

SHARING THE COMMITMENT

An Exceptional Student Education Advisory Committee

MEETING MINUTES
March 10, 2009



Members: Dr. Victoria Sartorio, Wilbur Hawke, Karen Stelmacki, Nancy Ross, Jennifer Smith, Debbie Tihen, Adella Spinella, Rosa Martinez, Barb Southwick, Dr. Elizabeth McBride,

Members Absent: Ken Fairbanks, Bob Spano

Guests: Stan Wesser, Joyce Austin, Jennifer Sabo, Dr. Katrina Nedley, Elida Ramirez, Shawne Thomas, Estela Lozano, Diana Cisneros, Laurdes Segura, Ana Villegas, Sanada Martinez, Francisca Curiel

Welcome: On behalf of Redlands Christian Migrant Association, Rosa Martinez welcomed Sharing The Commitment members and guests to RCMA and invited everyone to enjoy the pastries from La Favorita Bakery and to be sure to take home a bag of fresh vegetables from the fields in Immokalee.

Agenda and Meeting Minutes – Dr. Victoria Sartorio

A consensus agreement was reached to approve the agenda as presented, as well as, the meeting minutes from January 13, 2009.

Presentations

Sharing The Commitment welcomed guest, Jennifer Sabo who recently joined the Children's Museum of Naples as education director. When it opens in spring 2011, at the North Collier Regional Park, the Children's Museum of Naples ("C'mon"), the first of its kind in Southwest Florida, will feature 10 intricately designed child-scaled exhibits, from a working art studio and grocery store, to re-creations of space, the Everglades, and the beach. At the heart of the exhibits is the Banyan Tree and Tree House, a soaring two-story banyan tree with a lookout platform and crawling branches that lead to the fascinating tree house at the top, inspiring children's imaginations as well as body coordination. Exhibits in C'mon were created to meet Florida's Sunshine State curriculum standards, and all are accessible for individuals with developmental, hearing, physical, social/emotional and visual challenges. To learn more about the museum, visit <http://www.cmon.org/>.

Old Business

Sensitivity Awareness Training – Jennifer Smith

Sensitivity Awareness Training kits have been ordered and are nearly ready for dissemination to schools that have hosted a train-the-trainer training. To date, 10 schools have participated in the Sensitivity Awareness Train-The-Trainer. For purpose of IDEA grant preparation, funding for 10 trainings/kits, including stipends for trainers, will be planned for in 2009-2010. If you'd like to learn more about this opportunity, contact Jennifer at 337-8162 or Jenniferasm@leeschools.net.

Parent Library/Workshop Schedule – Wilbur Hawke & PEER Parents

PEER parents, Adella Spinella (Adella@fndfl.org) and Barb Southwick (barb@fndfl.org), in collaboration with FDLRS and FND, helped parents gain access to information and support services, sponsoring workshops at 14 different schools this school year, placing this same number of parent resource libraries at each site. In total, 36 parent libraries have been placed at schools in Collier. To learn more about these Parent/Staff Libraries, visit <http://www.collierstc.com/libraries.html>. Schools interested in scheduling a workshop should contact Parent Liaison, Wilbur Hawke, at wilbur@fndfl.org or one of the PEER parents above. Wilbur stated that work the PEERS are doing has been phenomenal, and added that although they are one PEER short, the two PEER parents have been disseminating information, providing assistance and support, as well as conducting training with parents of children with disabilities, throughout the district. Wilbur stated that until such time the third PEER parent is hired, each PEER parent may bill up to 15 hours per week for services rendered. Wilbur revisited the need for site based PEER teams; a teacher and parent per site. He suggested that principals might be willing to assist in identifying a parent within each school. Dr. Sartorio stated that each of the 18 ESE Program Specialists continue to serve as the PEER teacher component, as they are advocates for children with disabilities and knowledgeable about federal and state laws, and local programs and procedures. She suggested that the Specialists may be able to assist in identifying a parent(s) contact at each of their schools, a focus we may want to consider for 2009-10. Dr. Sartorio stated that in 2009-10, Sharing The Commitment will again, earmark IDEA grant funds, for an additional 10 parent/staff libraries for schools in Collier as our goal is to have this resource available to parents and staff in each of our district schools.

