



Soquel Elementary School District

**Special Education Review
Regarding the**

North Santa Cruz County SELPA

May 26, 2010



CSIS California School Information Services

May 26, 2010

Kathleen Howard, Superintendent
Soquel Union Elementary School District
620 Monterey Avenue
Capitola, CA95010

Dear Superintendent Howard:

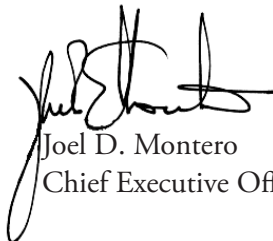
In February 2010, the Soquel Union Elementary School District entered into an agreement with the Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team (FCMAT) for a special education review regarding the North Santa Cruz County SELPA.

FCMAT's study agreement with the district specifies that FCMAT will perform the following:

1. SELPA
 - A. Review allocation funding model and compare with other comparable SELPAs and make recommendations, if necessary to improve equitable allocations to all involved.
 - B. Review governance structure of SELPA and make recommendations for improving communication, transparency and improved decision making.
 - C. Review regionalized dollars and they are disseminated.
 - D. Review role and responsibilities of program specialists, how they are assigned. Make recommendations on how to improve and maximize program specialist dollars and services.
 - E. Review how districts operate collaboratively within the SELPA with regards to accessing resources and support.
 - F. Review how staff development is provided to district staff on an equal basis throughout the county.
 - G. Review SELPA policies to assure they are current and consistent with federal and state laws.

This report details the study team's findings and recommendations. Thank you for allowing us to serve you, and please give our regards to all the employees of the Soquel Union Elementary School District and the members of the North Santa Cruz County SELPA.

Sincerely,



Joel D. Montero
Chief Executive Officer

FCMAT

Joel D. Montero, Chief Executive Officer

1300 17th Street - CITY CENTRE, Bakersfield, CA 93301-4533 • Telephone 661-636-4611 • Fax 661-636-4647
422 Petaluma Blvd North, Suite. C, Petaluma, CA 94952 • Telephone: 707-775-2850 • Fax: 707-775-2854 • www.fcmat.org
Administrative Agent: Christine L. Frazier - Office of Kern County Superintendent of Schools



Table of Contents

Foreword	3
Introduction	5
Executive Summary	9
Findings and Recommendations	11
Allocation Funding Model.....	11
Regional Programs.....	23
Alternative Funding Models.....	25
SELPA Governance Services	29
Regionalized Dollars/Program Specialists	35
District Collaboration	37
SELPA Policies	43
Staffing and Caseloads	47
County Office and Regional Program Staffing.....	49
One-to-One Instructional Aides	53
Nonpublic Schools/Agencies.....	55
Transfer of Programs.....	57
Transportation.....	61
Appendices	67



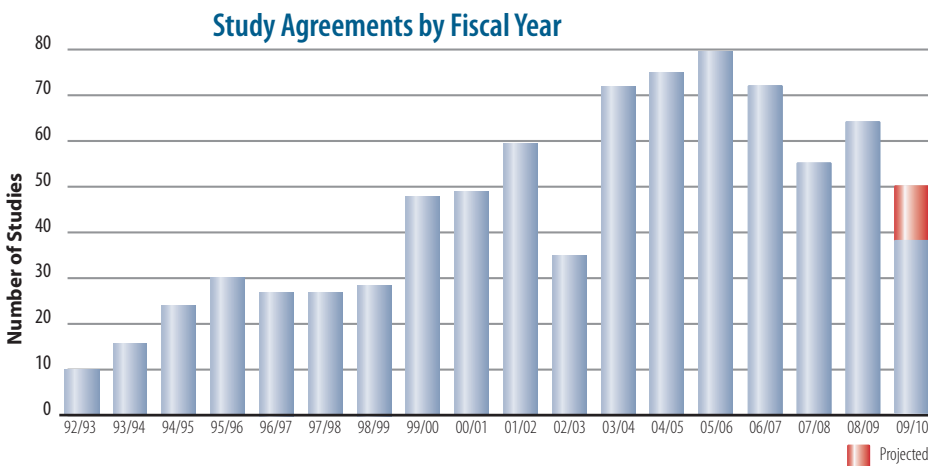
Foreword - FCMAT Background

The Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team (FCMAT) was created by legislation in accordance with Assembly Bill 1200 in 1992 as a service to assist local educational agencies (LEAs) in complying with fiscal accountability standards.

AB 1200 was established from a need to ensure that LEAs throughout California were adequately prepared to meet and sustain their financial obligations. AB 1200 is also a statewide plan for county offices of education and school districts to work together on a local level to improve fiscal procedures and accountability standards. The legislation expanded the role of the county office in monitoring school districts under certain fiscal constraints to ensure these districts could meet their financial commitments on a multiyear basis. AB 2756 provides specific responsibilities to FCMAT with regard to districts that have received emergency state loans. These include comprehensive assessments in five major operational areas and periodic reports that identify the district's progress on the improvement plans.

In January 2006, SB 430 (charter schools) and AB 1366 (community colleges) became law and expanded FCMAT's services to those types of LEAs.

Since 1992, FCMAT has been engaged to perform nearly 750 reviews for local educational agencies, including school districts, county offices of education, charter schools and community colleges. Services range from fiscal crisis intervention to management review and assistance. FCMAT also provides professional development training. The Kern County Superintendent of Schools is the administrative agent for FCMAT. The agency is guided under the leadership of Joel D. Montero, Chief Executive Officer, with funding derived through appropriations in the state budget and a modest fee schedule for charges to requesting agencies.



Total Number of Studies.....	743
Total Number of Districts in CA.....	1,050
Management Assistance.....	705 (94.886%)
Fiscal Crisis/Emergency	38 (5.114%)
Note: Some districts had multiple studies.	
Eight (8) districts have received emergency loans from the state.	
(Rev. 12/8/09)	

Introduction

Background

Located in the city of Capitola, the North Santa Cruz County Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) works with school districts and other public agencies in Santa Cruz County to provide a full range of special education services.

