

SUPERINTENDENT'S SPECIAL EDUCATION POLICY COUNCIL

September 10, 2025 ~ 9:00 AM

Humboldt County Office of Education – Annex Board Room

Voting Members Present: Luke Biesecker, Regional (Chairperson), No Humboldt Feeder Schools
Danielle Carmesin, Ferndale/Mattole Area
Gayle Conway, Northern Humboldt Union High School District
Michael Davies-Hughes, (Parliamentarian) Humboldt County Office of Education
Karrisa Feierabend, Fortuna Area
Julie Giannini-Previde, Northern Humboldt Feeder Schools
Tom Kissinger (Vice Chairperson), Del Norte City Schools
Shari Lovett, Independently Reporting Charters
Becky MacQuarrie, Eureka Feeder Schools
Jacqueline McCullough Klamath-Trinity Joint USD
Gary Storts, Eureka City Schools
Sarah Wilson, Southern Humboldt Unified School District (Alt)

Voting Member Absent: Jeff Harris, Del Norte County Office of Education
Sarah Schipper, Southern Humboldt Unified School District
DeAnn Waldvogel, Northern Humboldt Feeder Schools

Non-Voting Member Present: Haley Jones, Humboldt – Del Norte SELPA

Guests Present:	Katie Cavanagh	Lisa Calussen	Laurie Clendenen
	Nichole Dollarhide	Carol Ingram	John Leonard
	April Quincey	Inga Townsend	Cindy Vickers
	Teri Waterhouse	Corey Weber	Whitney Wirt
	Kelly Withers	Paul Ziegler	

1.0 CALL TO ORDER and LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Luke called the meeting to order at 9:00 with the land acknowledgement read by Whitney Wirt.

2.0 CLOSED SESSION

2.1 Announcement of Closed Session Item

2.2 Public Comment on Closed Session Item

None

2.3 Closed Session Item

2.3.1 Public Employee Performance Evaluation (Gov. Code § 54957) – SELPA Executive Director
Closed at 9:03 – 9:17 with a vote was taken and approved Ed Goals for the year.

3.0 ADJUSTMENT OF AGENDA

A motion was made and seconded (Conway/Lovett) to approve the agenda. The motion carried with all in favor.

4.0 PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

5.0 CONSENT AGENDA

5.1 Approval of Minutes – May 6, 2025

A motion was made and seconded (Davies-Hughes/Kissinger) to approve the minutes as presented. The motion carried with all in favor.

6.0 DISCUSSION ITEMS

6.1 Introduction of New Policy Council Voting Members

Haley introduced the new members, Jacqueline McCullough – Klamath Trinity Region, Shari Lovett – Independently Reporting Charter School, & Karrisa Feierabend – Fortuna Area Region. Haley further explained that Shari is not representing the charters as a whole, but the charters that are Independently representing themselves for Special Education, which are Pacific View Charter 2.0 and Northern United – Humboldt Charters. Sarah Wilson, Director of Student Services at Southern Humboldt was added as an alternate for the district vote.

6.2 Policy Council Member Informational

Haley provided the Policy Council with a member informational which included an overview of the vision, mission, values, Council bylaws, officers, and voting structure. She reminded voting members that all decisions made by the

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Policy Council need to be made with consideration of the SELPA as a whole, meaning that each voting member should not just be considering their LEA or region when voting or taking action on items, but considering all of the LEAs and students in the SELPA.

6.3 SELPA & AB 602 Funding Yearly Review

The Policy Council received an overview of the state, local, and federal funds received and how the SELPA is funded. Details were provided and shared with the council. Carol explained how the local allocation plan guides how money flows out from the SELPA to its member LEAs. The local allocation plan/model has had minimal changes since it was first agreed upon in 1998-2000. In 24/25 School Year, the Policy Council agreed to make minimal changes to the local allocation plan including the elimination of the preschool set-aside and differentiated rate for unduplicated students having “speech only” IEPs. The SELPA's decision making guidelines were shared.

School Services of California are to be utilized as needed for consultation purposes as future considerations for changes to the local allocation plan occur. It was highlighted that AB 602 Funding Allocation model will not cover the total costs of special education services and general funds will always need to be added. The 2018 fiscal and programmatic review that was conducted by Maureen Burness was briefly reviewed. There is a specific focus on AB 602 augmentation as a potential area to review and consider updating. Worksheets and model calculations will be distributed throughout the year for budget planning.

No questions or discussion took place by voting members.

6.4 Humboldt-Del Norte SELPA Priorities for 2025-26 School Year

Haley reviewed the key priorities for the year. These included a continued focus on aligning SELPA's fiscal and programmatic work with its Decision-Making Guidelines, Vision, Mission, and Values, emphasizing transparency, collaboration, and equity.

