

SCUSD CAC
March 15, 2022
General Meeting

Meeting Notes

Recording

- https://scusd.zoom.us/rec/share/m1WsbRtWSAJ1AARSgA8MPfKWuxs6pwYEnEJYbCQVutzXufr1_gpfzefqvZ9HD5wr.OM75iKD9Xwq59F1h
- Passcode: B#05z%P!

Public Comment

- None

MTSS Subcommittee Update

- Renee Webster-Hawkins introduced the MTSS Subcommittee.
- Our District began its MTSS effort last year. Renee shared and walked through some slides that the District's MTSS coordinator prepared. General introduction.
- MTSS can support students with disabilities by moving away from the historical "wait to fail" model. The District is attempting to rewrite the script to a "new way."
- Sarah Williams Kingsley: Schools are all split into three different cohorts. Task is so large that supporting school sites in this work requires smaller pieces.
- Renee, responding to question from Dennis Mah: When school sites report out, they will hopefully report out to the public so we can monitor alongside them. Remains to be seen. We hope to see district-wide positive change, especially in areas that were solely deficient. Hopefully also look site by site to see what goals and investments are moving the needles at those sites.
- David Fisher: Long term goal of teachers to have MTSS implementation in our District. Several years ago several teachers went with the District to a conference on this. We have proposed implementation options that have essentially been ignored. Pleased to see that last year at a school board meeting District announced hiring 40 intervention specialists. Unfortunately, that was pulled back, likely due to the staffing crisis. Hopefully District engages with teachers around implementation. Renee: That would be helpful. Something I've observed is that MTSS sites in early cohorts are already getting a lot out of their collaborative time.
- Nafeesah Young: Any talks about additional staff provided to the schools to help with implementation? Renee: We can ask that. Relevant question around how school site plans will implement. Inclusive classrooms are known to improve outcomes, but that may change the teacher ratio.
- Benita: How can other members participate in the MTSS subcommittee?
 - Renee: Let us know. Email Renee or Sarah (emails available upon request).

Elimination of Special Education Positions

- Benita: At our last special meeting devoted to LCAP goals, there was a huge discussion about what happened at the Board meeting. We decided then to devote this meeting to see what the CAC can do and to hear people's ideas and hear from the District.

- Geo: I have prepared responses for the questions in the agenda.
 - Q: Were SELPA and SpEd consulted? A: Consultation occurs between departments during the Budget Development Process. This is ongoing throughout the year. We were consulted.
 - Q: Why was CAC not involved in decision? A: Budget Development Process does not currently include advisory committees. Advisory committees can provide input on the local plan.
 - Q: School Board member thoughts on impacts to SpEd community? A: Board is meeting this evening (right now) so we can't ask them now.
 - Q: How will this impact the SpEd community? A: We do have a teacher shortage. The structural adjustment will have a positive impact on the special education community by providing students greater access to more highly qualified and credentialed teachers in the classrooms (fill vacancies), avoid layoffs, and promote MTSS structure. Something in development: MTSS coach position. Also, SpEd department using the Budget Development process to increase some SpEd positions including psychologists, social workers, OTs, BCBA's, administrators of teaching and learning, and office support.
 - Q: Actions CAC can take to mitigate impacts of this decision? A: Question for CAC. You can consider advocating through SELPA Local Plan.
- Jason Burke: Talk about positions that were cut to hire management-level positions – not certified teachers. On board with MTSS 100%. A principal told me they would hire me in my current position, but District does not provide funding for that. You got rid of 12 SpEd people who will be going back to the classroom through the surplus process. What else are we doing to hire more qualified teachers? Elk Grove put on a very good teacher hiring fair last Saturday. Why aren't we doing that? We've recruited from the Philippines but what else lately? When you add up the time of service of 10 of the 12 people: 188 years of service to the District. Average 18.8 years. There are also admin staff who are teachers who could go back to the classroom. We are not doing our best work to hire teachers. We are taking from one area to another. I asked who would be taking on the responsibilities of these reassigned teachers – told that there are a "cadre" of people who will do so. We already contract out so much. So overwhelmed right now we can't keep our head above water. No way that will happen after the cuts. Not sure what positions I'm even being offered to transfer to – no job description even. I would love to do a MTSS position in the SpEd department. I don't even know how I will get a job or what it will be. Do I have to apply? If the District has a plan, they aren't telling us. They won't tell us what administrators were involved in the decisions. Principals at MTSS Cohort 1 schools didn't even know this was happening. Not just about cut positions but treating people with dignity and respect. Some of my colleagues are afraid to speak out. They are worried they will get a one-year assignment and then black balled.
- Kenya thanked Jason for sharing his thoughts and experiences.
- Nafeesah: Also thank Jason. There were 15 site positions posted on EdJoin. When first posted salaries were wrong. Positions closed last Thursday. Interviews, only one person applied. If we're trying to recruit specifically for (my area) school psychologists, we need to make sure the posting has the right salary and is posted for a lot longer.
 - Geo: We had a discussion with HR to keep those positions open longer to continuously recruit. Will re-post.