The SELPA is composed of 13 local educational agencies (LEAs) including one high school district, two unified school districts, seven elementary school districts, two charter schools and the Santa Cruz County Office of Education. The SELPA operates under a joint powers agreement that establishes the Special Education Coordinating Agency (SECA) Governing Council as the administrative body.

In February 2010, the SELPA requested that FCMAT assist the district by reviewing district and county special education programs and services. The state fiscal crisis has raised concerns among SELPA members about the excess costs of special education programs for districts and the county office. Districts are concerned about a lack of openness and misunderstandings regarding the SELPA funding allocation plan from the SELPA. The study agreement specifies that FCMAT will perform the following:

1. SELPA
 - A. Review the allocation funding model and compare with other comparable SELPAs and make recommendations, if necessary to improve equitable allocations to all involved.
 - B. Review the governance structure of SELPA and make recommendations for improving communication, transparency and improved decision-making.
 - C. Review regionalized dollars and how they are disseminated.
 - D. Review role and responsibilities of program specialists, how they are assigned. Make recommendations on how to improve and maximize program specialist dollars and services.
 - E. Review how districts operate collaboratively in the SELPA with regards to accessing resources and support.
 - F. Review how staff development is provided to district staff on an equal basis throughout the county.
 - G. Review the SELPA policies to assure they are current and consistent with federal and state laws.
2. Review staffing and caseloads of programs and make recommendations on efficiency. Review all COE programs, and random sample of some district programs.
3. Review the one-to-one aide policy, procedures and staffing ratios and determine whether process is effective and make recommendations to improve efficiency and effective use of assigned aides to special education.

4. Review NPS and NPA placements and make recommendations for improving process for placement.
5. Review COE operated programs and determines whether some programs would be more cost effective if operated by districts. Determine capacity of districts to operated additional programs (such as facilities, staffing etc)
6. Provide comprehensive transportation review of special education transportation delivery system.

Study Team

The study team was composed of the following members:

William P. Gillaspie, Ed.D
FCMAT Chief Management Analyst
Sacramento, CA

JoAnn Murphy
FCMAT Consultant
Santee, CA

Leonel Martínez
FCMAT Public Information Specialist
Bakersfield, CA

Trina Frazier*
Administrator
Fresno County SELPA
Fresno, CA

James “Sarge” Kennedy
FCMAT Consultant
Red Bluff, CA

Timothy W. Purvis*
Director, Transportation
Poway Unified School District
Poway, CA

Michael G. Rea*
Executive Director
West County Transportation Agency
Santa Rosa, CA

*As members of this study team, these consultants were not representing their respective employers but were working solely as independent contractors for FCMAT.

Study Guidelines

FCMAT visited the North Santa Cruz County SELPA March 15-18, 2010 to conduct interviews, collect data and review documents. This report is the result of those activities and is divided into the following sections:

- I. Executive Summary
- II. Allocation Funding Model
- III. Regional Programs
- IV. Alternative Funding Models
- V. SELPA Governance Structure
- VI. Regionalized Dollars/Program Specialists
- VII. District Collaboration

- VIII. Staff Development
- IX. SELPA Policies
 - X. Staffing and Caseloads
 - XI. One-to-One Instructional Aides
- XII. Nonpublic Schools/Agencies
- XIII. Transfer of Programs
- XIV. Transportation

Executive Summary

The North Santa Cruz County SELPA requested that the Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team (FCMAT) provide a comprehensive study of the SELPA and county office programs and services for students with disabilities. During the team's interviews on site, the superintendent, SELPA director, county office staff, members of the Special Education Coordinating Agency Governing Council, and parents provided information and perspective on all aspects of programs and services these students.

In January 1974, the California State Board of Education adopted the California Master Plan for Special Education to help develop an equitable funding model for special education services. The study reviewed in detail each guiding principle adopted in the California Master Plan for Special Education, which provides the foundation for the SELPA. FCMAT found that there is a prevailing stance among SELPA members that students with severe disabilities should not attend regular school sites. This is contrary to the guiding principle that supports joint ownership and responsibility for all students that live in the SELPA.

The funding model includes some inequities, and a wide variance among participating agencies suggests that the allocation of state support funds may not be fair and equitable. This conflicts with the guiding principle that no SELPA members accrue undue benefit at the expense of other members. These types of funding inequities are further compounded by a lack of openness and effective communication. This has diminished trust between the SELPA and its district and county office members.

The SELPA combines the fee-for-service model with one that funds the costs of regional programs before distributing resources to local educational agencies, sometimes known as "off-the-top" funding. Given SELPA demographics, the current funding model is the most effective possible. The SELPA should use the current allocation model to implement greater protections for members.

The SELPA operates under a joint powers agreement that establishes the Special Education Coordinating Agency (SECA) Governing Council as the administrative body. FCMAT heard numerous reports of frustration over the lack of communication in the governance structure. This lack is prevalent among members of governing council, Special Education Council and chief business officials. Further, program and business members do not work collaboratively, hindering decision-making.

The SELPA has lacked consistent leadership for five years because of a high turnover of interim SELPA directors and the fact that the position was reduced to part-time status. This resulted in a series of inconsistent communications and articulation with SELPA members.

The current SELPA budget does not provide regionalized service dollars for program-specialist services to districts. The districts indicated they need support, particularly with problematic Individual Education Program (IEP) meetings. The governing council should determine whether program specialist support to districts should be provided.

FCMAT reviewed the staffing of special education programs at the Santa Cruz County Office of Education and a random sample of district programs. Some districts perceive that while they are making significant reductions in special education staffing, the county office is not making

The funding model includes some inequity, and a wide variance suggests that the allocation of state support funds may not be fair and equitable.

the same staffing reductions on a proportionate basis. Districts are mainly concerned with what they perceive as high support ratios in county office classrooms and high administrative ratios. FCMAT recommends a review and reduction in administrative staffing and program support.

District and county office programs increasingly use one-to-one instructional aides for students at all levels of programming. There is no industry standard to determine whether SELPA usage exceeds the standard of practice. The SELPA has administrative procedures for establishing the need for one-to-one aides; however, they are not used consistently. FCMAT found that the procedures lack clear guidelines on building independence and transitioning (“fading”) from the need for one-to-one support.