The 2018 fiscal recommendations continue to guide SELPA's efforts to improve communication and understanding between SELPA and Member LEAs. Decision Making Guidelines were shared and are intended to be central to all SELPA decisions. The SELPA is resuming consultation with Anjanette Peletier from School Services of California to simplify and clarify the AB 602 Allocation Model and explore extraordinary cost pools. Simulations and scenarios reviewed last year will be revisited with the Fiscal Committee, Policy Council, and BIG. Haley shared that the final AB 602 Augmentation count is now due by September 10th annually, with strict adherence to updated criteria—no changes accepted after this date. The SELPA is exploring the creation of an ECP to support LEAs facing unexpected, high-cost situations (e.g., multiple high-need students moving into a small district). Criteria, funding thresholds, and participation guidelines will be researched using other SELPA models.

Julie asked about other SELPA's approach to AB 602/local allocation plans and Haley reported that each SELPA is unique; and that we may be the only SELPA using the augmented funding set aside in the way that we currently do. With inclusivity in mind, she would like to see more training with the GE portion needs to be training as they may not be ready.

Haley shared that continued review of Therapeutic Learning Classrooms (TLC) sustainability and funding, especially for LEAs outside the ERMHS MOU (fee-for-service model). There needs to be a focus on CBSTs due to expiring funding, with ongoing discussions involving HCOE and hosting LEAs.

The SELPA is continuing to update outdated policies, including: Special Education Procedural Manual, Behavior Intervention Guidelines, SCIA and Surrogate Parent Guidelines and RTC Policies. Last year's updates included ERMHS Guidelines and Program Transfer Policy.

Haley shared that Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) is a core focus across all SELPA initiatives. The SELPA Leadership team is actively integrating DEIB into meetings, surveys, and staff engagement, and there are plans to designate a DEIB liaison to participate in HCOE's DEIB meetings.

There were no other questions or discussion on this item.

6.5 Medical Therapy Unit Local Interagency Agreement Update

Haley shared that the Medical Therapy Program (MTP), also known as the Medical Therapy Unit (MTU), is a vital statewide sub-program of California Children's Services (CCS) that provides medically necessary occupational and

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physical therapy to children and young adults with qualifying physical disabilities. It is jointly administered by county public health offices and SELPAs, as required by state and federal regulations. On August 1, 2024, the SELPA received a letter from the California Department of Education (CDE) with an updated Interagency Agreement (IA) template and an initial six-month deadline to revise and submit the agreement to both the CDE and the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS). Since then, the deadline has been extended to December 2025. Haley shared that she has been working closely with Katie at HCOE, CCS, DHCS, and MTU staff to finalize the updated IA. The draft has been reviewed by both SELPA's legal counsel and DHCS's legal team. DHCS is now preparing to send the draft to the state for final review, pending any feedback from the Policy Council. Haley noted that council members received the draft via email and in their meeting packets, and she requested that any feedback be submitted to the county by Friday, September 12. Once the state has reviewed and approved the agreement, Haley will bring the final version back to the Policy Council for a vote. She also mentioned that the State SELPA organization has been in communication with the state and DHCS about the IA template and is exploring the possibility of decoupling the MTU from SELPAs in the future.

Julie asked how it would impact member LEAs. Haley reiterated that legal counsel has reviewed the draft language and that essentially everything in the IA is in the past IA and in legislation. Haley shared that LEAs do not sign the IA, only the SELPA and HCOE as the hosting LEA. The MTU is currently located at the Glen Paul site in Cutten. Katie shared that the Policy Council may be asked to prove funding should it be required, which would include facilities and/or equipment. She added that there are provisions, such as when a student receives services through the MTU, the LEA might be obligated to invite members from the MTU to the IEP meeting. Haley said that is not a change as that has always been in the IA and in legislation. The Policy Council was provided a draft of the IA prior to the meeting.

- 6.6 Uncharted Shores Academy – Notification of Intent to Exit Humboldt-Del Norte SELPA for the 26/27 School Year
Haley shared that on June 16, 2025, the SELPA received a letter of intent from Uncharted Shores Academy (USA), a charter school in Del Norte County, indicating their potential plan to exit the Humboldt-Del Norte SELPA for the 2026–27 school year. While the charter has not made a final decision, they retain the right to explore this option. Haley has been in ongoing communication with Mr. Cartwright, Director of ABC Charter, as well as representatives from the California Department of Education (CDE) and SELPA legal counsel to better understand the process. However, she noted that there is currently a conflict between CDE's interpretation and legal counsel's guidance regarding the requirements for a charter to exit a SELPA, and she is working to clarify what steps are actually necessary. Haley emphasized that if CDE's interpretation is correct, the Policy Council may eventually need to take formal action. Additionally, USA is considering becoming its own LEA for special education purposes, which would require SELPA approval. Haley has shared SELPA's policy and requirements with Mr. Cartwright and connected him with another charter for support. Tom asked what Mr. Cartwright and ABC are hoping to achieve by these actions. She acknowledged that the motivation behind these actions appears to be financial, though further clarity is needed. SELPA is also reviewing its existing policy on charter LEA status, which may need updating. Haley assured the Policy Council that she will continue to monitor the situation closely and provide updates as more information becomes available. Shari added that this the request from ABC should have come from DNUSD as they are not their own LEA at this point. CDE told them this is what to do.

