

SHARING THE COMMITMENT

An Exceptional Student Education Advisory Committee

April 4, 2006 Meeting Minutes

Welcome and Introductions

Members Attended:

Dr. Victoria Sartorio, Karen Stelmacki, Dr. Katrina Nedley, Bob Spano, Jennifer Smith, Tricia Salvestrini, Christine Barbuto, Wilbur Hawke, Sherry Francis, Sylvia Delgado, Doug Carothers (FGCU representative replacing Dr. Marci Greene)

Members Absent:

Elizabeth McBride, Myra Shapiro, Dave Burgess, Lynn Clarke, Debbie Tihen

Guests:

Barbara Southwick, Cassy Pangaribuan, Heather O'Connell, Allman Todd, Dr. Richard Brimer, Shawne Thomas

Approval of Agenda

Consensus agreement was reached to approve the April 4, 2006 meeting agenda as proposed.

Approval of Minutes – January 17, 2006

Consensus agreement was reached to approve the January 17, 2006 meeting minutes as presented.

Old Business

Parent Libraries – Dr. Sartorio

Dr. Sartorio expressed appreciation to all members of the subcommittee in their planning and support in identifying the resource materials for the 10 parent libraries. Parent Library resource materials were on display at the Sharing The Commitment meeting and participants were given opportunity to view the resources after the meeting. Dr. Sartorio stated that ESE ordered an additional 10 copies of each resource book for 10 future Parent Libraries. Barb Southwick suggested a press release and Dr. Sartorio will send a write-up to Wilbur Hawke, who will work with the Naples Daily News on a press release. Parent training is scheduled April 18, 2006 at Lake Park Elementary School, one of the recipient's of the Parent Library. The Immokalee Charter School parent training is scheduled April 29, 2006 and North Naples Middle School is scheduled in May 2006. Both of these schools are Parent Library recipients.

Barb Southwick stated that she had a list of free resources for families from DOE and will work with ESE to obtain these resources for each of the libraries (20 in all). ESE will provide a copy of the district's Special Programs and Procedures for Exceptional Students document for each Parent Library. Barbara brought in the extra copies of books that were at CES and these will be raffled away to parent participants at future meetings.

Doug Carothers, Assistant Professor at Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU) and SEDNET Board President, stated that he has access to extra textbooks for a professional

library. Dr. Sartorio will share this information with appropriate administrators at the district.

Family Network on Disabilities

Wilbur stated that Family Network on Disabilities (FND) recently posted 4 new online workshops and that these workshops are currently available to parents, educators, and interested community persons. Wilbur stated that a statewide FND conference is being planned for August 2006 in Orlando. Plans for a regional-wide FND conference are on hold until FND receives word on the grant award.

Collaborative Partners Updates: FDLRS, PEERS and P.E.T.E.

Jennifer Smith announced that in collaboration with the Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System (FDLRS), the Parent Support Group for Families of Children with Disabilities at Corkscrew Elementary is having a coffee clutch / meeting on Tuesday, April 11, 2006. Jennifer Smith will be the guest speaker on the topic, "It's a Marathon, not a Race", placing yourself through the ESE Experience. For more information and to RSVP, contact Barb Southwick at 304-4491 or bsouth@swfla.rr.com.

Jennifer announced that the SW Florida Professional Development Partnership (formerly known as CPSD) is sponsoring a "Treasuring Transitions Conference" from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday, May 20, 2006. Dr. Lou Brown, Emeritus Professor, Consultant, Expert Witness and key mover and shaker in the field of education and disability, is the keynote speaker. Dr. Brown will speak on "The Quest for Ordinary Life": Preparing individuals to function productively in the real world of work". The conference includes breakout sessions organized in themed strands including a career conference for individuals seeking employment, an orientation to adult services for persons with special needs, advocacy and self determination, supported employment and supported living, as well as social/recreational oriented sessions. The SW Florida Professional Development Partnership (PDP) invites family members, students with exceptionalities, individuals with disabilities, professionals and community members to attend the conference. The PDP is working in collaboration with the region's five school districts, several family groups, and state and community organizations, to bring this event to the region.

