

COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC) FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION

September 15th, 2026 ~ 12:PM

Present: Haley Jones (SELPA), Krsitina Suarez (SELPA), Cassie Michel (parent - Ferndale), Amy King (parent - Hydesville), DeAnn Waldvogel (parent - Blue Lake), Emily Walker (parent - Fortuna), Jae Wood (parent - Pacific Union), Trevor Hammons (parent - Arcata High)

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Haley at 12:05

2.0 PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS

Haley asked if anyone had public comment on agenda items. There were none. Cassie asked Haley to provide an overview of the SELPA and CAC to new attendees.

Haley provided an overview of SELPAs, the local SELPA, and its role for new attendees. An overview of Community Advisory Committees (CACs) was shared.

The CAC is primarily composed of family members of students with disabilities, while also benefiting from participation and input from community organizations, agencies, and service providers.

3.0 INFORMATION/ACTION ITEMS

3.1 Voting for Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary

Haley shared that a voting form will be sent after the meeting as per the Chair request and bylaws. Members should watch for an email and note that a write-in option will be available.

As a reminder, Bylaws indicate that nominations occur at the last meeting of the year. Nominations brought forward during the May 2026 meeting:

- Chair: Cassie Michel
- Vice Chair: Trevor Hammons
- Secretary: Amy King

3.2 Goal focus for 26/27 School Year

Discussion centered around identifying a primary CAC goal for the year.

Key considerations included: Ensuring representation across all SELPA regions., including community partners and supporting agencies, reinforcing the importance of consistent attendance at CAC meetings, continuing SELPA outreach and tabling efforts.

Additional discussion: Beginning in 2024-25, districts were asked to send representatives to CAC meetings on a rotating basis to promote equitable district representation. Several districts are scheduled for participation this year and have already been contacted. Participation is not limited to districts currently in the rotation.

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SELPA has successfully tabled at multiple Back-to-School Night events. Materials are prepared and easy to bring to additional events. Ideas for recruitment included: Placing CAC flyers in Resource Rooms. Sharing CAC information during IEP meetings.

Calendar of Events: Members discussed maintaining an active CAC calendar as a primary goal for the year. Ideas included:

- Hosting the calendar on the newly updated SELPA website.
- Creating a dedicated CAC calendar similar to the existing professional development calendar.
- Providing editing access to SELPA staff and CAC leadership (Chair/Vice Chair).
- Using a traditional calendar view for easier navigation.
- Including direct links to event websites, flyers, and registration information.
- Identifying and promoting parent training opportunities and topics of interest.
- Utilizing school communication apps to advertise events to families.
- Using color-coding to distinguish opportunities for: Families, Educators, Related professionals, Other groups

Consensus: **The Calendar of Events appears to be the primary CAC focus for 2026-27.**

Community Presentations: The CAC will continue inviting community organizations to present information on programs, resources, and services. Cassie will attend the statewide SELPA training, "From Compliance to Results" with Dr. David Bateman, on January 26, 2027, and provide a report back to the CAC. Members discussed strengthening connections with:

- Redwood Coast Regional Center (RCRC), whose attendance has been inconsistent despite regular invitations.
- Special Beginnings, as many families connect with services there early in their child's journey.

Additional Ideas

- Host an in-person CAC gathering.
- Explore the development of a social media presence for the CAC.

3.3 CAC 26/27 Schedule

Google Invites have been sent. Upcoming Meetings:

- November 17th, 2026
- February 23th, 2027
- April 20th, 2027

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3.4 Highlights from 25/26 School Year

Haley mentioned that at this meeting and future meetings we will have an item for highlights from the time between meetings. The following highlights were shared:

Community Events: DHH BBQ was well attended. Signing Santa event was well attended and continues to be an annual tradition.

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR): Requests for support and assistance doubled compared to the previous year. Increased utilization may indicate improved awareness and communication regarding SELPA services and supports.

Trainings and Outreach: SELPA provided training opportunities in:

- American Sign Language (ASL)
- Behavior supports

Additional highlights: Increased requests from districts for SELPA participation at local events. Continued expansion of SELPA outreach and visibility.

4.0 AGENCY SHARING/REPORTS

4.1 [Redwood Reading Alliance](#)

The Redwood Coast Reading Alliance was invited but unable to attend.

The organization serves as a resource and information hub for students with dyslexia and their families.

5.0 OTHER TOPICS FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION AND/OR AGENDA ADDITIONS

Ongoing Priorities

- Continue development of CAC goal(s), with an emphasis on the Calendar of Events.
- Continue member recruitment efforts.

Potential Future Topics

- ASL supports and training in schools (Jae may have contacts to support this work).
- Special Olympics presentation.
- Trainings for paraprofessionals offered through SELPA.
- Parent volunteer training opportunities.
- Cassie's report from the January 26, 2027 "From Compliance to Results" training at the February CAC meeting.
- Play Street presentation:
 - Jae and Emily will coordinate with Play Street and aim to present at the November 17 meeting.
 - Play Street is launching a Moms Night Out program on the third Friday of each month.
 - The current suggested participation fee is \$20, though organizers are pursuing funding to cover costs.
 - Play Street also received funding for a DHH pumpkin patch trip.

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- Parent and special needs parent support groups and available opportunities.
- Additional topics as identified.

Potential Future CAC Guests

- Humboldt Autism Alliance
- Changing Tides (a regular participant during the 2025-26 school year)
- Redwood Coast Regional Center (RCRC)
- Special Beginnings

6.0 ADJOURNMENT