were notified the meeting was being recorded live on YouTube and would be available for future viewing on the CAC YouTube channel. A link will be posted to CAC social media accounts as well. Spanish translation was available for those attending the meeting in-person.

Adopt CAC Yearly Calendar - Michele Ploessel-Campbell motioned for approval of the CAC yearly calendar. The motion was seconded by Rachel Niemeyer-Sutherland, and approved by the raising of hands. No one opposed the motion.

Adopt Changes to CAC Executive Board and Committee-

Michele Ploessel-Campbell motioned for approval of CAC's Executive Board changes. Rachel Niemeyer-Sutherland seconded the motion, and the motion was approved by a show of hands. No one opposed the motion. Rachel Niemeyer-Sutherland motioned for approval of Mo Langley's application to be submitted to the CUSD School Board, so she can join the CAC

Executive Board. Michele Ploessel-Campbell seconded the motion, and the motion was approved by a show of hands. No one opposed the motion.

New Board Approved is as follows:

Chairperson, Beth Davis

1st Vice Chair, Mina Carson

Vice-Chair, Michele Ploessel-Campbell

Vice-Chair, Rachel Sutherland

Secretary/Treasurer, Whitney Zolna

Dir of Communications & Social Media

Ability Awareness, Nicole Lindstrom

Co-chair – Danielle Schmeising

Legislation/Parent Advocacy, Michele Ploessel-Campbell

Grade Level Transitions Event, Yasmina Faiz

Sunshine Awards (Exceptional Educator event), Julie Cole

Hospitality/ Events, Steve Burke

Co-chair- Carol Atkinson- Smith

Local Plan – open position

Sped Reps Needed- The following schools are still in need of Sped Reps: BAMS, Carl Hankey, Concordia, Del Obispo, DJAMS, Hidden Hills, Kinoshita, Ladera Ranch Elementary, Las Flores Elementary, Marian Bergeson, OCASA, Oso Grande, Tijeras Creek, and Viejo Elementary.

Chairperson Reports

Beth Davis- CAC Chairperson- A “What is CAC,” slide shown was shown. The slides will be posted to the CAC webpage and included in the post meeting email.

Sonia Moser - Family Resource Center Liaison- FRC Happenings, Families Connected-

This weekend in San Clemente FAM will host a hunger walk. Thursday October 12, from 11-12 PM, a Zoom workshop will be held in collaboration with Western Youth Services on the topic of the “Basics of Mindfulness.” Also, on Thursday October 12, at 6:30 PM, there will be a parent workshop on IEP’s presented by Sandi Ames at GiGi’s playhouse in Laguna Hills. On October 17, from 9:30-11 AM, there will be a Families Connected Mentor Training at the district offices. On November 16, there will be an IEP parent training, with more information coming. Also, on November 16, at 6 PM, Amy Neville will speak at Marco Forrester to discuss drugs. More information can be on Instagram @CUSD Family Resource Center. Amy Neville will also speak at Niguel Hills Middle School on October 10th at 6pm.

Julie Cole – Sunshine Committee-The Sunshine Awards are currently scheduled on March 28, 2024. This could change after a venue is decided upon. We need volunteers the day of to help, or ahead of time. The Sunshine Committee is also looking for a space larger than CUSD District Boardroom to hold the Awards.

Michele Ploessel-Campbell - Legislative Update- There are several updates this month on recently signed bills/legislation:

For Dyslexia - money was included in budget trailer language to study how to implement universal screening. Currently in CUSD we already use DIBELS 8, which is a universal screener. Now CUSD is working on what to do with data collected, and how best to provide interventions and specialized instruction for the identified students. We are ahead of what is being currently required by the state - we still need to do more, but we are starting on the right path.

AB87 - Pupils Section 504 plans: Meetings and Team Meetings - Adds language for SELPAs on supporting 504 plans. Specifically adding language allowing audio recording of meetings same as is allowed for IEPs.

AB1078 - Safe Place to Learn Act - Instructional materials and curriculum diversity. Prohibits school boards from not adopting textbooks that are compliant with the Fair Act adopted in 2011. The Fair Act required that the history and contributions of all groups be included in CA adopted curriculum.

SB760 - Requires gender neutral bathrooms on all school sites (both public and charter schools.) This was a win for many on our campuses who were not happy with the status-quo. Many on the spectrum do not identify as het-normative, so this provides a safe restroom for them as well.