PEER Parent, Sherry Francis, stated that she continues to receive calls from parents of children with disabilities expressing interest in participating in Parent Empowerment Through Education (PETE) workshops. Workshops have proven to be successful, with 10+ parents participating in each session. Parent training is scheduled April 18, 2006 at Lake Park Elementary School, April 29 at Immokalee Charter School, and May 2006 at North Naples Middle School. For more information on PETE workshops, contact Sherry Francis at Francish@collier.k12.fl.us.

Dr. Sartorio shared information on parent support groups formed in other regions for consideration by our PEERS:

- "Hearing Me" parent support group is sponsoring speaker, Beth Otto, Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing at Kaley Elementary, Orlando, FL on March 23, 2006 from 6- 8 PM. For more information contact Tanya Williams at 407-317-7430 x 2199.

- *Nathaniel's Hope* Buddy Break offers respite care to parents of children with disabilities one Saturday a month. For more information on this Orlando parent support service, visit www.NathanielsHope.org

New Business

“Day of the Child”

Sylvia Delgado introduced herself as an Area Family Specialist. She shared information on a collaborative parent conference, “Day of The Child” on April 29, 2006 at noon at Redlands Christian Migrant Association (RCMA) Immokalee Community Charter School. The conference will include breakout sessions organized in themed strands including a strand for children with disabilities. Strands will be in English and Spanish. There are 400 families in RCMA. Based on the results of a RCMA Family Needs Assessment completed at the beginning of the school year, the focus will be behavior and the social-emotional development of children. Session titles include: Positive Behavior Support, Collaborative Communication, Parents as Reading Partners, Making Daily Battles a Walk on the Beach, Making the Best out of Family Meetings, and Stranger Dangers.

The Exceptional Student Education (ESE) Department and FDLRS are working in collaboration with RCMA. CCPS will provide 250 backpacks and children’s story books and CCPS/ESE bags and notebooks for attendees. FDLRS will provide children’s story books and will be providing a bilingual workshop at the conference.

Shawn Thomas, the Inclusion Specialist at RCMA, shared background information on the early childhood programs(Head Start, Early Head Start, and Voluntary Prekindergarten Program) at RCMA. Shawn works with staff and assists them with instructional strategies for children with disabilities included in each of RCMA’s programs.

“You Make a Difference” nominations

Dr. Sartorio disseminated a handout from The Florida Developmental Disabilities Council, Inc. The “You Make a Difference” award recognizes teachers, teaching teams, administrators, assistants, therapists, and others, in Florida public and private schools who practice inclusion of children with developmental disabilities in the classroom and in other educational setting. Sharing The Commitment participants were encouraged to nominate a district school if they felt the school was “making a difference”.

Open

Karen Stelmacki disseminated a copy of the Superintendent’s Letter and the Parent Intent form for the McKay Scholarship Program for Students with Disabilities. This DOE program offers parents of eligible students in grade K-12 a School Choice option, which includes: to take a McKay Scholarship to attend a participating private school; to attend another public school in an adjacent county, or to attend another public school in the same county. The first two choices require the parent to provide their own transportation. If a parent chooses to participate in a private school, the student does not access services under an Individual Education Plan (IEP). Approval of a parent’s school choice in the public schools is dependent upon school space availability.

Dr. Katrina Nedley, SEDNET Manager, stated that SEDNET, in collaboration with the SW Florida Professional Development Partnership, is continuing conversations regarding the Regional Summit on Children's Emotional Behavioral and Mental Health. Please join this discussion on May 2, 2006 from 8 a.m. – 3 p.m. at Florida Gulf Coast University, Ben Hill Griffin Hall, Room 107. Kathryn Shea, LCSW, will lead the discussion on "Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders: Diagnosis, Intervention, and Family Supports.

