

IRVINE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
Special Education Department
Community Advisory Committee (CAC)
Meeting 6:00pm, February 11, 2021, IUSD District Virtual

MINUTES

Call to Order: Chair- Bernadette Ah-Hing

Welcome to Guests Attendance

Introductions/Roll Call: Chair- Bernadette Ah-Hing

Attendance: Voting members 9, Non-Voting members 31

- **District Office:** Melanie Hertig, Allison Robbins, Amy Ochoa, Angela Paterson, Angela Weedn, Tammy Blakely, Jennifer O'Malley, Karena Gibbs, Lisa Torkzadeh, Taryn Dreifus
- **IUSD School Board:** Paul Bokota
- **CAC Board:** Bernadette Ah-Hing, Angie Foster, Andrea Matolo

Approval of the Agenda: Moved by: Bernadette Ah-Hing Seconded by: Angie Foster Vote: 8 Ayes

Approval of Minutes of November Meeting:

Moved by: Bernadette Ah-Hing Seconded by: Angie Foster Vote: 8 Ayes

Public Comments

Kim Pellet: I'm wondering if the district has considered allowing kids with IEPs to attend school five days a week next year. Some other districts are doing this to better serve kids with IEPs.

Matthew Thoma: Topic of Interest. Would like to understand what IUSD's plan is for addressing learning loss. There have been several communications, but nothing recently.

Chair reminded members that questions will be read and forwarded to the appropriate department who will get back to you with the answers to your questions.

Robin Cowan: Just a reminder- If you have a public comment that's on the agenda - everyone can respond to you. Otherwise - public comments cannot be responded to publicly per Brown Act.

Robin had public comments for #3 and #4 on agenda for the district report. Melanie Hertig advised that typically public comments would be taken during that item #.

Committee Chair Report

1. Thank you – Especially to families who have been hanging in there. Parents, caregivers, teachers, all doing what is best for children. Thanks to Paul Bokota for becoming our liason again this year.
2. District-wide online survey – Opportunity as parents to use narrative boxes to provide input appropriate to your student. Reminder of February 22 survey close date.
3. LCAP Activity – Tammy Blakely will speak on this later

CAC GOALS -

The below CAC goals were listed on agenda:

CAC GOALS:

- Create a thriving CAC community and board partnership as evidenced by increased membership and collaboration opportunities such as
 - Zoom Call or WebX for meeting
- Create an IUSD approved and Website available “Parent Handbook” that includes Parental Rights, Procedural Safeguards, and the IEP Process in an easy to read format:
 - Access to Records
 - Prior Written Notice
 - Informed Consent, including the Right to sign in full, with exception or not at all.
 - Evaluation Procedures and Independent Educational Evaluation
- IEP Meetings, including the ability to invite outside parties, facilitated IEP participation, and provide IEP team with comments to the IEP.
- Benefits of speaking with other parents with children in the same classroom
- School policies about volunteering in their child’s classroom
- Promote and enhance inclusive practices
- Assisting IUSD with the creation of accessible playgrounds –

Regarding these goals:

Chair asked when playgrounds would be reopening, especially given the City of Irvine opening playgrounds. It is difficult for Special Needs children. Accessible playground project (adaptable equipment) has been put on hold. Reminder that the CAC would like to see this goal met.

Melanie Hertig: Added that many facilities projects have been put on hold. She will inform CAC when that changes. There still is support for these projects just no timeline.

Membership increase – Membership has slowly been increasing for a couple years. This will be an ongoing goal.

IEP meetings – Asking to include the ability to invite outside parties to facilitate rolling out of post-IEP survey for parents to give the district an idea of how IEPs are going. These should help improve IEP meetings and give creative ideas and ideas of what additional supports are needed.

Dept. Developmental Services: Individuals with developmental and other disabilities are able to participate in receiving the COVID vaccine now. Regional Center can help provide a letter for appointments. Kaiser can provide letters as well.

IPSF – IPSF is grateful for parent support. They provide vital support to our children. They do help with online after school help. They offer in person workshops and will offer various types of classes. Information can be found online.

Committee Vice Chair Report

1. Irvine Special Education Parents Discuss List - Special Ed Parents discuss list for parents of 504 and IEP students. Over 300 parents opted in. Welcome letter was sent recently. The forum is to share resources and experiences, learn about local events, and ask questions. Tonight’s panel will be regarding 3 local resources. Privacy can be provided through asking questions directly to an email.
2. Irvine Special Education Parent Discuss List Discussed the Special Ed Parents discuss list that parents of 504 and IEP students. Over 300 parents opted in. Welcome letter was sent recently. The forum is to share resources and experiences, learn about local events, and ask questions. Privacy can be provided through asking questions directly to an email address.
3. PTA Council & CAC Parent Rep Recruitment – She would like to increase collaboration with between the CAC and PTA. to Support for CAC Parent Rep - Want to grow membership by creating a CAC parent rep at each school

site, similar to the PTA. Angie met with the PTA and board members to look for opportunities to connect and network at schools. This is a goal of hers. She hopes for feedback from the PTA on best way to move forward, especially during COVID. She would like to see some events occur. Potentially a resource fair, IEP workshops, recognition awards program for those who went above and beyond for our children, Disability awareness week as a district-wide month.

Melanie Hertig: The district supports these goals and is 100% committed and looking forward to these things happening in the future.

Special Education Department Report: Melanie Hertig & Jennifer O'Malley

Melanie Hertig:

If you're not sure who your program specialist is, Taryn Dreifus sent a brochure with information on the CAC and who program specialists are. Thank you to Paul Bokota for being here.

