

## **Capistrano Unified School District**

### **Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Minutes**

**November 30, 2022**

**In Person & Facebook Live**

**Meeting called to order at: 9:35 AM.**

#### **Voting Members in Attendance:**

Rachel Niemeyer-Sutherland  
Steve Burke  
Mina Carson  
Beth Davis  
Michele Ploessel-Campbell  
Jillian Stewart

#### **CAC Voting members absent:**

Veronica Hoggatt  
Danielle Schmiesing  
Kimber Smith  
Janelle R Stever  
Nicole Lindstron  
Malissa Watson

Rachel Niemeyer-Sutherland called the meeting to order. She asked attendees to please sign in. Mina Carson motioned to approve the agenda and start the meeting. Michele Ploessel-Campbell seconded. No corrections to the October minutes. By raising of hands, the group approved the motions. All in attendance were notified the meeting was being recorded and would be available for future viewing on the CAC Facebook page, and that Spanish translation was available for those attending the meeting in-person.

#### **Chairperson Report**

##### **Rachel Niemeyer-Sutherland, CAC Chairperson**

- Open SPED Rep positions- The following schools have open positions:  
Aliso Viejo Middle, Canyon Vita, Carl Hankey, Concordia, Del Obispo, Don Juan Avila Middle, Hidden Hills, Kinoshita, Las Flores Elementary,

Marblehead, Marian Bergson, Oso Grande, RH Dana, San Juan Elementary, San Juan Hills High, Tesoro High, and Viejo Elementary.

- Site visit to Tesoro- Tesoro has a number of wonderful common areas for various purposes for the STEPS students, including a sensory room and kitchen / laundry facility. The Turbo Cafe wasn't available for viewing, but the set-up for the STEPS students to work on their job skills was impressive. Teachers and staff send in their orders the day before, and orders are prepared and delivered by the STEPS students. There are a variety of jobs each student can do, so truly any student can participate meaningfully, regardless of the potential challenges posed by their disability. CBI's (Community Based Instruction) are a bit challenging for Tesoro because of its location, but the Turbo Café, along with seasonal car washes for the staff, provide opportunities for the students to get hands-on work experience. The piece de resistance however was the "garden". Not only are they raising typical vegetables and herbs, but they actually have sustainable fish "ponds", that have koi fish and tilapia at the different life stages. The most exciting part of all was the chicken coop and the how it came to be with Tesoro's AP students in collaboration with the STEPS students.
- Home Base at Aliso Viejo MS- Kim Stanga, head of the family support team for Aliso Niguel, and the inaugural teacher of the Home Base program, shared with the CAC Board about this wonderful program for students on the autism spectrum who are at, or above, grade level in academics and need additional support with social and emotional behaviors. Students are selected via their IEP team's recommendation for this program, and if needed, busing is provided regardless of where the student's home school is located. All Home Base students are in the general ed classes for math and about half also go to English and/ or science with their typical peers. Home Base students have their own large classroom with a variety of seating options, and a separate space that looks like a cross between a living room and a sensory room. If students aren't scheduled to take academic classes with their peers, then the curriculum in the Home Base room mirrors that of General Ed class, so that they are easily able to transfer into a typical class when they are able, and not have to catch up. The students also take PE with their peers, and the Home Base teacher goes with them for support. Restrooms are available for them inside the Home Base classroom to dress out for PE. They also work on accessing lockers, and have weekly IBI with a para 5. Speech and OT services are also typically delivered in the Home Base classroom. They are allowed to choose whatever elective they

want to do regardless of their grade (the wheel in MS typically only allows you to do certain electives in a certain grade). There is also the expectation that they will have lunch and enjoy breaks outside the class. Aliso Viejo also has a garden that the students maintain during tutorial, and many of the general education students will sign up to work there for service hours. The Ranch across the street provides a CBI like experience for Homes Base students, where they go bi-weekly to help maintain the garden.

### **Administrator Introductions/Discussion**

**Clint Collins, Asst. Superintendent, Special Education Services, SELPA Director-** Clint was absent, so Rachel Niemeyer-Sutherland gave an update. Jeanna Dagley is the new Executive Director of SPED Programs, Related Services and the CUSD SELPA Director. She also handles PT and OT under the related services umbrella. Allison Jacobs is the new Coordinator of Staffing and Training, which includes training paraprofessionals as well as the coordinator for Home Health Instruction and the Medi-Cal Collaborative.

Ms. Niemeyer-Sutherland also mentioned a fourth PT was hired by the district as well and the brochures for all special education programs in all grade levels for CUSD are now available on the CUSD website. There was a suggestion to put the brochures on the websites for the individual school sites that carry those programs which will be followed up with the district.

**Cuco Gracian, Executive Director, Cultural Proficiency Equity, Access, and Social Emotional Learning-**Mr. Gracian introduced Omero Corral, who he works with. Mr. Corral is a Counselor on Special Assignment. Mr. Gracian then proceeded to review what he and Mr. Corral are currently working on for the district. New documentation and protocols for SST (Student Success Teams) and 504 evaluations, building site capacity, and making sure front office personnel know who to refer parents with questions to. He further shared that typically the site contacts for 504s in secondary are the counselors and in elementary are the Principal or Assistant Principal. They are also implementing a Board approved Cultural Proficiency Plan. The difference between a 504 plan and an IEP were reviewed, and a chart will be shared with everyone about that in the meeting follow up. Mr. Gracian also emphasized the use of the word “unique ability,” versus “disability.”

## **Officer and Committee Reports**

**Sonia Moser - Family Resource Center Liaison-** January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023, there will be a teen depression discussion presented in Spanish via Zoom. January 23, 2023, there will be a mentor training for volunteers who would like to become Family Support mentors. Finally, the Family Resource Center now has a district approved Instagram page, which can be found under the title, “CUSD Family Resource Center.”

**Veronica Hoggatt – Sunshine Awards- ATP Boutique-**Mrs. Hoggatt was absent, so Steve Burke spoke in her place. Mr. Burke requested drinks for the Sunshine Awards, taking place on March 29, 2023. Rachel Niemeyer-Sutherland announced that the ATP Boutique will take place on December 16, 2022, in District training rooms one and two. Cash and checks are the suggested form of payment at the boutique.

**Mina Carson-Reflections-**Mrs. Carson reported out of the 215 entries, 30 were selected to move on to the Fourth District Reflections, including 4 Special Artist entries.

**Michele Ploessel-Campbell - Legislative Update-** Mrs. Ploessel-Campbell stated that she will be creating a letter template to send out in January that highlights the need to fully-fund IDEA. The letters should be filled out and sent to Katie Porter and Mike Levin’s offices, to encourage the “Keep our Promise Act” to be reintroduced and passed by Congress.

**Meeting adjourned at:** 10:39 AM.