- Sarah: We have lost thousands of students. Where are we misaligned? Parents don't know that.
 - Geo: Who has credentials? Where can we align with other areas that we have a District focus on? One of those areas is MTSS. What are the needs of our students coming back to school?
- Kim Taylor: How are we going to fulfil the needs of SpEd students who need specific services with the number of BCBA people? Today they can barely manage existing case loads.
 - Geo: No specific provider required. We can look at other positions to do that. Other support systems, e.g. school psychologists and social workers. Not just taking work from one group and giving it another. It's how to meet needs in a MTSS way. Ultimately, teacher credentials are valuable. School psychologists are not credentialed in that fashion. Get credentialed teachers into classrooms.
- Kim: Nice that you respect the teachers and their positions (and need for that credential), but you never even spoke to them about that – just told them they lost their BIS role. Also: systemic problem in District that SpEd positions aren't filled in the first place.
- Deirdre: Share my experience over the last couple of months. I feel connected to CAC, great way to know what's going on. We've had quite a contentious experience with the IEP process. Some of these newly created positions were assigned to work with us. Changed how IEPs are done. These folks are amazing and so good to work with. Before: suggestions then yes/no. Now with those people they know if something will work and if not what else will.
- Kenya: A lot of what we're speaking about right now – shortage of teachers across the country. Newsom passed a bill to ease hiring and grant credentials. Psychologists and BCBA's need to hold credentials. We want credentialed staff psychologists and BCBA's. Some students do not need a BCBA or behavior intervention plan, but some students do. When speaking about community as a whole, keep in mind IEP is individualized.
- Taylor: We are solving a particular acute need for classroom teachers by gutting our SpEd department. Our SpEd issues are long term. Unfortunate other District staff not here to share their thinking and to hear our emotion. I expect we'll be talking about the Board's March 3rd decision to reassign these positions 5 years from now. The positions being realigned are some of the hardest to fill. This is misguided and is helping larger district problems on the backs of our SpEd kids.
- Jason: We are not serving a higher number of kids. We are taken from a large pool of kids we currently serve to a small pool. If we want to work as many kids as we can, moving to a surplus classroom is not the answer. MTSS position does not exist yet. Takeaway: general reduction of services for SpEd kids.
- David: I've seen this happen for so many years. The work doesn't go away – the needs don't go away. You can't do addition by subtraction. We aren't widgets that can just be moved around the chess board. We need to fill all the holes. Larger hiring issue. I know hundreds of teachers who went to the Elk Grove hiring event. This will be a downward spiral.
- Geo: Board members not here because of board meeting going on right now that started at 4pm.
- Dennis: There does seem to be a systemic problem in the budgeting process. It looks at one year at a time based on projected ADA. Misses the 5- or 10-year outlook that we

should look for in Sac City. In the long view, we should not be laying off people this year. Advocating that someone tell the decision makers to look at the big picture.

- Kenya: Can David tell us difference between being laid off and surplussed?
 - David: Lay off is pink slip. The District does this every year, then tries to hire back in the summer. Surplussed means site or department loses a position but you're not losing your job.
- Kim: How many Functional Behavioral Analyses (FBAs) are performed annually in the District?
 - Geo: I don't know off the top of my head but can bring it back to the group.
 - Dr. Hedegard: Difficult to analyze across the District. A number of functional behavioral assessments completed through legal processes as well.
- Kim: Lots of effort to go through and make necessary recommendations and changes around BIS support and other SpEd issues. Why not same effort applied to hiring SpEd teachers? Address the systemic problem.
 - Geo: Now dedicated staff to retention and recruitment. Area of focus going forward.
- Kim: This seems politicized and best needs of the student population not going to be met going forward. Staff with many years of experience supporting the community, then a decision in a vacuum without thinking through impacts of consulting the community.
- Renee: This is not the first year the District has clumsily announced budget solutions in the form of reductions of positions or actual layoffs. Doing it in the budget process and not from an instructional/student focus. No explanation about what resources are being retained and invested in. Communication problem sews distrust. Interested to hear Deirdre's experience with IEPs. Measurable change. But disappointed in District's response to bullet about whether CAC was consulted. I would have thought decision would be based not just on budget but also productive investment based approach that would in fact improve outcomes for individual kids. Sounds like those conversations have been happening. Been ongoing visions and plans to invest in services that need to happen. Look at the data: our students with disabilities are not thriving. Invest in those areas and fix the status quo. But why was the CAC not included in that visionary planning?
- Benita: We need to take our frustrations beyond this meeting and to take action. I'm not a parent that sits silent. We need to take what we expressed here out there. Send the Board members lots of emails. Tell them the CAC President told you to do so. I'm on video – you have proof I said this. Continue to speak loudly every day.