

Take-Away Points
Special Education Leadership Committee
1-28-10

In Attendance: Jeff Baier, Anne LePage, Wade Spenader, Carol Rossi, Linda Young, Gita Gopal, Rita Estrada, Sheila McGovern, Maggie Harris

- LRE/Mainstreaming Study: A survey was conducted of the special education teams at all the schools and the results were shared. (See attached). All the schools have similar definitions of LRE. However, it is possible the factors listed in #5 are not being applied uniformly across the schools. Anne will share results at the next special education staff meeting and discuss #5 to ensure common application of LRE principles across the schools.
- Science and Social Studies Curriculum. There were no results to report as yet on best practices used by teachers to integrate science and social studies into the special ed curriculum. The administration is currently investigating adaptive curricula for these subjects (e.g. Science A-Z), and will report back at the next meeting. Some ideas discussed to make it as simple as possible for SDC teachers: have material that identifies the few big ideas at each grade level; have mainstream teachers email SDC teachers updates on what is being taught so that SDC teachers can prepare kids to best utilize time spent in mainstream classes.
- Support for mainstream teachers to deal with diversity in the classroom and differentiate for different behaviors and instruction needs was discussed. Schools Attuned, a program to help educators differentiate teaching for struggling students, was tried at Covington; however no information was available as to its value. A proposal was made to invite Linda Figone, a teacher at Covington, to the next meeting to talk about her experience with Schools Attuned. Another program, Teach Social Silicon Valley, also provides training for educators. These programs will be researched and information will be provided at the next meeting regarding the cost and the value of these programs.
- The schools have a variety of practices at the beginning of the school year to familiarize the main stream teachers with the kids in their class who have IEPs. It was agreed that a standardized profile will be drawn up for each child and provided to the mainstream teachers. The profile will include mainstream goals for the child, tips on how best to teach the child, and the contact information of an assigned behavioral specialist and school psychologist who can help the teacher with difficulties. There will be follow up a few weeks into the school year to assess how the child is progressing in the mainstream class. A sample profile will be discussed at the next meeting.
- The budget for the next school year may need to be cut by approximately \$800,000 over and above the \$1.5m already cut this year. Ideas for creative ways to save money were solicited. Sheila McGovern agreed to look into possible grants.
- The next three meetings for the school year are Thursday March 4th, Thursday April 29th, and Thursday May 27th..