1. Events & Opportunities – RCOC Resource, update by Karena Gibbs:
 - Taryn Dreifus Shared link:
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1WHTJpQ6OU1PXJMjmRYFpsFP0nrly1LaR/view?usp=sharing>
 - Students 18-22 with moderate to severe disabilities are served by adult resource center.
 - Students that age out of the program heavily rely on Regional Center to help fund their programming.
 - Every year, Karena puts together a vender fair for supports in district to share with parents.
 - Event is live, in person.
 - Due to COVID, this event is not happening this year. However, RCOC has put together a remote event. Space is limited. Pre-register. She highly encourages parents to learn about transitional programs as students leave the school setting.
 - Melanie Hertig added a note regarding Gigi's Playhouse – They are doing a walk-a-thon fundraiser in June. If you want more information, reach out to Melanie. Also, she shared that OC had a family that was highlighted as receiving a Make-a-Wish gift. A reminder that there are so many local charities that we can support.
2. Legislative updates – A lot of focus in Sacramento is in regards to relief and response to COVID. There likely won't be much outside of this.
 - Melanie signed a letter of support of Bill 126 supporting establishing new family empowerment centers to provide information and training to Special Needs families.
3. ESY and Summer Programming- There is nothing official to announce but they will be holding their in-person ESY and potentially something in addition to that.
 - Melanie wants to make sure that everyone is aware of Care Solace, IUSDs social and emotional supports. There are also school counselors at school sites.
 - Melanie mentioned a question was received on social distancing when school resumes. They are awaiting updates from CDC and CA Department of Health.
 - A couple questions came through on chat regarding staff vaccines. Some staff have a priority over others. Ages 65 and over are prioritized and the district is awaiting further guidance.

Robin Cowan Public Comment: How are we determining who is eligible for ESY during COVID?

Jennifer O'Malley: That will be addressed later.

Jennifer O'Malley:

4. Service Logs – There were some questions regarding providers keeping service logs.

- All related service providers keep logs on services that they provide for IEPs. These are kept as part of student records and can be provided generally within 5 days of request.
5. Providing Instruction & Services in various platforms.
- In-person, hybrid, and virtual academy. SAI and related services are provided to all of these platforms. The amount of services provided varies based on individual student needs
 - IEPs are written with traditional school in mind. Those services will look different for virtual and hybrid models.
 - We are aware that some students have lost some skills and we are looking into figuring a way to regain those skills. We continue to monitor learning loss and need for services. Looking into summer programs. Will update as we get more information.
 - We are looking into regression and recoupment, how long it takes children with IEPs vs. typical children to regain lost skills, and other methods for determining who will get ESY. We want to make sure that we're looking at special circumstances, for example disabilities.

Robin Cowan had a public comment: A letter sent by Ms. Hertig in November said that learning loss would be assessed and we would get progress reports to compare to last year. She's asked in November and December about learning loss and it doesn't seem like the district has a plan to assess it. Children in year-round schools had an 11 week summer. Is there a district plan on how to assess learning loss? Does this influence ESY for students that may not have qualified before?

Melanie Hertig: There are a lot of layers to what you shared. There is ongoing measurement on student progress. Adjustments are being made to students IEPs. They are still hoping that they'll get to a point in time for measuring learning loss by the end of the year. They are still working through COVID and doing their best.

Jennifer O'Malley: You should all receive progress reports this year. Melanie mentioned that in August we did not expect that students would not be able to be in class 5 days a year the entire school year. We continue to plan on comparing progress reports and to look at additional services that can be offered

Robin Cowan: Thanked district for their hard work. Is worried at the length of time that it's taking the district to address learning loss. It was not addressed at her IEP. How do we assess to help our children's development?

Melanie Hertig: Suggested reaching out to child's IEP team.

Robin Cowan: 2nd question is regarding the service log. She wants to point out the CAC allows parents to share positive and negative feedback and suggest solutions. She has brought up twice that there is not a formal policy for logging behavior therapy hours. There has been no systemic change. In order for FAPE to be provided the school needs to be able to prove that they are providing the services listed in IEP.

Melanie Hertig: A service that is part of a student's instructional day is not something that would be necessary for logging. The teachers are keeping ongoing data as to when students are receiving SAI time.

Robin Cowan: Clarification- Child does not have a bell-to-bell 1:1 aide. There is no way of verifying hours except through emails. Is there some sort of software that can help to keep track of this? This is an area of improvement that she identified.

Jennifer O'Malley: She thinks that generally a 1:1 aide is provided for a good portion of a day so a log is not necessary. If BI is in classroom with student, as opposed to a pullout service, there is no log.

6. LCAP Activity – Dr. Tammy Blakely, Executive Director /Student Support Services

- LCAP is the accountability plan. Principals should be sharing a link to provide priority. The online survey is the first opportunity to share input into priority action items.

- District and staff view what is important and decide on action items based on input.
- The priority levels provided will help them provide input to board
- Looks forward to hearing everyone's input

A couple public comments in chat box were read by Andrea Matolo:

- Angie Foster: Will ESY be 4 weeks or longer this year due to COVID?

Melanie Hertig: ESY is always 4 weeks. We are looking at an additional program.

- Michelle Leeg: If ESY is in-person, will it be held at more school sites in order to have better social distancing?

Melanie Hertig: We are still looking for guidance. Social distancing will be part decisions going forward

Adjourn Business Meeting at 7:14pm: Moved by Bernadette Ah-Hing Seconded by Andrea Matolo Vote: 8 Ayes

Presentation:

- Kathleen McFarlin, Manager, Family Support and Community Outreach, Comfort Connection Family Resource Center, (RCOC)
- Bonnie Gilman, Founder & Executive Director, Family Autism Network
- Paula West-Hernandez, Project Manager, Region 2, Task OC

Q&A

Next CAC meeting is Thursday, April 8, 2021 6-8pm on Zoom