

**San José Unified School District
855 Lenzen Avenue, San José, CA 95126
District English Learners Advisory Committee (DELAC) Meeting**

May 16, 2011

MINUTES

- I. **Call to Order:** Mrs. Mara Herrera called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.
- II. **Welcome and Introductions:** Mrs. Herrera welcomed everyone and introduced District staff and special guests. Interpretation services provided by Christine Lemmon and Claudia Aguilera.
- III. **Attendance:** Mrs. María Elena Ramírez reminded everyone to sign the attendance roster.

Schools represented:

Allen at Steinbeck, Almaden, Anne Darling, Bachrodt, Canoas, Carson, Empire Gardens, Galazar, Hammer at Galarza, Gardner, Grant, Graystone, Hacienda, Horace Mann, Los Alamitos, Lowell, Olinder, River Glen, Simmonds, Terrell, Trace, Washington, Williams, Willow Glen Elem., Bret Harte, Burnett, Castillero, Hoover, Muir, Willow Glen MS, Broadway, Leland and Pioneer.

Schools not represented

Booksin, Reed, Schallenberger, Gunderson, Lincoln, San Jose High and Willow Glen High.

IV. **Approval of the Agenda**

The agenda was reviewed and amended. The time allotted to Sections VIII and IX was combined to make it a thirty-minute presentation including a question and answer segment. Mrs. María Dolores Lizárraga made a motion to approve the agenda and Mr. Luis García seconded. All were in favor and the agenda was approved as amended.

V. **Approval of Minutes**

The minutes from April 18, 2011 were reviewed. Mrs. Danelia Gutierrez made a motion to approve them and Mr. Gabino Martínez seconded. All were in favor and the minutes were approved as presented.

VI. **Correspondence**

Mrs. Ramirez reminded everyone to keep contact information updated. One member invitation was returned by postal mail this month.

VII. **Committee Reports**

Voluntary Integration Plan (VIP) Committee Report by Dr. Vincent Matthews

Dr. Matthews indicated that there were two main reports presented to the VIP Committee at the last meeting. The Student Services Department reviewed Latino student suspension and expulsion data and analyzed it to see if the percentages were in alignment with the rest of the District population in terms of ethnicity. The data showed that the number of Latino students being suspended or expelled was slightly higher compared to the rest of the District population. The committee discussed the results and reviewed the programs currently in place to reduce the number of student suspensions and expulsions. Lastly, the committee discussed how District staff and teachers are working with students in a more positive way to deal with discipline issues.

The Special Education Department reviewed the percentages of students in Special Education by ethnic group to see if there was alignment with the District population. The number of Special Education students matched almost exactly with the District population by ethnic group.

Parent Brown Bag Meeting by Dr. Matthews

The committee reviewed the current District's budget situation and talked about the community meetings held, which provided an opportunity for everyone to give their input with regard to the budget and furlough days. He shared that parents recommended the first week of October to implement the furlough days if necessary.

Mrs. Ramirez indicated that she is concerned about the number of Latino students being suspended and asked Dr. Matthews what is the District's plan to deal with this problem. She recommended using the TIIG resources to implement strategies that really make a difference.

Dr. Matthews shared that the Positive Behavior Intervention System (PBIS) Program has been successful in addressing this issue and has also helped reduce suspensions and office referrals. The staff is working with students in a positive way to improve their behavior. One of the District's goals is to continue implementing PBIS and similar programs that are effective in reducing suspensions and expulsions.

Ms. Ramirez believes that if a student does not feel comfortable at school, he or she would tend to misbehave. She encouraged parents to seek support at their school sites if there need be.

Ms. Valdes invited everyone to the next Parent Brown Bag meeting scheduled for May 26, 2011.

VIII. Old Business

A. Language Census-R-30 by Ms. Rosanna Mucetti

Ms. Mucetti began her presentation by explaining the purpose of the Language Census-R30. She indicated that the data collected annually is used by the California Department of Education to generate reports, compute funding for schools and to project future English Learner enrollments. She shared data, which included the number of English Learners in the District from 2005 to 2011. This year, 8,125 English Learner students are enrolled in the District; 5,578 of those students at the elementary level and 2,547 at the secondary level. According to the R-30 report, the major language spoken in the District by English Learners is Spanish with 85%. Ms. Mucetti shared the number of ELs enrolled in alternative programs at the elementary level. Some of these programs include the Structured English Immersion (SEI), Academic Language Acquisition (ALA) and the Two-Way Bilingual Immersion (TWBI). The data showed that most students are enrolled in the SEI program. She also shared the secondary program enrollment data, which showed that the majority of English Learners at the secondary level are enrolled in English Language Development (ELD) and Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE) classes. Ms. Mucetti explained that teachers who provide services to English Learners must possess a special credential. This year, 138 bilingual teachers provided primary language instruction to students and 713 teachers taught ELD or SDAIE classes. To conclude her presentation, Ms. Mucetti indicated that the State monitors teachers' credentials, but that it is the District's responsibility to monitor the quality of instruction and program implementation at the school sites.

