

**Exceptional Student Education
Sharing The Commitment**

September 20, 2005

Meeting Minutes

Members: Dr. Victoria Sartorio, Wilbur Hawke, Dave Burgess, Idel Altenburg, Karen Stelmacki, Beth McBride, Virginia Kennard [for Debbie Tihen]

Members Absent: Jennifer Smith, Myra Shapiro, Lynn Clarke, Dr. Marci Greene, Sherry Francis, Christine Barbuto, Tricia Salvestrini, Robert Spano

Guests: Dr. Richard Brimer, Allman Todd, Sherry Alvies, Cassy Pangaribuan, Larry Ruble, Barb Southwick, and Heather O'Connell

Welcome and Introductions

Dr. Sartorio convened the meeting at 10 a.m., welcoming all members and guests. Introductions were made.

Approval of Agenda

Dr. Sartorio requested to add "Family Reading Kits" to New Business. A consensus agreement was reached to approve the agenda as presented with this addition.

Approval of Minutes

Consensus agreement was reached to approve the May 17, 2005 minutes as presented.

Old Business

1. Members and Contact List

Dr. Sartorio asked ESE Advisory members to review and update, as appropriate, their contact information on the Membership List.

2. Targeted Enhancement for Parent Services

A copy of the Collier's ESE Project Design Narrative for Targeted Enhancement for Parent Services was distributed and reviewed. Karen Stelmacki reviewed the objectives of the project: 1) to foster collaborative communication and to "Share The Commitment" in the education of students with disabilities with all stakeholders by conducting ESE Advisory meetings; 2) to provide all parents of students with disabilities the opportunity to access parent liaison services for the purpose of seeking resolution to any perceived conflicts between parents and schools, demonstrating the spirit of Sharing The Commitment's collaborative partnership; and 3) to create parent ESE libraries at 10 school sites for information dissemination about IDEA 2004 and all areas of exceptional education. Activities will include: 1) participation in collaborative activities / workshops; 2) contract with Family Network on Disabilities (FND) to coordinate parent liaison services; 3) contract with FND to provide three Parent Educator Exceptional Resource (PEER) parents; 4) to maintain an active ESE Sharing The Commitment Advisory; 5) facilitate parent-to-parent meetings and training opportunities for families of children with disabilities through the Parent Empowerment Through Education (PETE); and 6) PEER parents will assist in the selection of resource materials and school sites for the 10

ESE Parent Libraries. The project award is \$50,000. The narrative included a summary of the 2004-05 Parent Services report was included.

PEER parent, Idel Altenburg, reported that the following schools are interested in hosting PETE activities and to house a parent library: Shadowlawn, Golden Gate and Poinciana Elementary School. Barbara Southwick stated that Corkscrew Elementary would be interested in hosting a meeting for its area but that the funds for a library could go toward another school's library. Poinciana Elementary School principal, Dave Burgess, expressed interest in hosting a PETE activity and to house a parent library. Mr. Burgess volunteered to purchase all resources for the library.

3. Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System (FDLRS)

FDLRS representative, Virginia Kennard, disseminated two flyers: 1) FDLRS' Four Function Areas; and 2) FDLRS' Child Find Referral Process for children birth to 21 years of age. The four functions include: Child Find; Parent Services; Human Resource Development; and Technology. Flyers are being distributed by Collier's Child Find Specialists and will be sent to each public school. If you know someone who may have a special need, call FDLRS Child Find at 337-8635 or 800/551-8636.

Ms. Kennard reported that FDLRS has hired Collier's 1.5 Child Find Specialists. Carrie Hewitt, 1.0 Child Find Specialist has already started in Collier with outreach and child find activities. She has an office located at Golden Terrace Elementary School. The .5 Child Find Specialist has been hired and will start in October. This Specialist's focus will be to provide outreach and consultation/training to early childhood providers (e.g., voluntary prekindergarten programs) in Collier.

FDLRS announced their current collaborative projects impacting Collier:

- a) Collier ESE to plan a JDL Facilitative IEP training. Tentative dates are December 13 -15 for all new ESE Program.
- b) SW Florida CSPD Foundation and SEDNET to sponsor a regional summit on children's emotional, behavioral and mental health on November 4 and 5, 2005. Agency professionals, psychologists, guidance counselors, social workers, nurses, pediatricians, service providers, administrators, early care and education providers, parents, teachers, and therapists are invited to participate. Participants will participate in a simulation activity on November 4 learning how to access mental health services and supports for all children and families.
- c) Mayer-Johnson/DynaVox to present The Yellow Bus Tour. FDLRS purchased 25 tickets and offered these to both Lee and Collier teachers. Although November 11th is a non-school day for Collier, nearly all tickets have been reserved. If interested in attending Friday, November 11, 2005, please contact Virginia Kennard by October 7th. There are two sessions being held at the Holiday Inn Select in Ft. Myers on November 11th – 9:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. or 4:30 – 6:00 p.m.

4. Family Network on Disabilities (FND) Update

Wilbur Hawke reported that FND will be rolling out their newly designed website within the next few days. The site includes information on Sharing The Commitment, Positive Behavior Supports, FND workshops, and a calendar of regional workshop offerings

including PETE activities. Wilbur requests advisory members and guests to send all event activities to him for posting. Wilbur stated that the Sharing The Commitment minutes and agenda will be posted on the FND website. He mentioned that FND is fully staffed throughout the state and that the FND Area Training Coordinator for this region is Betsy Taylor. Wilbur indicated that he is the "FND parent liaison" for Collier through Sharing The Commitment and will attend IEP meetings in Collier per the District's or parent's request.