Six of the 13 local education agencies in the SELPA, including the county office, provide or contract for transportation service. However, these transportation programs operate independently of one another. The districts should explore ways to jointly provide services, stabilizing transportation costs. Communication between SELPA members regarding transportation services is inefficient and lacks openness. For example, the lack of a common calendar for county office programs and individual school districts exposes individual districts to increased costs. This is further complicated by the inability to stagger start and dismissal times for programs, which would increase efficiency and reduce program costs.

Compared to five other county offices, the Santa Cruz County Office of Education costs for education students with severe disabilities are normal. Districts should analyze the comparative data from these county offices to determine the effectiveness of program transfers. Districts should also build the appropriate infrastructures and provide teachers with training to ensure successful transition of severely handicapped programs.

Findings and Recommendations

Allocation Funding Model

In January 1974, the California State Board of Education adopted the California Master Plan for Special Education. While much has changed over the last 34 years, the underlying purpose of the fiscal model remains intact and provides excellent guidance. The objectives essential to building an equitable funding plan for special education are as follows:

1. **Provide adequate resources to assure equality of educational opportunity for all individuals with exceptional needs.**
2. **Provide levels of support for special education programs which will promote programs and services of equal quality.**
3. Provide encouragement for the development of comprehensive programs.
4. Promote both program and fiscal accountability.
5. Clarify fiscal relationships between state, county, and district.
6. **Ensure equity in support levels among various program components.**
7. Provide adjustments in support levels to reflect changing costs.
8. Provide support based on needs of pupils enrolled in special education—funding based on specified programs and services rather than on categorical disability groupings.
9. Ensure that reporting and auditing policies and procedures are meaningful for evaluation and program development.
10. Provide methods for monitoring and evaluating quality control in special education.

Source: California Master Plan for Special Education, California State Board of Education, Jan. 10, 1974, Pages 36-37. Emphasis added.

In defining a funding allocation model, Special Education Local Plan Areas (SELPA) should remember that these resources are not intended to fully fund the costs of providing special education programs and services.

The three objectives highlighted in bold are particularly relevant. In defining a funding allocation model, Special Education Local Plan Areas (SELPA) should remember that these resources are *not* intended to fully fund the costs of providing special education programs and services. The four sources for funding special education programs and services are as follows:

- Local support from the general unrestricted funds of school districts.
- Revenues from local property taxes levied for special education programs and services.
- State aid from Part 30 of the California Education Code, commencing at section 56000.
- Federal local assistance from the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

Part 30 of the Education Code provides for state aid, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) provides for federal local assistance. IDEA and state monitoring place the responsibility for providing special education services on the district of residence. When defining a funding allocation model, a SELPA should therefore remember that it is allocating funds intended to equitably ease the financial burden on districts, not to fully fund the costs of providing special education programs and services. The primary responsibility for funding these programs and services belongs to LEAs.

The key to an equitable funding model is understanding the relationship between the level of funding allocated and the relative cost to each entity of providing similar services. The average rate of total expenditure per student and the average level of local contribution per student will reflect this information. A local contribution that is absent or low could suggest an overallocation of state and federal resources. Conversely, a high local contribution could suggest that state and federal resources have been underallocated.

Given the intent of state and federal policy makers in providing these funds, mitigation of the fiscal burden should be considered in terms of equity rather than equality, and might include factors such as the following:

- Providing special education services in the least-restrictive environment (LRE).
- Responsiveness to changing demographics and service needs.
- Consideration of geographic and demographic factors that could adversely affect the costs of providing very similar services among the school districts
- Determining who will have primary responsibility for providing programs and services, based on the disability and the intensity of services required.
- Establishing cost factors for various disabling conditions based on their service needs.
- Considering factors such as socioeconomic and bilingual/bicultural populations that may contribute to higher special education costs.
- Comparing the cost effectiveness of alternative strategies.

Closely monitoring funding equity will help align the fiscal model with the uses intended for state and federal funds. The focus will be on alleviating the impact of excess costs based on factors that may increase those costs.

A primary focus of this study is the degree to which the allocation model meets these guiding principles, the adequacy of the allocation model, and recommendations for changes that could address the concerns of SELPA members.

The SELPA model for allocating state and federal fiscal resources is predicated on the following guiding principles:

Guiding Principle One

SELPA members agree that all children with exceptional needs residing in this SELPA should be appropriately served.

The SELPA member districts generally agree with this principle. However, some districts believe that disabled children should not attend regular schools, particularly those with severe disabilities. Others perceive that they have little or no responsibility for disabled students attending programs operated on regular school sites by the county office.

The SELPA should include in the first principle a statement that *all* SELPA members are jointly responsible for all disabled students that live in the SELPA. This principle should also state that students with disabilities are legally required to have equal access to the services and programs they require regardless of their location in the SELPA.

The following is a prototype developed from the guiding principles of several other SELPAs:

It is incumbent on each LEA member and its respective staff to take ownership of the responsibility to ensure a free and appropriate education for each special education pupil residing in the geographical boundaries of the SELPA. This responsibility shall be met by direct provision of services, establishing an agreement with another public education agency, or contracting with nonpublic school and agencies. The allocation plan for distribution of resources must recognize the collective and individual responsibility for all children in the SELPA while addressing the need to equitably share resources among the districts and county office of education.

The intent of this principle is not fully demonstrated throughout the SELPA.

Recommendations

The SELPA should:

1. Consider revising the guiding principle's wording to include language that supports joint ownership and responsibility on the part of all SELPA members for all students with disabilities residing in the SELPA
2. Consider conducting disability awareness activities throughout the SELPA annually to help staff and students understand the nature and effects of various disabilities.

Guiding Principle Two

In order to deliver appropriate services to all students, the SELPA members believe in everyone working together as a team for the good of all. The cooperation of the business offices and program departments is critical. Where appropriate and cost effective to do so, efforts will be made to operate services in a SELPA-wide coordinated fashion.

Based on interviews with a variety of program and business staff, a close collaboration between program and business representatives does not function as intended by this principle.