Ms. Ramirez asked if parents had the right to monitor or inquire about teacher credentials.

Ms. Mucetti said the credential information is public and the Language Census R-30 is a required topic that must be presented to the SELAC Committee every year.

Ms. Albarrán added that schools could have a teacher substitute in a classroom for up to 20 days. But if the substitute works more than 20 days, it is the school's responsibility to notify the parents in writing indicating that the substitute doesn't have the appropriate credential.

Ms. Herrera asked how many middle and high school students were enrolled in the District and about how many English Learner students were enrolled in each classroom to determine the quality of service a teacher could provide to these students.

Ms. Mucetti didn't have the exact number of secondary students at hand, but explained that at the secondary level, the number of ELs in each classroom depends on the number of students, their English level and the program in which they are enrolled.

IX. New Business:

A. Reclassification Presentation by Rosanna Mucetti, Manager of Curriculum, Instruction & EL Services PK-5

Ms. Mucetti began her presentation by defining Reclassification and talking to parents about the importance of supervising student achievement after they are reclassified as English Proficient. She then explained the reclassification criteria. A student cannot be reclassified earlier than 3rd grade and he/she must obtain a score of 317 or higher on the CST in Language Arts in English. Students must also obtain a 4 or a 5 on the California English Language Test (CELDT) with a minimum of a 3 in each of the following areas: Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing.

In addition, students must be able to write an essay to demonstrate they have attained English proficiency.

Based on the student's academic performance, the teacher recommends reclassification. Parents are then notified and a meeting is scheduled to discuss the reclassification recommendation with parents.

Ms. Ramírez asked if parents could opt to reclassify or not his/her child even though he/she met the reclassification criteria.

Ms. Mucetti indicated that once a student meets the reclassification criteria, the system would reclassify the student.

Ms. Albarrán added that in some cases if the result is 318 and the school and parents feel the student could benefit from the services for an additional year, then the school could make a decision. But, a decision is always based on the best interest of the student.

Ms. Mucetti shared a reclassification data comparison between the District, County and State for 2004-2011. She indicated that this year, SJUSD reclassified 12.4% of the total English Learner enrollment, which surpassed the State and County rates.

Ms. Valdes asked when is recommended for parents to start feeling concerned about their children's reclassification if they are still not reclassified.

Ms. Mucetti said it is difficult to answer that question since the English development and academic levels of each student need to be considered individually. But if students have been in the system since Kinder and they are at the secondary level, the parents would need to check with the school to find out what areas or obstacles are preventing their child from improving his/her language or academic development.

Ms. Albarrán said that the most important thing for parents to do is check student results and review them to make sure there is improvement. Parents need to start checking grades and CELDT results since students are in Kindergarten. Each case is different, but parents need to ask questions and supervise their academic progress since an early age.

Ms. Herrera addressed the parents and talked to them about the importance of supporting their children and providing what they need in order to be successful in school. She mentioned that although the District has improved the services provided to students, these are still not sufficient. Parents need to remember that EL students have two jobs to do: learn the language and the content. Therefore, they are in disadvantage compared to the rest of the student population. She has noticed that non-EL students who are successful in elementary school are already taking advanced classes in middle school, unlike EL students who are falling behind due to the language barrier. She feels that non-EL students are successful because their parents are able to provide private tutoring for them, or maybe because their parents don't work and have the extra time to support their children. She believes providing tutoring to students is necessary and parents of EL students should make an effort to provide these services to their children, so they could be successful. EL students could be feeling frustrated because they see themselves as disadvantaged compared to the rest of the student population, which not only would affect their academic performance, but could also lead to discipline issues at school.

A parent asked about the promotion/retention policy and Ms. Albarrán and Ms. Mucetti answered her question.

B. End-of-the-year Recognition

All representatives were recognized for their year of service.

DELAC Officers were recognized for their two years of service.

Officers thanked the committee for their support.

X. Announcements

A. Parent Education and Involvement by Ms. Elizabeth Bliss

Ms. Bliss announced her retirement and delivered a special message to parents with regard to supporting their children.

XI. Adjournment:

Ms. Laura Alonzo made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Ms. Paula Sarabia seconded.

All were in favor and Mrs. Mara Herrera adjourned the meeting at 7:38 pm.

Minutes respectfully presented by Verónica C. Lara