

Meeting Minutes
Thursday, October 28, 2021

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I. CALL TO ORDER

Alida Fisher called to order the regular meeting of the Community Advisory Committee for Special Education, San Francisco at 6:05 on October, 28, 2021 via Zoom and Facebook Live. AAPAC and CAC Chairs describe purpose of AAPAC and of CAC, agenda, and meeting norms.

Members Present: Alida Fisher, Christina Share, Danielle Satinover, Eileen Boussina, Julia Martin, Havah Kelly, Kim Stewart, Lillian Lim, Martha Brooder, Megan Caluza, Roberta Havens, Sam Murphy, Suz Dehne, Whui Chang, Winnie Chen, William Patterson,

Members Excused: Karla Bobadilla, Olga Maldonado

Members Absent: Marisol Martinez, Roberta Havens, Naheed Misfeldt

AAPAC Members Present: Laticia Erving, Mauricha Robinson, Hope Williams, Mary Lohoury, Rionda Batiste, Toni Hines

Special Education & Other District Staff Present: Jean Robertson, Jenny Jimenez Payne, Adriana Aro, Annie Bovone, Ben Neumann, Brian Gustman, Cathy Sherman, Chad Schimke, Corrina McGraw, Cynthia OrtizFront, Esther Adames, Francine DeMarco, Kara Schinella, Kee Fricke-Pothier, Kristen Devine, Maggie Michels, Matthew Lavoie, Melissa Endo, Michelle Bizeau, Raj Sharma, Simone Green, Scott Ostendorf, Simone Green, Thomas Graven,

Other District Staff Present: Armen Sedrakian, Arcadio Fokin, Brittny O'Connor, Rebecca Fedorko, Raquel Huerta, Suzy de Blois, Tara Sessa

II. SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES AND SPECIAL EDUCATION UPDATES

Prasant Nukalapti, Education Director at Support for Families shared their mission and services. Nov 13 - Workshop on Giving kids skills to be safe online, in person, and in the world. Offers peer-to-peer parent mentoring program.

Jean Robertson, Chief of Special Education greeted everyone and shared that she is meeting regularly with and partnering with UCSF Dyslexia Center and working to connect UCSF with our district. Eight highly valued special education content specialists have been reassigned to teach in the classrooms to cover staffing shortages. Special Education Central is going to have to thoughtfully go through a continuous improvement model to make things work with the remaining staff.

III. **PROGRAM: DYSLEXIA**

Kareem Weaver - Guest Speaker, Oakland NAACP

“Elimination of illiteracy is as serious an issue to our history as the abolition of slavery.”

-- Maya Angelou

CA Dept of Ed - Dyslexia is one of leading causes of low achievement

Why aren't the kids reading?

SFUSD 2019 SBAC - just under ½ the 3rd graders are reading

Oakland USD 2019 SBAC - just over ⅓ the 3rd graders are reading

San Jose USD 2019 SBAC - just over ½ the 3rd graders are reading

Is it a race issue? African Americans who don't qualify for free/reduced lunch have similar rates to the all student average. African Americans who are on free/reduced lunch have similar scores as students with disabilities.

Speaker says if you have money, you use things like Kumon “mastery of fundamental skills, for diverse needs and abilities (code for dyslexia), nurtures core skills” - and business is booming. Business is booming because that's where the need is.

Ladder of Reading

5% of kids will read no matter what

35% of kids learn to read relatively easily with broad instruction

40-45% learning to read requires code based - systematic, explicit, direct

15% needs (dyslexia, etc) need intensive help

25 years ago, the Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention said that “the link between academic failure and delinquency is welded to reading failure. It is proposed that research based reading instruction can be used to reduce recidivism and increase employment opportunity. Reading failure is most likely a cause and not just a correlate for delinquent behavior.”

How are SFUSD kids being taught to read? There is a huge mix of what is being used, with curriculum not aligned to research, and teachers not trained to use many programs. SFUSD elementary Teachers only get 150 min/wk for collaboration for all subjects.

NAACP petition to Oakland USD - 8 demands

1. District wide TK-2 literacy curriculum
2. Role dedicated to student literacy
3. Make resources to support students reading below grade level. End “leveled” tracking.
4. Oncoming access to professional development on teaching reading
5. Dyslexia screening for all students K-2
6. Better tracking of intervention support and outcomes
7. District HR encourage flow of educators into high needs schools who have been trained in evidence based methodologies

8. Ensuring chosen curriculum reflects the diversity of students with time bound goals and future financial costs baked into an initial agreement

Speaker says dyslexia is a diagnosis of privilege. The African American and Special Needs community need to join together.

Berkeley - federal lawsuit was just settled under IDEA. Districts have affirmative responsibility to find these kids and provide FAPE.

“Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will.”

-- Frederick Douglass

Speaker says the unity between AAPAC and CAC is our biggest weapon.

Speaker's 16 year old daughter said pre-diagnosis, she felt stupid and people thought she wasn't trying hard enough. School sucked, she was depressed and miserable. When she received the diagnosis, she felt excited and there was hope for her.

It causes trauma for students who don't get what they need to learn to read.

Questions from the chat:

Moderator: Megan Potente - Co-State Director of Decoding Dyslexia CA

Questions: What are the next steps?

Systemic: Invest in educators, PD, give them the support they need.

Parents: Get clarity on what's being done. Are your kids getting direct, explicit, systematic instruction on a DAILY basis?

What is happening in Tier 1 - GenEd - what is the plan to teach all kids to read?

When kids are struggling, what is the next step?

Most kids are counting on the system to get it right. Every child deserves access regardless of their parent's bank accounts.

Structured Literacy:

Q: How can we ensure teachers enter the classroom more prepared?