Jennifer Smith, FDLRS Parent Services Specialist reported that the recent workshops on managing behavior/positive behavior supports presented at Laurel Oak Elementary and Pinecrest Elementary were huge success. Jennifer recognized each of the principals at these schools, appreciating their involvement and support of this event; each school received a parent/staff library. To learn more about this training opportunity, contact Jennifer at Jenniferasm@leeschools.net.

Wilbur stated that the Florida State Parental Information and Resource Center continues to be a resource for parents. Visit <http://fndfl.org/projects/pirc/index.asp> to learn more about this support. Wilbur shared that he recently presented to the Florida Board of Education who expressed interest in duplicating the Sharing The Commitment model in other districts within the state and received an invitation to Hawaii to speak with the Board of Education there, a result of his speaking in Washington, DC. Additionally, he was invited to speak to the Palm Beach County School Board on Partners in Transition.

Dr. Sartorio stated that Sharing The Commitment brochures, available in English, Spanish, and Creole were disseminated to schools. ESE Program Specialists are distributing this brochure as well as, surveys to parents after their Individual Educational Plan (IEP) meeting for their child. You may also obtain copy of this brochure at <http://www.collierstc.com/>, located under the "ESE Advisory" button.

Boundless Playground Project – Barb Southwick

Equipment for the Corkscrew Community's Boundless Playground arrived yesterday. Barb reports that to date, \$197,000 has been raised. The All Kids Play Foundation is currently working to lay the foundation, seeking services and donations to excavate the playground area. For more information, or to provide a donation (monetary or services), contact Barb Southwick at barbsouth@comcast.net. Kudos to Barb for all her work and efforts in making this accessible playground, a dream come true for the children and families in the Corkscrew area. The playground is scheduled to open by summer 2010. If you missed the article, *Dream coming*

true at Corkscrew Elementary, visit Collier Citizen at <http://www.naplesnews.com/news/2009/feb/11/dream-coming-true-corkscrew-elementary/> . For more information on Boundless Playgrounds, visit <http://www.boundlessplaygrounds.org/> .

Collaborative Partners Updates

Family Network on Disabilities (FND) – Wilbur Hawke

Festival Educativo, a conference for families of students with disabilities of all ages, teachers, and other professionals, was held on Saturday, February 21, 2009 in Miami, FL. To learn more about this annual conference, visit: http://southwood.dadeschools.net/Parent_Advisory/08-09_festival_flyer.pdf

Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System (FDLRS) – Debbie Tihen

FDLRS will again sponsor families to attend Family Café; funding \$1,000 for hotel arrangements. The 11th Annual Family Café Conference is June 5-7, 2009 and will be held at the Disney Coronado Springs Resort and Convention Center; registration is free. To visit the online registration form, follow this link: www.familycafe.net,

FDLRS recently conducted parent workshops on behavior at Pinecrest and Laurel Oak Elementary Schools. Jennifer stated that these trainings were remarkable; each principal promoted and supported the training opportunity and each was well attended. Additionally, a Introduction to Pre-K ESE training was conducted at Veterans Memorial Elementary for parents of children transitioning from Part C to Part B Preschool. The Collaborative IEP Process, a three-day training commitment, was attended by five (5) administrators from Collier. Administrators learned about various barriers to collaborative IEP meetings, became proficient “facilitative” behaviors, learned skills to identify and resolve core issues, practiced consensus building skills, and learned fundamentals of effective communication skills to facilitate effective IEP meetings.

