



## **Special Education Committee 2024-25 Year in Review**

### **Meeting Dates:**

Meetings occurred on the 1st Wednesday of every other month unless stated otherwise. Time: 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. - Please click a date to view a recording of the meeting or to access the materials.

[September 11, 2024](#)

[November 6, 2024](#)

[January 22, 2025](#)

[March 5, 2025](#)

[May 7, 2025](#)

### **Topics Discussed:**

#### **September 11, 2024**

Division of Special Education Listen and Learn Campaign

Division of Special Education Updates

#### **November 6, 2024**

Diploma with Alternate Assessment

Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) for Students with Disabilities: Supporting Twice-Exceptional Students

Magnet Opportunities for Students with Disabilities

#### **January 22, 2025**

Parent and Community Engagement Opportunities for Families of Students with Disabilities

Early Childhood Special Education

## **March 5, 2025**

World Down Syndrome Awareness Day and World Autism Awareness Month

Empowering Students with Disabilities: The Role of Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) and Assistive Technology (AT) in Communication and Learning

## **May 7, 2025**

Division of Special Education Listen and Learn Campaign: Summary and Action Steps

## **Major Highlights:**

**9/11/24** - The Special Education Division hosted focus groups to inform its practice, with public input from teachers, parents, students, local agencies, and others during September to collect qualitative information on how it might improve the Special Education process - the findings were made public in November.

**9/11/24** - The Division shared information regarding the opening of schools for the 2024-25 school year with over 6,000,000 service minutes delivered to students, 734 IEP team meetings held, and 603 transit service requests were completed along with APEIS Leadership Academy taking place July 29-31 over the summer.

**11/6/24** - The Division shared updates and requirements for the Diploma with Alternate Assessment program, which affords students with cognitive disabilities who take an alternate assessment the opportunity to earn a high school diploma.

**11/6/24** - About 4.6% of gifted students are students with disabilities who receive differentiated instruction and benefit from engaging with other gifted students to enhance their experiences in these programs. Students with disabilities are found to be twice exceptional in academics, arts, math, and many other subjects.

**1/22/25** - Parent and community engagement is conducted through virtual workshops bi-monthly during October, December, February, and April, with each session lasting 75 minutes each.

**1/22/25** - Early Childhood Special Education covers children from birth to age 3 and emphasizes natural environments, meanwhile providing important services for families.

**3/5/25** - Down Syndrome affects 1 in 700 babies in the US, and the district has taken part in the With Us Not For Us Campaign, where the Down Syndrome community calls for respect and advocacy towards their individuality.

**3/5/25** - 1 in 36 children are identified with autism, according to the Centers for Disease Control, and it is four times more common in boys than in girls - The District works with UC Davis Mind Institute on Modules for various languages.

**3/5/25** - The District's Language and Speech Program (LAS) provides over 700 speech-language pathology services and speech-language pathology assistants.

**5/7/25** - 31 focus group sessions held across the district that included parents, teachers, educational partners like the Community Advisory Committee, Special Education Committee, and others.

### **Recommendations**

- The implementation of clear guidelines or plans to implement a service for a student that also assesses their advancement through the Division of Special Education's Listen and Learn Campaign.
- Priority enrollment for students with disabilities, particularly students with deafness, for magnet programs to advance equitable access.
- Training for general education teachers must be expanded to incorporate special education students into the general education setting.
- Creating a system to bring general education into special education instead of special education acclimating to general education.
- Explore the development of Career and Technical Education pathways for special education and deaf students.
- Ensuring that the IEP process incorporates continuous points of engagement with students.
- Develop strategies for recruitment and retention of paraeducators and special education teachers.

### **Acknowledgments:**

Ms. Silvia Martinez, Board District 3, Chief of Staff

Mr. Zimri Padilla, Board District 3, Policy Director

Ms. Rosa Jimenez, Board District 5, Chief of Staff

Ms. Genesis Coronado, Board District 5, Policy Director

Mr. Anthony Aguilar, Chief of Special Education, Equity, and Access

Dr. Jose Soto, Interim Director of Special Education

Ms. Alesha Haase, Administrator of Instruction, Division of Special Education

Ms. Deneen Cox, Deputy General Counsel of the Office of General Counsel