A: SB-488 - Requires commission on teacher credentialing to strengthen teacher standards. Can't blame teachers who were not trained in this. Curriculum being used is all over the place. Just because it says "science of reading" on the box, it doesn't mean it is direct, explicit, and systematic.

Q: What is the best way to approach District leadership in a way that is approachable and effective?

A: The first thing I always ask is "So why do you think the kids aren't reading?" See what they say. Don't make assumptions. When you start with that, what you will find many times, there are these tropes "It's poverty, it's trauma, it's this and that." Ask "when do you do these different things?" If the teachers weren't trained about the science of reading, then the principals weren't, and if they weren't the supervisors weren't. See if they are willing to learn and grow and do better, then go show grace.

Q: Why do you think there is this resistance?

A: Some Principals and Chief Academic Officers feel they should be the “Best Knowers”, and are unwilling to show vulnerability, courage, humility, grace, and a willingness to grow and learn.

Final Thought: The reason why AA and SN folks are in the boat together -- when you have a black child, you know going in, what you are up against. It is a lonely, desperate situation. It feels like you are against the world. When you have a SN child, you are in the same boat. The system isn't built to help your child. We have a common destiny and a common cause, so we should join forces to advance our mutual interest.

Megan: Evidence supports that early intervention changes lives.

Speaker: Our curriculum is not lined up with the teacher's prep time. It's a systemic inequality. Look at the budget, reading curriculum, schedule. If you can't do those things, you can't provide social justice for kids.

Q: What assessments do you recommend kids ask for?

A: Make sure kids are being screened for auditory processing. How are they processing sound? Many times, it's not being done. Get kids assessed, make sure goals are solid and being progress monitored, if kids aren't meeting goals or say the kid can't meet the goals, join groups to advocate for FAPE.

Q: How to get an evaluation?

A: District is the first step for evaluations. There is also the possibility of an IEE after that. Private testing (using insurance or self-pay) is also an option.

Speaker says it's a time crunch. There may be a huge backlog, and to get to you, it may take a while, and you have to assess on the ground whether your child can afford the delay. You need to weigh the cost of direct tutoring versus private assessment versus waiting for the district.

Sam Murphy - CAC member goes over some of the comments

<https://dyslexiaida.org/what-is-structured-literacy/>

Here is the link to the deck for future reference:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1X76KN19XNHs_COrt53oEV7Wins2Z1Tms/view?usp=sharing

IDEA -

<https://www.understood.org/articles/en/individuals-with-disabilities-education-act-idea-what-you-need-to-know>

Support SB 237 (requiring K-2 Universal Screening for Risk of Dyslexia) working its way through State Legislature.

Sign the SB 237 petition:

<https://p2a.co/QanZpHP> Online Petition Link - English

<https://p2a.co/u4QkDoA> Online Petition Link - Spanish

CA Dyslexia Guidelines: <https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/se/ac/documents/cadyslexiaguidelines.pdf>

Wrightslaw is a great resource for all questions about IEPs and legal rights related to IDEA.

<https://www.wrightslaw.com/>

We have lots of website links on the CAC linktree including Support for Families, the CAC, Decoding Dyslexia etc. - <https://linktr.ee/cacspedsf>

The UCSF Dyslexia Center's website also shares some resources: <https://dyslexia.ucsf.edu/resources>

Sample Independent Educational Evaluations:
<https://dredf.org/special-education/sample-letters/>

How To Obtain An Independent Educational Evaluation At Public Expense
<https://www.disabilityrightsca.org/publications/how-to-obtain-an-independent-educational-evaluation-at-public-expense#>

If you suspect your student has these issues and they are in Tier 2 in SFUSD receiving LLI you should request a meeting immediately - as a SPED teacher I see the damage that intervention specifically does to students emotionally, by the time they get to me in Tier 3 it takes months to undue the damage. It's very upsetting.

Inclusive Schools Week: <https://www.sfusd.edu/sped-isw>

And dropped this a few times, but lots of resources on our link tree and I will be updating them this week!
<https://linktr.ee/cacspedsf>

re: question on ADHD and Dyslexia, is yes there is. There are several overlapping learning challenges that are part of auditory and visual processing disorders in addition to sensory processing disorders.

Request the CTOPP test of phonological processing as long as the full battery of tests.

Not everyone has the ability to get a tutor. We have to demand the resources that are rightfully ours.

When you ask for an assessment from the school. Put it in writing and ask for a PWN (prior written notice). If it doesn't go anywhere, escalate to a SPED supervisor and keep going until you get a response and if you need help reach out to support for families.

IV. AAPAC and CAC BUSINESS

Hope Williams, AAPAC Leader discusses AAPAC goals and mission. AAPAC has a monthly newsletter. AAPAC@sfusd.edu . How-to guide coming in November. Look forward to collaborating.

Christina Share, CAC Vice Chair discusses CAC goals and mission.

Member Attendance: We have a quorum. September 2021 Meeting Minutes were approved by general consent.

CAC Board Report presented by Christina Share, Vice Chair Inclusive Schools week is right after Thanksgiving Break. Reach out to your school to ask how they are celebrating, how you can help. Or join our district planning team.

CAC Board meeting Nov 3 at 7pm and Nov 4 at 7pm. You don't need to be a member to attend.
Email your interest at cacsped@gmail.com

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS & PUBLIC COMMENT

Support for Families Updates by Christina Share, CAC Vice Chair Support for families has job openings especially for people who speak more than one language. If you want to get involved in a more casual way, sign up and become a parent and mentor. If you're having any challenges and you want a little assistance, you can request a parent mentor.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT - No public comment.

VII. MEETING ADJOURNS - The meeting adjourned at 8:02pm

Toni Hines, AAPAC Leader - Led closing and Appreciations
