

SHARING THE COMMITMENT

An Exceptional Student Education Advisory Committee

May 16, 2006
Meeting Minutes



ESE Advisory Members Present:

Beth McBride, Dr. Katrina Nedley, Allman Todd, Karen Stelmacki, Tricia Salvestrin, Wilbur Hawke, Debbie Tihen, Jennifer Smith, Sherry Francis, Sylvia Delgado

ESE Advisory Members Absent:

Dr. Victoria Sartorio, Bob Spano, Christine Barbuto, Dave Burgess, Myra Shapiro, Dr. Douglass Carothers, Idel Altenburg

ESE Advisory Guests:

Barb Southwick, Heather O'Connell, Shawne Thomas, Lisa Lewis

Approval of Agenda

A consensus agreement was reached to approve the agenda as presented.

Approval of Minutes – April 4, 2006

A consensus agreement was reached to approve the minutes as presented with one correction:

- page 2, Collaborative Partners Updates, 1st paragraph, 2nd last line, change “placing” to “pacing”.

Old Business

- **Parent Library Update – Barb Southwick**

All pamphlets from Department of Education (DOE), Family Network on Disabilities (FND), and the Florida Inclusion Network (FIN) are ready for dissemination to each of the parent libraries. Dissemination will be completed by: Heather O'Connell (Osceola Elementary); Barb Southwick (Corkscrew Elementary, Estates Elementary, and Sabel Palm Elementary); Sherry Frances (Shadowlawn Elementary, Poinciana Elementary, Vineyards Elementary, and Naples Park Elementary); and Shawne Thomas (Immokalee Charter School). To date, six parent trainings have been conducted and four schools (Naples Park, Vineyards, Sabel Palm, and Estates Elementary Schools) need scheduling. These trainings may need to be conducted during school year 2006-07. Barb suggested identifying 10 new elementary schools for parent libraries next school year since the resources already purchased are targeted for families of children at the elementary level. Wilbur and Sherry suggested that next year we should also focus on 5-10 middle and/or high schools, offer transition training, and provide either a variety of appropriate parent resources or focus our resources on transition, e.g., a “Transition Tool Box”. Members supported the tool box idea.

Wilbur stated that FND recently conducted transition training at North Naples Middle School and that they should be a recipient of resources next year. Barb indicated that Laurel Oak Elementary has expressed interest in hosting a parent

workshop and receiving a parent library in 2006-07. Members agreed that Sharing The Commitment training options should include FDLRS trainings (e.g., family friendly schools and Mysteries in the Middle), as well as FND. Sherry Frances stated that she is responsible for contacting principals, offering a training menu from which they choose, and then scheduling the training in collaboration with FND. If you know of a school who is interested in being a recipient of a parent library, please contact Sherry at FranceSh@collier.k12.fl.us or 377-2293(w)/261-0082 (h).

Dr. Nedley shared that Florida Mental Health Institute (FMHI) through a grant by the Florida Department of Education is accepting applications for TIP mini-grants. TIP mini-grants are available to support exemplary practice models for the transition of youth with emotional and/or behavioral difficulties. It is anticipated that up to twelve (12) TIP mini-grants will be awarded this year. Awarded sites will receive from \$500 to a maximum of \$3,500 for project activities. It is expected that these awards will serve as seed funds that can be combined with other sources of funding for transition programs and activities for this targeted population. Questions, requests should be directed to Jordan Knab, Project Director, TIP Florida Initiative, at (813) 974-6412 or jknab@fmhi.usf.edu. Transition websites: <http://tip.fmhi.usf.edu> <http://ntacyt.fmhi.usf.edu>

- **“Day of the Child” Update - Wilbur Hawke/Sylvia Delgado**
Sylvia Delgado expressed appreciation to all persons who participated in the “Day of the Child” and especially to Dr. Sartorio for her support of this conference. Persons who participated did a wonderful job. The Day of the Child was a team effort. She stated that there was an overwhelming response from the parents and that 92 adults registered, not including personnel from the various agencies who participated. Sylvia stated that they were prepared for 300 people, and they guess 500 participated. Jennifer Smith stated that the Day of the Child was an incredibly festive day, excellent food, and that the day was extremely impressive. The Day of the Child was a wonderful event for our parents, they obtained greater knowledge, and they had fun. Wilbur stated that this was the first conference that ever targeted migrant families and that it was a wonderful day!
- **Collaborative Partners Updates: FDLRS, PEERS, P.E.T.E., SEDNET**
Debbie Tihen, Project Coordinator of the Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System (FDLRS) disseminated a list of trainings available and a copy of the FDLRS newsletter. Trainings include:
 - Introduction to Pre-K ESE
 - Managing Behavior: Turning Daily Battles into a Day at the Beach
 - It’s a Marathon, Not a Race Pacing Yourself through the ESE Experience
 - It takes two to Talk
 - Families Building Better Readers
 - Mysteries in the Middle
 - Creating Family Friendly Schools
 - Opening Doors
 - Surrogate Parent Program