Keep the Promise - we are continuing our advocacy work at the federal level to fully fund the originally promised 40% of special education costs by the Federal Government under IDEA. Currently for CUSD only approximately 8% of costs are federally funded. More to come on this project and how you can help.

Administrator Introductions/Discussion

Clint Collins, Asst. Superintendent, Special Education Services- A handout was provided for this presentation. It can be found in the post meeting CAC email. Highlights from the hand-out included a discussion of paraeducator levels, Home Base, and SAC (Structured Autism Class).

Paraeducator level I: Not used for special education students, used in general education settings, and PE.

Paraeducator level II: SPED level support staff offered in labs and general education settings.

Paraeducator III: STARS staff, 1:1, additional programming support in the general education classroom

Paraeducator IV: For moderate to severe students in SAC and STEPS, may include behavior and medical training, and inclusion opportunities in the general education classroom.

Paraeducator V: Receiving the highest training in behavior, social and emotional, best classroom practices, and practices to train other paraeducators.

When Mr. Collins visits school sites, the principal of the school is asked which paraeducators should be recognized for outstanding work. They are then honored in person, and the photo is posted on CUSD Cares Instagram page.

The Home Base program is now available at Aliso Viejo Middle School, Oak Grove Elementary School, Ladera Ranch Middle School, and Tesoro High School. Home Base supports student with unique social and emotional needs.

SAC is now open at Moulton Elementary School. And finally, the strategic plan for the district hasn't been updated in five years. A new strategic plan is going to be created, with room to change the plan over time. CAC parents and reps are encouraged to join the process.

Jeana Dagley, Executive Director of Special Education Programs and related services, SELPA Director- The universal screener the district uses for Dyslexia is DIBELS 8. Three times a year a child in K-5th grade is given the screening to check for Dyslexia risk. Teachers on Special Assignment (TOSA) are trained in Wonder Works Intervention, Orton-Gillingham, and Heggerty to meet with students that are identified during the screening process. Then students are re-tested after 6-8 weeks of intervention.

The Alternate Pathway to Diploma handout was discussed. This handout can be found in the post CAC email. 10th graders this school year are the first eligible for this pathway. For California Alternate Assessments, a recorded cognitive disability is necessary, having a specific learning disability is not enough to qualify. An IEP meeting is required before the student starts 10th grade, to go over the process of electing this alternative pathway. A student must complete their diploma in 4 years with this pathway but may still attend ATP after they receive their alternative diploma.

Meg Ervais, Executive Director, 6-12, ATP, Curriculum and Instruction- There will be a college fair at Capo Valley High School on Monday October 2 at 5:30 pm. While 130 colleges will attend, schools that support special education student accommodations are harder to find. The district is looking to partner with the CAC to develop a list of those schools.

Peggy Baerst, Executive Director, PK-5th, Curriculum and Instruction- A structured literacy approach is used for children with Dyslexia, or children at-risk for Dyslexia. STARS students use Wonder Works and Steps to Advance, which are accommodated versions of their general education counterparts. Heggerty is a supplement used for daily practice oral drills, and all Education Specialists are trained in Orton-Gillingham. Also, a new math curriculum is being piloted, and Math Expressions Tier 2 and 3 is on the way out. For students with moderate to severe disabilities, Unique Learning System N2Y, Polaris, and Positivity are a few of the curriculums currently used. L3Skills is used for ELA and math games as well.

Lauren Pattullo, Director II, Early Childhood, General Education & Special Education Programs- The TK focus for this school year is “self-regulation.” Teachers will teach students self-regulation to help with kindergarten readiness, communication, social and emotional issues, and motor skills. By the 2025-2026 SY, all children age 4 before September 1, 2025 will be eligible to attend TK.

SEALS is a reverse mainstream program for preschoolers that utilizes peer role models in their classrooms. There are 5 locations with openings for peer role models, and attendance is free.

Dr. Cary Johnson, Asst. Superintendent, Curriculum and Instruction-New grading and evaluation procedures are currently being considered for CUSD. Considering the mastery of the subject, multiple opportunities, and ways to make learning standards, and familiarizing teachers with these shifts will take precedence. Full roll out is expected next fall.

Cuco Gracian, Executive Director, Cultural Proficiency Equity, Access, and Social Emotional Learning- He had to leave due to another scheduled meeting and will present at next month's meeting.

Next Meeting is Wednesday October 25, 2023, with a guest speaker on Emotional Regulation.

Meeting adjourned at: 11:33 AM.