Allman Todd, ESE Coordinator for High School, shared that he will be participating in a "Summit on Transition" in Orlando on April 25 & 26, 2006. He shared the names of the various agencies (FND, Community Mental Health, Children's Medical Services, Division of Voc Rehab, Association for Persons with Disabilities, Edison College, Workforce Development, and Collier Schools) to be involved in the Summit and stated that we continue to actively solicit a name of a family member who could participate in this Summit. If you or someone you know is interested, please contact Mr. Todd at 377-0120 or at toddal@collier.k12.fl.us. Accommodations and mileage will be reimbursed by the state. Breakfast and lunch will be provided. Allie stated that he recently participated in a conference call with the other agencies to identify their priority areas.

Dr. Sartorio announced that the District recently received from Florida Department of Education (DOE) preliminary data for the 2006 LEA Profile. The preliminary profile contained data indicators that described measures of educational benefit (graduation rates for students with disabilities, receiving standard diplomas through meeting all graduation requirements and FCAT waivers); educational environment (regular class placement); and prevalence for exceptional students (student membership in selected disabilities by race/ethnicity). Upon receipt of Collier's official 2006 LEA Profile, data will be reviewed at Sharing The Commitment.

Dr. Sartorio shared information on the School District's current collaborative partnership / pilot project with the Talia Seidman Foundation for the delivery of Hospital/Homebound services to students with disabilities who are critically ill. The Foundation came forward to the school district to provide technical assistance/equipment that permits a child to interactively participate from his home in the school classroom via audio/visual equipment. The Foundation provides all equipment in the home and the school, except for the TV at school. The student identified in Collier's pilot program is a middle school student. Earl Gardner, who is a volunteer working with the Foundation, is assisting the family with technical issues in the home and he is making arrangements with a celebrity group to have a celebrity visit the student.

Dr. Sartorio shared a message from Debbie Tihen that FDLRS would like to pay the accommodations for three families to attend Family Café. Three (3) hotel rooms are reserved. Interested families may contact Jennifer Smith at FDLRS at 337-8363.

Dr. Sartorio stated that Collier County Public Schools ESE will soon be receiving knowledge of the IDEA grant, specifically the Parent Services Discretionary Grant award. Dr. Sartorio welcomes participants to e-mail her with any ideas regarding the Parent Services; her e-mail address is Sartorvi@collier.k12.fl.us. Barbara Southwick asked about including childcare services in the grant for the PETE meetings. Sherry

Francis indicated if need exists, that childcare will be provided. Barbara indicated that CES' monthly parent coffee clutches support childcare services. Dr. Sartorio stated that funding for "Fun Camp" services is available for the PETE meetings. Barbara suggested that we may want to purchase craft items from the IDEA grant for the children attending workshops with their parents. Wilbur Hawke talked about tapping into community partners and highlighted a partnership that exists between Best Buy and a district in Washington, DC. He stated that this may be a subcommittee focus. Dr. Sartorio shared that the district receives funds from community partners to support students with disabilities participating in community-based job programs to assist in learning functional life skills. Allie stated that he is in the process of pursuing a grant to fund 1 ½ Job Coach positions. We have 30+ work sites for students with disabilities available through our CO-STEP Program.

Dr. Sartorio mentioned that Collier is also involved in TACTICS, a multi-agency group that meets monthly to discuss post-school options for persons with disabilities. The TACTICS brochure which highlights numerous agencies is available on our District website. Allie will bring TACTICS brochures to the next meeting for dissemination.

Christine Barbuto shared information about U Can Ski 2 program (featured in today's Naples Daily News) which traveled to East Naples from Winter Haven last weekend to teach adults and children who have an array of disabilities how to water ski. Volunteers skied with people with autism, Down Syndrome, cerebral palsy and with paraplegics.

Dr. Richard Brimer shared information about Extended School Year (ESY) services. School-based sites include: Barron Collier High, Poinciana Elementary and Village Oaks Elementary Schools. The ESY session is June 19 – July 19, 2006 from 8:30 - 11:30 AM. (ESY determination of need is an IEP team decision and teams are requested to make this decision by no later than April 15, 2006.)

Next Meeting Date: May 16, 2006

Time: 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Location: Martin Luther King, Jr. Administration Center, Room 1-103