The SELPA assigned an AB602 committee to implement this principle. While the AB602 meetings were intended to involve both program and business personnel in the discussion of programmatic needs and provide the Special Education Coordinating Agency (SECA) with recommendations, there have been very few recent meetings.

The SELPA should have an operations oversight committee composed of key program and business staff members so issues can be fully explored and discussed. The recent decision regarding the use of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds to expand the autism program would have greatly benefited from committee review. If program and business staff members have not thoroughly vetted programmatic issues before they are presented to SECA for action, the result can be long-term fiscal commitments.

Recommendation

The SELPA should:

1. Consider reactivating the AB602 committee as an operations oversight body that helps develop regional program budgets, reviews proposals before they are submitted to SECA for action, and provides SECA with the advantages and disadvantages of a proposal from the programmatic and fiscal perspectives.

Guiding Principle Three

Fairness and equity shall be the basis of the development of this Funding Allocation Plan.

Staff members expressed concern about the equitability of the funding model. While equity and fairness are often based on whether an equal amount of revenue is allocated to each member, a more accurate measure is the level of SELPA support of the special education services required by each local education agency (LEA) member.

A review of information included in the maintenance-of-effort (MOE) documents indicates that the funding model has some inequity. There is considerable disparity among SELPA members regarding the percentage of expenditures from combined state and local funds, represented by expenditures from local-only funds. This suggests that some members may receive an inequitable share of AB602 funds.

Using MOE data for the 2008-09 school year, the level of local support requirements shows considerable variance among members regarding the proportion of total special education expenditures and combined state and local expenditures that derive from local support funds. The following table ranks the members based on the percentage of combined state and local expenditures represented by local funds:

Ranking of Members Based on the Percentage of Combined State and Local Expenditures Represented by Local Funds

District	Local as % of Total Expenditure	Local as % of State/Local Expenditure
Bonny Doon	79.50%	83.37%
Santa Cruz City Schools	65.07%	75.51%
Scotts Valley	66.31%	74.09%
Live Oak	51.10%	58.97%
Soquel	50.32%	57.77%
Pacific	49.30%	55.12%
San Lorenzo Valley	40.20%	46.37%
Delta	37.01%	37.01%
Mountain	26.57%	30.36%
Happy Valley	25.66%	28.52%
Pacific Collegiate Charter	0.00%	0.00%
NSCCO Composite	45.01%	50.16%

This wide variance indicates that the allocation of state support funds may not be fair and equitable for all participating agencies. However, further analysis is suggested to determine whether this is a result of external factors such as demographics, geography, or socioeconomic indicators or internal differences such as salary rates, benefit agreements, or staffing ratios. The current allocation model may not sufficiently consider factors that cause some districts to provide significantly greater funding contribution from their own internal funds than other districts.

Recommendation

The SELPA should:

1. Assign a committee such as the operations oversight committee to review the expenditure budgets of districts showing higher levels of support from local funds. This review should help determine whether the factors affecting that support are external such as demography, geography, socioeconomic indicators, (or language issues) or internal differences that stem from decisions made by the district regarding salaries, programs, benefits and staffing. Exceptions to the allocation model should be developed to address identified external factors.

Guiding Principle Four

Federal and state revenues will flow directly from the state to the SELPA Administrative Unit, which is currently the Soquel USD. The administrative Unit will allocate the funds to SELPA members according to this Funding Allocation Plan.

This principle is being followed in accordance with the plan. While it may not be practical, the SELPA could elect to inform the California Department of Education (CDE) of the percentage of AB 602 revenue each entity is to receive and have the state funding sent directly to the district.

Recommendation

The SELPA should:

1. Refer only to the SELPA administrative unit and not specifically to the current provider of that service.

Guiding Principle Five

SELPA member districts will retain their own decision making on how to use their funds in serving special education students based on needs outlined in their Individualized Education Program (IEP).

This principle raises some concern because it suggests that funds received through the allocation model are the property of the receiving LEA, and other SELPA members have little or no say regarding how these funds are implemented. Since the SELPA is a JPA, the concept that the state and federal funding is communal funding suggests a different perspective.

This principle emphasizes ownership and sovereignty of state and federal resources provided to help offset the excess costs associated with providing special education services for disabled students.

Recommendation

The SELPA should:

1. Consider adopting language that emphasizes the communal nature of the funding. The following prototypes found in the guiding principles of other SELPAs may provide some guidance::

It should be kept in mind that these are “communal monies” intended *to assist in paying the excess costs* of providing special education services and are not the “private property” of the recipient. Each member has a legitimate stake in the equitability of the allocations and in how cost-effectively other members use the resources.

The guiding principle should be that no member receives undue benefit at the expense of other members. The allocation model must be fair, equitable, and understandable to all members.

Guiding Principle Six

This Funding Allocation Plan will be kept as simple as possible and yet be flexible and useful in serving special education students.

While the allocation model can be described as simple and flexible, it is not well understood by most program and business staff members. Its simplicity may limit its flexibility.

Insufficient source information on the part of the SELPA members and the primary regional program providers results in confusion and distrust.

The allocation model funds the costs of regional programs before distributing the funding to local education agencies, often known as the “off-the-top” approach.” This funding is based on calculated fees for service. The SELPA’s method is to calculate each district’s share of the total revenue based on its K-12 enrollment.

The total costs of the regional programs are divided in two equal amounts for each program. One amount is funded by a deduction from each local education agency’s share of the revenue based on the respective K-12 enrollments. This funds half the cost of regional programs by pro-rating them over all SELPA members.

The other amount is funded by a deduction from each local education agency’s share of the revenue based on the number of students that the agency has enrolled in the regional programs. This funds the other half of the cost of regional programs based on participation.

Interviews with superintendents, special education administrators, and business personnel from several districts indicate they are more concerned about understanding how county office regionalized programs costs are funded than about the allocation model. Although Santa Cruz City Schools operates two regional programs, no one expressed concern about the costs of those programs.

The model for providing this information and the relevant presentation forms are included in the procedural section of the allocation model, but the procedure is not followed.

Recommendations

The SELPA should:

1. Ensure that regional program operators clearly present the costs of the program so that other SELPA members can fully understand this issue.