Debbie stated that five Collier families are being sent to Family Café (mileage and accommodations will be reimbursed). Barb indicated that she knows of three Collier parents who have received Family Café scholarships. Lisa Lewis stated that

she is attending and she knows that of several adults with disabilities who received scholarships from Collier Connections.

- **Summit on Transition – Allman Todd, Wilbur Hawke**

Allie identified the persons from Collier in attendance at the Summit on Transition: Jimmy Camp, ESE Program Specialist at Palmetto Ridge High; Allman Todd, ESE Coordinator / High School Level; and Wilbur Hawke, parent liaison. Community representation included: John from Vocational Rehab; Mike D’Amico, Director of Children’s Services at David Lawrence Center; Patti Warren, Workforce Development Navigator; Agency for Persons with Disabilities; and Patricia Moore from Children’s Medical Services. Allie stated that in addition to the keynote speaker presentations on April 25 & 26, the majority of the time participants worked on their individual County priorities. Three goals were established for Collier County: 1) to enhance the skills of ESE teachers in writing transition plans at the ESE secondary level and bring agency representatives in sooner in the development of the transition plan; 2) to research and implement appropriate vocational evaluation(s) at a younger age to assist students and schools in transition planning; and 3) to expand Collier’s transition team to include teachers, parents, a former student who has already successfully transitioned into the community, and other community agencies/organizations.

Lisa Louis stated that she knows a 28 year old adult who went through school in Collier and when attending conferences she sees this person often talking with Department of Education staff about Transition.

Wilbur Hawke stated that Palm Beach had 89 people on their County Transition Team. Wilbur suggested that we re-establish our Transition Sub-Committee of Sharing The Commitment. Sherry Frances expressed interest in participating as a parent representative. Allman Todd will serve as the County’s Transition Team Facilitator.

Allie disseminated the Tactics Brochures: A Guide to Transition Related Services in Collier County, to meeting participants.

- **McKay Scholarships – Karen Stelmacki**

The McKay Scholarship for Students with Disabilities Program provided over 15,000 Florida students with special needs the opportunity to attend a participating private school during the 2005-06 school years. The McKay Scholarships Program also offers parents public school choice. To be eligible for the McKay Scholarship Program a student must: have been enrolled and reported for funding in a Florida public school during both October and February surveys (Grades K-12); have an IEP; and have completed a year in kindergarten. The first McKay Scholarship compliance deadline for a parent filing intent to attend a private School Choice is July 3, 2006. There are three (3) other parental intent deadlines for the McKay Scholarship “private” School Choice; these are September 2, December 3, and February 14. July 3, 2006 is the only deadline for filing intent for “Another Public” School Choice. The School Choice website address is www.floridaschoolchoice.org.

New Business

- **Lisa Louis, Special Population Coordinator / Parks and Recreation**

Lisa announced that she is working with a focus group to offer inclusive Parks and Recreation services for all persons with disabilities. While the focus is on this year's Summer Camp at Osceola Elementary School from June 5-August 4, 8 AM – 5 PM, she plans to continue the focus group next year to talk about inclusive Parks and Recreation services and leisure activities. Lisa expressed interest in participating on the Sharing The Commitment Board in 2006-07, as a community representative, a Board position held previously by her predecessor.

- **Parent Survey – Karen Stelmacki**

As part of Florida's State Improvement Plan required under Part B of the IDEA, the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) requires that states collect information from families of students with disabilities. Specifically, Florida is required to report the "percent of parents with a child receiving special education services who report that schools facilitated parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities." For the 2005-06 school years, the Florida Department of Education will be collecting these data via two (2) parent surveys consisting of items developed and validated by the National Center for Special Education Accountability Monitoring (NCSEAM). There is one survey for parents of children with disabilities in preschool programs and one for parents of children with disabilities in grades K-12. For the 2005-06 school year, the survey will be sent to the parents of all preschool children with disabilities and to a sample of parents of K-12 children with disabilities.