5. P.E.E.R. Activities and P.E.T.E. Project Update

PEER parent, Idel Altenburg, reported that PEER activities will focus not only on Spanish speaking parents in the Immokalee area, but also in the Naples area this school year. Translating equipment will be used to support interpreting needs of parents during PETE functions.

Ms. Altenburg stated that FND, in collaboration with Florida Inclusion Network (FIN), recently sponsored a parent workshop at the Immokalee Community School with emphasis on the Circle of Friends.

Mr. Burgess stated that Poinciana Elementary School is planning school-wide disability awareness activities and welcomes support from Sharing The Commitment participants, including the PEERs. Participants shared information on possible community resources, including:

- Lisa Cronin Miller offers sensitivity awareness workshops (non-profit organization). Contact information: www.sawoneheart.com or contact@sawoneheart.com or 466-6344
- Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System may have disability awareness projects e.g., Hals Pals, Walk a Mile, and More Alike Than Different.
- Lynn Clarke, Parks & Recreation, previously offered sensitivity awareness workshops
- National Down Syndrome Society (NDSS) developed and piloted *Everyone Counts: Teaching Acceptance & Inclusion*, a curriculum for teachers in elementary school classrooms. For more information, contact Suzanne Elliott Armstrong at selliott@ndss.org.

Barbara Southwick stated that she and other parents of Corkscrew Elementary School are interested in launching similar activities at their school; activities that can be used to make it easier for all students to understand and respect the abilities of students with disabilities. Ms. Southwick would like to see this type of activity during Inclusive School Week [first week of December].

New Business

1. LEA Profile

Dr. Sartorio disseminated copies of Collier's 2005 LEA Profile and highlighted data presented as indicators of:

- a. educational benefit (standard diploma, dropout rates, post-school outcome, and 3rd grade promotion and retention);
- b. educational environment (regular class, early childhood setting; and discipline rates); and

- c. prevalence (membership by race/ethnicity, gifted membership, membership in selected disabilities by race/ethnicity, and percentage of all disabilities). Dr. Sartorio highlighted Collier's data as it compared to its enrollment group (Brevard, Escambia, Lee, Manatee, Marion, Osceola, Pasco, Polk, Sarasota, Seminole, and Volusia) and the State.
- d. 64% of Collier's students with disabilities (SWD) ages 6-21 receive special education and related services in classes, 80% or more of their school week with nondisabled peers (better than enrollment group and State)
- e. 19% of SWD in early childhood settings receive all (100%) of their special education and related services in educational programs designed primarily for children without disabilities or in their home (better than enrollment group and State)
- f. 76% of students ages 6-21 identified as educable mentally handicapped (EMH) spend less than 40% of their day with nondisabled peers (higher than enrollment group and State)
- g. 14% of SWD are Black students in the disabled population than in the total PK-12 population (11%) *
- h. 38% of EMH population is Black compared to 11% of the total Black population in the district *
- i. 20% of EH/SED population is Black compared to 11% of the total Black population in the district
- j. 3% of Gifted students are Black compared to 11% of the total Black population in the district *

** The district has submitted continuous monitoring plans to the Department of Education in this area. There is an over-representation of Black students in EMH and EH/SED for SWD and an under-representation of Black students in Gifted programs.*

2. Disproportionality in Special Education Programs

Dr. Sartorio disseminated copy of a flyer announcing a district presentation on disproportionality by Gwendolyn Webb-Johnson, an assistant professor of Texas A & M. A community presentation for parents, teachers, and members of the public are invited to participate on Tuesday, September 27, 2005 from 6 – 8 p.m. at the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Administration Center, Board Room. Flyers will go home with elementary school students. Flyers will be posted at middle and high schools. A presentation for administrators and child study teams will be conducted on Wednesday, September 28.

3. Parent Libraries Subcommittee

A Sharing The Commitment subcommittee was formed. Their task is to identify the core list of library resource materials/cost and the school sites for the 10 libraries. Barbara Southwick will chair this committee. Members include: Idel Altenburg; Heather O'Connell; Cassy Pangaribuan, and Sherry Francis.

4. Families Building Better Readers

Dr. Sartorio distributed information on Florida's Department of Education Just Read Florida! "Families Building Better Readers" workshop information. Jennifer Kincaid, the district's reading supervisor, is the point person for this district-wide project that will focus on all 3rd graders. Sharing The Commitment ESE Advisory members reached a

consensus agreement to support this project, allocating any remaining dollars from the resource funds set aside for the 10 parent libraries.

Jennifer Smith, the parent services person for FDLRS, has been trained by the state in the inservice "Parents Building Better Readers".

5. Special Programs Procedures (SPP) Document

Karen Stelmacki stated that the district's Special Programs and Procedures document was approved by the School Board September 15, 2005. Pending FL Department of Education's approval for a revision request to the Hospital/Homebound section of the SP&P, the document will be copied and disseminated to principals, ESE Program Specialists, therapists, psychologists, and ESE teachers, as well as to all parents participating in the ESE Advisory. Additional copies will be provided to community and other parents upon request.

It is the district's intent to have copies ready for dissemination by November 1, 2005.

OPEN

ESE Week is October 5 – 9, 2005. A letter will be sent to all ESE educators and assistants with a token gift of appreciation. This activity is being done in collaboration between the district ESE Office and FDLRS.

1st week of December is Inclusive Schools Week – packets will be sent to all schools.

NEXT MEETING

The next Sharing The Commitment ESE Advisory meeting is November 15, 2005 from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. at the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Administration Center, Room 1-103.

Meeting ended at 11:45 AM.