A suggested format is included in the allocation model and should minimally include the following:

- A list of staff members, individual full-time equivalencies, individual salaries and individual benefits costs by job classification

- Nonsalary and nonbenefit costs by object code
 - Allocated support costs listed by type of support
 - Calculation of indirect costs
2. List revenue by description type. All revenue streams should be included, especially those allocated from sources beyond restricted special education funds.
 3. Consider requesting that the governance council approve a format that could be used to calculate what the actual cost per pupil was in 2008-09, apply it to the current year, and use it to project 2010-11 effects.

Guiding Principle Seven

The distribution of funding will be understandable, predictable, and timely.

Interviews with LEA staff members indicate that the allocation model has not met the standard expressed by this principle. Business and program staff members repeatedly stated they do not understand the model.

The resources are allocated based on each district's proportionate share of the total ADA in the SELPA. Once allocated, they are reduced to fund regional programs. The lack of understanding focuses on what constitutes funding for regional programs. A presentation on this topic by the county office internal business staff could increase comprehension.

The SELPA fiscal analyst should not be a co-presenter for this information. The analyst's role should be to interpret for the SELPA members how these costs will affect them and estimate any alternatives to regional services.

Recommendation

The SELPA should:

1. Ensure that the regional program operators clearly present the costs of the program so other SELPA members clearly understand this issue. The information should be developed with the inclusion of an operations oversight committee and presented by the regional program manager and an internal business staff member from the agency providing the information; however, the SELPA fiscal should not be responsible for presenting this information to SELPA members.
2. Assign the SELPA fiscal analyst to present the effects of the information on the SELPA members and suggest variances that might mitigate those effects.

Guiding Principle Eight

SELPA members will commit to timely reporting and analysis of all relevant data necessary for the allocation and distribution of funds.

Data is often not received within the time lines. Further, the quality of the data analysis varies based on the clarity of the information presented. This principle is not being followed by all SELPA members.

Recommendation

The SELPA should:

1. Ensure that SELPA members commit to timely reporting and analysis of all relevant data and information. This material should clearly show the basis and implications of the information on allocation and distribution of funds.

Guiding Principle Nine

This Funding Allocation Plan will be in legal compliance with federal and state laws.

There are no specific state or federal laws governing the local plan for the allocation of state and federal funds other than those requiring SELPAS to have a plan. Without any specific restriction, the funding allocation plan complies with this principle and is being followed by all SELPA members.

Recommendation

The SELPA should:

1. Continue following its funding allocation plan practices to maintain compliance with federal and state laws.

Guiding Principle 10

Disputes regarding this Funding Allocation Plan will be resolved at the lowest level possible with final appeal to SECA.

FCMAT was not made aware of any specific disputes regarding the implementation of the funding allocation plan that required resolution.

Recommendation

The SELPA should:

1. Continue the practice of resolving disputes at the lowest level possible.

Guiding Principle 11

Provide technical assistance and program support to districts to ensure effective service delivery to students and families by SELPA, COE or districts.

As regionalized services declined, the capability of all entities to provide such technical assistance suffered. This guiding principal should be removed from the list as it focuses on programmatic support and not the allocation of fiscal resources.

Recommendation

The SELPA should:

1. Consider removing this principle from the guiding principles

Guiding Principle 12

Provide an incentive for districts not to overidentify students for special education services.

The funding allocation plan has no specific elements that serve as an incentive for providing cost-effective programs.

Regarding the provision of an emergency pool from which direct-service districts may seek assistance for new placements in a certified nonpublic school, there is no incentive to place students in a nonpublic school. The inability to draw resources from this pool for ongoing placements serves as an incentive to provide public school alternatives to nonpublic schools.

Basing 50 percent of the support for regional programs on participation provides an incentive for school districts to develop more cost-effective alternatives. As a result, the allocation model does not appear to have any specific incentives or disincentive for providing cost-effective programs.

Recommendation

The SELPA should:

1. Consider factors that might serve as an incentive to encourage districts to provide cost-effective programs for their students with disabilities instead of sending them to regional programs.

Guiding Principle 13

Provide no incentive for districts to over-identify students for special education services.

The funding allocation model distributes funds based on K-12 population data and is not determined by the numbers of identified disabled students. It is not necessary to include this as a guiding principle of the allocation plan.

Recommendation

The SELPA should:

1. Consider omitting this principle from the guiding principles of the SELPA.

Guiding Principle 14

Recognize that districts have been and will need to continue contributing special education revenue limits and general fund contributions to cover special education costs.

An analysis of the SELPA's funding allocation model found that it assumes fiscal support for special education from local resources.

As the state proceeds to implement the IDEA excess-cost requirement, the funding allocation model will probably need to address that issue.

CFR, Title 34 specifies that Part B funds can be used only to pay the excess costs of providing special education services as follows:

§300.202 Use of amounts.

(a) General. Amounts provided to the LEA under Part B of the Act—

- (1) Must be expended in accordance with the applicable provisions of this part;
- (2) Must be used only to pay the excess cost of providing special education and related services to children with disabilities, consistent with paragraph (b) of this section; and

(3) Must be used to supplement State, local, and other Federal funds and not to supplant those funds.

“(b) Excess cost requirement.

(1) General.

(i) The excess cost requirement prevents an LEA from using funds provided under Part B of the Act to pay for all of the costs directly attributable to the education of a child with a disability, subject to paragraph (b)(1)(ii) of this section.

“(2)(i) An LEA meets the excess cost requirement if it has spent at least a minimum average amount for the education of its children with disabilities before funds under Part B of the Act are used.

IDEA also defines excess cost as follows:

§ 300.16 “excess cost”

“Excess cost” means those costs that are in excess of the average annual per student expenditure in an LEA during the preceding school year for an elementary school or secondary school student, as may be appropriate, and that must be computed after deducting—

(a) Amounts received—

(1) Under Part B of the Act; (IDEA)

(2) Under Part A of title I of the ESEA; and

(3) Under Parts A and B of title III of the ESEA and;

In summary, IDEA requires an average per-pupil expenditure amount to be calculated for elementary students and a similar amount for secondary students.