7.0 ACTION ITEMS

- 7.1 2026/2027 Local Education Agencies Removal from Educationally Related Mental Health Services Consortium
Haley shared that three LEAs—Cutten Elementary School District, Alder Grove Charter School, and Trinidad Elementary School District—submitted formal applications throughout the spring of the 2024–25 school year to exit the SELPA's ERMHS Consortium beginning July 1, 2026. These applications were due by June 30, 2025, and are included in the meeting packet for review. Haley explained that while the applications are complete, formal approval from the Policy Council is required to move forward with their removal from the ERMHS Cooperative Agreement. She noted that the estimated reduction in state ERMHS funding resulting from these exits totals approximately \$96,595, with a projected staffing impact of a 0.6 FTE reduction. Currently, five students are being served across these three LEAs. Haley requested that the Policy Council take action to approve the removal of these LEAs from the ERMHS Consortium for the 2026–27 school year.

Michael mentioned the recommendation is helpful, however, can SELPA provide a continuum of support to the districts with the exit of 3 additional LEAs. Danielle noted that even when LEAs can provide their own services it is still a loss to the overall SELPA. Haley explained that this is the outcome of moving funds back to the LEAs however, the state didn't appear to consider the more rural and small districts when these decisions were made. Haley agreed that it certainly affects the larger SELPA. Becky also replied that it is a difficult decision for LEAs to

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remove themselves from the cooperative, but other factors come into play that each LEA needs to consider. The state wanted the districts to have that decision at the local level. Luke appreciated that our SELPA has worked this through over a period of years. Haley said by following the year and day allows time to provide supports as transitions occur.

A motion was made by Julie and seconded by Gayle. The motion passed unanimously.

8.0 INFORMATION ITEMS

8.1 Director's Report

Haley shared her Director's Report, highlighting the upcoming Fall Special Education Meeting on September 19th featuring Dr. Vivian Rodriguez-Eads, with a focus on Alternative Dispute Resolution. She noted that the SELPA's Professional Development Calendar will be released soon, with some site-specific trainings potentially carrying a fee. Haley announced that the SELPA is fully staffed, though Teresa will be retiring this year. She also shared updates on CDE monitoring deadlines, emphasizing the importance of accurate CALPADS and SEIS data ahead of Census Day on October 1st. Anna Brown will host a Data Focus meeting on September 11th to support LEAs. Haley acknowledged the 50th Anniversary of IDEA, with September's theme being Least Restrictive Environment and Inclusion—an area she continues to champion. She also mentioned the Policy Council survey results, CDE's new Dispute Resolution website, and an upcoming Facilitated IEP Trainer of Trainers session in December to support ADR efforts across the SELPA.

8.2 Legislative Advocacy Updates

Haley provided an update on the current bills that the State SELPA organization are continuing to monitor. These included AJR-7, AB 560, AB 784, H.R. 2333, and H.R. 2598. AJR7 and HR2598 support IDEA full funding, AB560 (caseload reduction) is opposed by ACSA, and AB784 (expanding DHH access) effective Jan 1, 2026.

8.3 Committee Update

8.3.1 Fiscal Committee Report

Haley reminded the Policy Council that the next Fiscal Committee meeting is scheduled for October 14th. At that meeting, the committee will discuss future SELPA contributions to Therapeutic Learning Classrooms (TLC), the funding model, the allowable cost matrix, the extraordinary cost pool, and the AB602 Allocation and Augmentation.

8.3.2 Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Report

Haley shared that the first CAC meeting of the year was held on September 9th, though attendance remains low despite updated guidance for LEAs to appoint members. A virtual ballot was held to officially appoint Cassie Michel (Ferndale) as Chair and Trevor Hammons (Northern Humboldt) as Vice Chair. While a member from MUSD stepped down, Hydesville added a new representative. Haley noted that several LEAs—including Garfield, Eureka City Schools, Mattole, Big Lagoon, Jacoby Creek, Pacific Union, Klamath Trinity, and Del Norte—still need to appoint members. She has sent reminders and encouraged anyone with interested parents to share the CAC brochure or connect them with her directly. The group approved its updated Mission and Vision statement, which will be posted online, and welcomed guest Nancy Bridenbaugh, who shared plans for a "Finger Spelling" training to support the local Deaf community.

8.3.3 Special Education Administrators Advisory Committee (SEAAC) Report

First official meeting of the year will take place on October 30th. Haley shared that SEAAC is continuing to grow, we now have 21 members from 18 LEAs who are invited to each meeting. Our goal for the year with SEAAC is to continue looking at our SELPA policies and procedures, but to mainly focus on CDE monitoring and best practices related to all things IEP related.

9.0 COMMUNICATIONS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

None

10.0 FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- AB602
- Policy Updates
- Therapeutic Learning Classroom

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- Allowable Cost Matrix
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11.0 ADJOURNMENT

10:40