It Takes Two to Talk, a course facilitated by a Hanen certified Speech-Language Pathologist, was recently conducted with Early Steps Infant Toddler Developmental Specialists. This language development training provided specialists with practical tools to increase expressive language output and offered feedback/coaching on the use and effectiveness of the strategies learned. *More Than Words*, another Hanen Program for Parents, is planned Mar 17 and 31 at Veterans Memorial Elementary. For further information on FDLRS training opportunities, visit Island Coast FDLRS serving Collier and Lee Counties at <http://leeschools.net/orgs/fdlrs/> or contact Jennifer Smith at 337-8162 or Jenniferasm@leeschools.net .

A National Conference on Autism for physicians, parents and educators, *Promising Pathways: The Road to Best Practice in Autism*, is planned for Saturday, April 25, 2009 from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Florida Gulf Coast University. To register, call 239-992-4680 extension 202, or visit: <https://registerce.fgcu.edu/>.

Collier's Partners in Transition (PIT) – Allman Todd

Collier PIT has disseminated a draft Memorandum of Understanding to all members and a signature of commitment has been requested of all participating agencies. As a result of Collier's Partners in Transition focus groups, participants identified four major goals: 1) guardianship and trusts; 2) benefits and services; 3) independent living; and 4) sexuality and social skills. To learn more information about transition services, visit, <http://www.collierstc.com/Tactics%20Page.html>.

Florida Inclusion Network (FIN) – Stan Wesser

Talk at the Bureau has focused on working in partnership with agencies and a big push about being more thoughtful about the trainings offered. Stan indicates that schools will need to develop an action plan if FIN training is to be provided. FIN will continue to provide professional library materials to schools interested in training; recent request for training has been focused on Differentiated Instruction. Workshops are free! FIN will also dedicate \$1,000 for Family Café family expenses (amount to be used by any parent from any of the five counties FIN serves). Contact information: Stan Weser at sweser@fgcu.edu.

SEDNET – Dr. Katrina Nedley

The Multiagency Network for Students with Emotional Disabilities (SEDNET) is devoted to facilitating the creation of a comprehensive “system of care” for high-risk students and students with emotional disabilities and their families. SEDNET assists in enhancing the system of care for families and children, providing direct services, grants and funding, and interagency collaboration and linkage. Most recently, SEDNET has worked with the Wine Festival in the development of a needs assessment; submission of grants for school-based enterprise projects; and monitoring the privatization of community health centers and its impact on the provision of the Medicaid Program with regard to mental health services for families and children.

Redlands Christian Migrant Association (RCMA) – Rosa Martinez

RCMA is working in collaboration with FND, FDLRS, and Sharing The Commitment in preparing to celebrate the *Dia del Nino* event on Saturday, April 18, 2009 from 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. ESE will be providing books and bookbags for the 300 children expected to participate in this event. FDLRS will be providing training and bookbags as well. For more information, call 800-825-5736. Rosa announced that RCMA is adding an early childhood center in the Eden Park area which will focus on early head start (for children age 0-3) and will open 10 licensed child care homes for infants in this same area. RCMA has been working collaboratively with FDLRS in screening migrant children identified as having a possible developmental delay, and professional development training for staff.

New Business

PEER Teacher Parent Event – ESE Program Specialist, Nancy Ross, announced that she has been working collaboratively with Richard LaBelle, Executive Director, Family Network on Disabilities, to coordinate a parent workshop event on April 21, 2009 at Naples High School for parents of students with disabilities interested in learning more about Wills, Special Needs Trusts, and Guardianships. This workshop will address, in a family-friendly way, the importance of planning for the future for persons with disabilities and their families. Participants will look at the essential components that a family plan should have. Additionally, the trainer will address guardianship, including alternatives to guardianship, and the importance of when action should be taken. Contact Information: Nancy Ross at 377-2228 or RossNa@collier.k12.fl.us.

Next Meeting May 12, 2009

10 AM – 12 PM

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Administration Center

Room 4-167