Total expenditures are those from *all* funds, excluding expenditures for the following:

- Capital outlay (Objects 6001-6999)
- Debt service (Objects 7430-7439)

Federal, state, and local expenditures should be subtracted from that total for the following:

- IDEA (special education goals 5000-5999)
- ESEA Title 1 Part A (Resources 3010-3013, 3175-3178, and 7090)
- ESEA Title 3, Parts A and B (resources 4201-4250 and 7091)

The remainder should be divided by total elementary or secondary enrollment, as appropriate, (including disabled students to determine the elementary or secondary enrollment).

Calculations should be made separately for elementary and secondary students. Unified school districts may not use the same APPE for elementary and secondary students.

Once the APPE is determined for elementary students, it should be multiplied by the total number of elementary disabled students to determine the amount that must be spent in order for the expenditures to be excess-cost expenditures. The same formula applies for secondary students.

IDEA funds can be used only for those excess cost expenditures. EC Section 56836.04 seems to strongly suggest that AB602 funds can be used only for those excess cost expenditures as well.

56836.04. (a) The Superintendent continuously shall monitor and review all special education programs approved under this part to ensure that all funds appropriated to special education local plan areas under this part are expended for the purposes intended.

(b) Funds apportioned to special education local plan areas pursuant to this chapter are to assist local educational agencies to provide special education and related services to individuals with exceptional needs and shall be expended exclusively for programs operated under this part.

Recommendation

The SELPA should:

1. Modify the funding model as appropriate as the state proceeds to implement the IDEA excess-cost requirement.

Regional Programs

While school districts in several SELPAs provide regional special education services for students of other districts, most county office SELPAs including the North Santa Cruz County SELPA primarily give this responsibility to the county office. County offices have a unique role in SELPAs. They are the responsible agency for relatively few students, but are uniquely positioned to provide services for students with low-incidence disabilities, severe disabilities, and those with nonsevere disabilities who live in small, rural and/or sparsely populated areas. This is in accord with the statutory requirement that the county's local plan for special education ensure access to a free appropriate public education (FAPE) for all disabled students, regardless of where they live in the county. At the North Santa Cruz County SELPA, the responsibility for providing regional programs for the aurally impaired and those who require transition/work training experience belongs to Santa Cruz City Schools.

When the SELPA membership requests one or more of its member agencies to act as the provider of special education services to residents of their districts, they have the obligation of paying for those services. To minimize excess costs, the allocation model should ensure that the provider is not unduly burdened in carrying out this obligation.

Most California county offices historically provided services for students with severe and/or low-incidence disabilities because they were better situated to do so and had the authority to levy a property tax for this purpose before passage of Proposition 13. Property tax was maintained as a part of the funding model after the passage of Proposition 13 and the implementation of the Master Plan for Special Education in 1979.

Property tax revenues fund the special education programs and services provided by the county office. However, if tax revenues exceed the cost of providing those programs and services, the county office is to distribute the excess revenues to the local school districts participating in the SELPA. Some county offices have initiated a fee-for-service model that allocates all revenues, including the property tax funds. This allows the districts to provide the services on their own or to contract with the county office.

The four ways of paying for programs and services provided by one agency for another are as follows:

- Payment can be made up front on some agreed basis.
- Payment can be made on an as-you-go basis throughout the year.
- Payment can be made upon completion of the provision of services.
- Payment could involve any combination of the above methods.

Property tax revenues are usually treated as up-front payments to the county office for services it will provide.

In most multidistrict SELPAs, allocations of federal and/or state funds are set aside for the regional program providers. They are usually provided on an as-you-go basis, and regional program providers receive these funds in the same manner as the districts receive allocations of state and federal revenues.

Regional programs serve students whose disabilities result in especially labor-intensive services. For county office regional providers, these students are usually the most severe, requiring several services and considerable human interaction. An equitable allocation model considers these fac-

tors and provides increased funding. If the increase is not sufficient, excess costs will accrue, and the districts will be billed for those costs. If the increase is greater than warranted, the regional program provider will carry over the excess funds to the subsequent year. If the presence of these funds is not considered in the subsequent year's allocation design, the regional program provider will begin accruing a reserve. It may be prudent to have a reserve, but it should not become unduly large with an inequitable funding model that annually provides a regional program provider with more funds than needed.

Budgets for regional programs and services provided by the county office and Santa Cruz City Schools are developed, revised and monitored unilaterally by the county office and school staffs with little or no involvement from the affected school districts. The operating budgets of the regional program providers for students who live in member districts should not be determined unilaterally. The districts of residence pay the bill by providing a greater share of the state and federal resources to the regional program provider or by a combination of allocated resources and excess cost bill-backs. Therefore, the districts should have a responsible and responsive role in developing and implementing the regional program providers' budgets for special education.

Increasing the allocation to the regional program providers would reduce allocations to the districts for the direct provision of services, increasing the districts' local support costs. Excess cost bill-backs further reduce district resources. Cost-control measures are warranted, and all affected agencies should have a role in making those determinations. The relationship should be one of collaborative partnership. Since all funds allocated to all agencies are community monies, every district has an interest in whether others provide services cost effectively and in compliance with the law. The guiding principal should continue to be that no agency should accrue undue benefit at the expense of other agencies.

. Since all funds allocated to all agencies are community monies, every district has an interest in whether others provide services cost effectively and in compliance with the law.

The SELPA does not have a policy regarding the carryover of unused allocations from year to year. However, there is a procedure. The funding model does not allow any carryover of AB602 funds and is monitored by the SELPA. Any district that has AB602 revenue greater than its special education expenses will set up accounts payable at closing. In February, with the P-1 certification, these funds are redistributed with any adjustments in the annual certification for the previous year to districts with encroachment.

The allocation model provides for the projected costs of regional special education provided by the county office and Santa Cruz City Schools. Budgets for regionalized program services are unilaterally developed by the agency providing the regionalized program

The allocation plan does not discuss the carryover of unused funds, but includes a method for agencies to provide regional programs to return the excess funds of the districts of residence that provided them.