- **IDEA Grant and Activities – Dr. Sartorio**

Collier has received its IDEA, Part B (K-12 and Preschool) preliminary entitlement distribution for fiscal year 2006-07. The ESE Federal entitlement for parent services continues to be \$50,000. Funds will continue to support activities including: contract with FND for a parent liaison; PEER parents; support for Parent Empowerment Through Education (PETE) projects; and parent libraries. Participants expressed the need for these activities to continue in 2006-07. Heather O'Connell asked how parents would be notified that library/resource materials are available at their school. This will be considered by the Library Subcommittee who is planning to meet briefly today, following the Sharing The Commitment meeting.

- **Talia Seidman Foundation**

The Talia Seidman Foundation was founded by Andrea and Ron Seidman after the death of their daughter Talia at the age of seven. The Talia Seidman Foundation provides the technology to videoconference medically fragile children in their classroom from their home or hospital when their illness prevents them from attending school. This technology provides children real education experience and teacher / classmate interaction. The Foundation is a nondiscriminating public charity. There is no charge to the family or the participating school. Collier is participating in a collaborative partnership with the Talia Foundation to pilot services for an ORM medically fragile child. Earl Garner, a volunteer coordinator for the Foundation has been working with ORM principal and staff and the child and family. A Talia Foundation video clip was shared with meeting participants.

Next Meeting Date:

September 19, 2006

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Administration Center

Room 1-103.

The 2005-06 Sharing The Commitment meeting calendar was disseminated.

Open

- Sherry Frances stated that this year's last Parent Empowerment through Education (PETE) meeting/training on transition, was held at North Naples Middle School.
- Dr. Katrina Nedley announced that SEDNET, a multi-agency Network for Students with Severe Emotional Disturbance, is involved in the May 20, 2006 Treasuring Transition Conference at FGCU from 9 AM – 2:30 PM. The featured keynote speaker is Dr. Lou Brown. Katrina also stated that the Florida Department of Education has asked SEDNET to focus its 2006-07 grant activities, to include: Response to Intervention (RtI), Transition, and Transformation. She stated that the SEDNET project will continue its work with the LEAPS program and that in Collier, LEAPS is used in all middle and high school level SED classes and is also being used in EH classes at the middle school level. She also shared that in collaboration with the Department of Children and Families and Substance Abuse and Mental Health, the state is focusing its efforts on allowing parents and children to choose their mental health services.
- Tricia Salvestrini stated that Immokalee High School supportive services' staff, Ray Royce, Teacher of the Hearing Impaired, received a Florida Teacher-of-the-Year Award. Congratulations Ray! Armando Ayala, the school nurse, also received an award for the supportive services to students at Immokalee High School.
- Barb Southwick stated that Sue Fialko, a 1st grade general education teacher (former ESE teacher) at Corkscrew Elementary School, is a recipient of the "You Make a Difference" Award from the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council, Inc. Congratulations to Sue!
- Allman Todd stated that he attended a Knights of Columbus dinner Tuesday evening where CCPS/ESE was presented a donation for our LIFE program, a career experience/career prep program. Allie stated that he presented a certificate of appreciation from ESE to the Knights of Columbus for their "Making a Difference" for our students with disabilities.
- Lisa Louis expressed her appreciation for being invited to Sharing The Commitment. Thank you Heather O'Connell!
- Debbie Tihen stated that FDLRS is charged with the responsibility to provide Child Find to the private schools. Debbie stated that there is one part-time Child Find Specialist who has focused her efforts on visiting private schools in Collier and Lee and letting them know about FDLRS services. Debbie announced that FDLRS is now able to offer a positive behavior management system training, CHAMPS, that coordinates well with Positive Behavior Supports (PBS). Debbie stated that FDLRS is preparing its grant for 2006-07 and would like to share its grant focus/activities with Sharing The Commitment at the September 2006 meeting.
- Jennifer Smith stated that FDLRS Parent Services has two training goals:
 - 1) families, and
 - 2) training schools to be family friendlyDebbie shared that an effective delivery model for parent training is the experience of having a parent sponsor the event at their home; Barb Southwick recently did this and it was very successful.
- Sylvia Delgado expressed appreciation to Wilbur Hawke for his assistance and support to RCMA and for suggesting that they become a member of Sharing The Commitment.

- Colleen O'Connell disseminated a Families First of Southwest Florida brochure and announced that respite care services, as a result of a grant award, are now available one Saturday a month to any Collier parent of a child with a disability (and siblings).
- Wilbur Hawke expressed appreciation to Dr. Sartorio for her vision and what she has done for families in Collier, and for all those who have participated in Sharing The Commitment to make a difference for children.