Recommendation

The SELPA should:

1. Review and revise policies on the disposition of unused funds from the operation of regional programs as appropriate.

Alternative Funding Models

Before designing a new AB 602 funding model, attention should be focused on the following:

- How services are to be planned and delivered.
- Who will provide services for students with low-incidence disabilities; students with severe disabilities; small populations of students in sparsely populated areas; and regional programs as alternatives to service provided in the home school, placement in a neighboring SELPA, or placement in a nonpublic school.
- How regional program providers will be held harmless so that they do not bear an undue burden by serving students who are the responsibility of other LEAs.
- What factors need to be considered in developing an equitable funding model in North Santa Cruz County Schools.
- Whether the current organizational structure meets the needs of the districts, the county office and students.
- The relative identification rates of students needing special education programs and services, and whether overidentification is occurring in the SELPA.

Most SELPAs transitioned to the AB602 funding model by developing a plan to allocate resources with hold-harmless effects. That is, district funding in 1998-99 would approximate the amount received in 1997-98. Distribution of state funds was usually based on average daily attendance, and federal funds were distributed based on the prior year's unduplicated pupil counts. Most SELPAs have revised their allocation models, many of them several times since 1999-2000.

Although they have many variations, the three formats generally used to allocate funds are as follows:

- Removing the total cost of providing regional program and allocating the remaining funds to the districts.
- Calculating an allocation for regional program providers and planning for the districts to fund the costs that exceed the allocation through bill-backs.
- Calculating the total cost of providing a regional program and using that cost to implement a fee-for-service model

There is a statewide trend toward a fee-for-service model. With this approach, all or most of the available state and federal resources are allocated to the districts, allowing them to determine whether they can provide more cost-effective services for their students on their own or with one or more other districts. They can also contract with a regional program provider for services based on an established fee structure. The North Santa Cruz County SELPA uses a variation of the allocation and fee-for-service models. Fees are established and applied to each district's allocation. Half are funded by relative enrollment and half by the numbers of students from each district.

The fee-for-service model is attractive to larger districts that have what they perceive as excessively high bill-backs from a county office. In this model, all revenues accrue to the districts including property taxes. They can opt to provide for their own students, collaborate with one or more districts to provide for some students, and/or contract with the county office to provide services for an established fee.

This model provides districts with greater control, but includes risks for the county office, other regional program providers and smaller districts with fewer resources to augment any allocation they receive. Protections should be implemented to ensure the enrollment in regional programs matches the projections used to determine the operating budgets and fees. These protections should also ensure that smaller districts have access to the regional programs their students may need and that the related fees are reasonable. The allocation model could also create a funding pool for smaller districts that may need them.

Because of Santa Cruz County's demographics, the current model may be the best. It spreads the cost between a neutral figure such as ADA or CBEDS and each district's actual enrollment in regional programs. This structure combines the best of both allocation models.

Staff interviews and a review of the data indicate that the procedures specified in the allocation plan's "Fundamental Elements of An Approved Cost Model" are effectively used. This document

Because of Santa Cruz County's demographics, the current model may be the best. It spreads the cost between a neutral figure such as ADA or CBEDS and each district's actual enrollment in regional programs

specifies the revenue elements considered in developing the regional program provider fee calculation. It also specifies the expenditures allowed in the fee-development process. Specific forms are included for presenting expenditure considerations. This information was unavailable for the current and prior years from either the county office or the district providing regional program services.

There is room for improvement in the process used to develop and submit this information to the SELPA for approval. Providers prepare a budget summary with the cost of regional provider programs. Other SELPA members are not involved in determining program needs and projected expenditures. The district submits its budget for approval, but the county office assigns the program administrator and the SELPA fiscal analyst to provide the county office budget summary. The SELPA fiscal analyst should not help present the county office budgets for regional programs based on best practices. The county office program administrator and internal business staff members should present that information. The SELPA fiscal analyst is a county office employee, but is not involved in developing these budgets and is not in a position to explain this information. The SELPA fiscal analyst's role is to provide

information to the SELPA membership on the affect of these budgets on SELPA members. The SELPA fiscal analyst should calculate the local fiscal support for the payment of fees by SELPA members. The analyst should also determine the member costs for any pooling of funds for various contingencies.

The SELPA should determine the regional programs with greater cost factors and those with students that could be better served by the district of residence. Proportional and use rates for more costly programs may be higher than rates for less-costly programs. Further, the division between proportional and usage support may differ for programs according to whether districts should be encouraged to develop their own programs. Some programs may consequently have zero percent proportional support and 100 percent usage support. Other programs may be 100 percent proportional and zero percent usage (such as low-incidence disabilities). Others might be divided by ratios of 25 to 75 percent, 33 to 67 percent, 50 to 50 percent or vice-versa.

The SELPA allocation model provides sufficient opportunities to protect all members from negative fiscal effects and sufficient flexibility to be altered as needs change.

Expenditure budgets for regional programs are developed unilaterally by the agency providing the regional service.

The method of determining service fees seems to be oversimplified. Treating all special class populations equally makes it impossible to determine true program costs or use a fee schedule with incentives and disincentives.

The SELPA has a pool to help districts that are defined by Education Code 14054(a) as direct-service address the initial costs of placements in certified nonpublic schools. If there are insufficient funds in the pool, claims are funded on a pro-rationed basis.

The section on maintenance of effort refers to the maintenance of combined state and local support funds. It does not mention the option of maintaining the level of support from local funds, which would sometimes benefit the SELPA. The language contains an outdated figure for the possibility of reducing the maintenance-of-effort requirement when federal funds are increased from one year to the next. Since 2004, IDEA has permitted up to 50% of any increase to be treated as local only for maintenance of effort if a like amount is expended for activities under ESEA. This was an increase from the 20% established in 1997 and currently specified in the allocation model. The section contains a segment on the SELPA as a whole demonstrating maintenance of effort, but does not discuss the SELPA's responsibility to monitor the maintenance of effort of the individual school districts.

The policy does not discuss the SELPA's responsibility to monitor the maintenance-of-effort of the individual school districts, but the SELPA financial analyst performs this function. This position regularly places special education maintenance of effort on the agenda of the district's monthly financial information group meetings. The SACS MOE interim reports and MOE unaudited reports are action/discussion items on the agenda at the SECA board meetings, allowing the superintendents to see how their districts are doing in regard to their MOE. The SELPA financial analyst attends the SEC meeting and discusses fiscal issues including the districts' MOE issues. This year, the county office's fiscal director and SELPA financial analyst conducted individual district meetings with the districts' fiscal staffs, special education director, and in some cases, the district's superintendent to review their use of ARRA, IDEA, and possible problems with their MOE in both current and future years.

Item 9 in the Allocation Model discusses inter-SELPA services between the North Santa Cruz County SELPA and other neighboring SELPAs. However, FCMAT could not find any information regarding agreements that might exist between Pajaro Valley, Monterey County, San Benito County, or Santa Clara County SELPAs.

Item 10 in the allocation model discusses intra-SELPA transfers from a district of residence to another district for the receipt of services. However, it does not discuss what happens after the servicing district informs the district of residence that a student has been referred for special education services.

Item 12 discusses services to parentally placed disabled students in private schools. It refers to a determination made in 1999 during consultation with "representatives of children with disabilities" that only speech and language services could be provided to a student with disabilities parentally placed in a private school. The federal regulation refers to "meaningful and timely consultation with representatives of the private schools and parents of students with disabilities" enrolled in these schools. December 1999 does not seem to be timely or meaningful given the opportunity for populations and needs to change and the increase in federal funds received by the North Santa Cruz County Schools. Unless the state has changed its position, the language

regarding three- to five-year-olds may be moot since California does not have a statutory definition of “elementary school.”

Information obtained in interviews indicates some districts may initiate special education programs and begin placing students. During IEP reviews, students are consequently removed from regional programs and returned to the program created by the district of residence. The advantage is that the district of residence chooses to provide special education services to its own students at its school sites. The disadvantage is that this practice may be used to avoid the transfer language contained in EC Section 56207. This has the potential for creating a fiscal hardship for the regional program provider and increases the support costs to all other SELPA members.

Recommendations

The SELPA should:

1. Continue using the current conceptual allocation model while implementing greater protections for all SELPA members and flexibility to provide incentives and disincentives.
2. Use an operations oversight committee in developing revenue/expenditure budgets for regional programs and monitoring ongoing operations from a programmatic and fiscal aspect.
3. Develop policies on the disposition of any unused funds from the operation of regional programs.
4. Review and revise, as appropriate, the maintenance-of effort language in the allocation model.
5. Develop procedures and contractual formats for providing services to residents of neighboring SELPAs.
6. Provide more procedural descriptions of the procedures and activities involving intra-SELPA services.
7. Review and revise Item 12 in the allocation model. Timely and meaningful consultations have generally interpreted to mean annual consultations.
8. Review and revise Item 14. The SELPA should consider incorporating language that triggers a “transfer” if it appears to be occurring. A disincentive should be implemented for districts to inform a regional provider before March 1 that a certain number of their students will be enrolled in the program the following year and subsequently change that number significantly after March 15.

SELPA Governance Structure

The Special Education Coordinating Agency (SECA) Governing Council is made up of a superintendent or administrator from each participating LEA. The governing council contracts with the county office for the personnel and fiscal services that support functions as the SELPA administrative unit. Governing boards approve contracts and/or JPAs with the county office and other participating LEAs in the SELPA.

The North Santa Cruz County SELPA LEAs vary significantly in size and are as follows:

- Bonny Doon Union Elementary School District
- Delta Charter School
- Happy Valley Elementary
- Live Oak Elementary School District
- Mountain Elementary School District
- Pacific Collegiate Charter
- Pacific Elementary School District
- San Lorenzo Valley Unified School District
- Santa Cruz City Schools – Elementary and High School
- Santa Cruz Office County Office of Education
- Scotts Valley Unified School District
- Soquel Union Elementary

Each governing council member has one vote. However, if one member requests a weighted voting system, each member is required to participate in this system. In this case, each LEA receives one base point with an additional point granted to LEAs with a CBEDs count of more than 100. LEAs with a CBEDs count of more than 100 receive one additional point for each additional thousand students. The number of points assigned to each district and county is readjusted each October when the new CBEDs figures are determined. Absentee votes are not counted, and absent members may not assign their voting privileges to other agencies.

The special education administrators of each LEA participate on the Special Education Council (SEC) have the authority to implement policies and procedures. SEC members meet regularly and formulate advisory positions of program organization, structure, allocation and policy issues that are offered as recommendations to the governing council through the SELPA director. The director serves as the chairperson of this committee and is responsible for providing timely written notice of the meeting and agenda, minutes, and any additional documentation.

The SELPA has established a Community Advisory Committee (CAC) as required by Education Code Part 30 (EC56205 (12) (C)). The SELPA actively recruits for members that include the parents of special education students in public or private schools, regular education teachers, special education teachers, other school personnel, representatives of other public and private agencies, and people concerned with the needs of special education students.

The SELPA director serves as the SELPA chief administrative officer, the executive secretary of the governing council, and the chair of the SEC. The director provides the leadership and supervision required for development of SELPA reports, implementation of program specialist services and other regionalized services. The main role of the SELPA director is to provide leadership

and facilitate decision-making. The governing council is responsible for the selection, direction, discipline and annual evaluation of the SELPA director. The evaluation is performed by a joint committee; however, no information was provided on the composition of the joint committee. The administrative unit helps the governing council with hiring and selection.

The SELPA has lacked consistent leadership for five years because of a high turnover in interim SELPA directors and the fact that the position was reduced to part-time. As a result, communication and articulation with the districts has been inconsistent. The SELPA should take the leadership role in communicating with all its member districts and the county office. The county office will again become the administrative unit July 1, 2010.

The county office does not have a SELPA director. The Soquel Union Elementary School District is the administrative unit for the SELPA with a .5 FTE director.

Communication

Several of those interviewed expressed frustration over a lack of communication in the governance structure that affects council members, the SEC and chief business officials. Program and business members do not work collaboratively, hindering decision-making. There is confusion regarding agreements made at the meetings of the governing council, which occur four times a year, and the SEC, which meets monthly. The two committees reportedly view special education from different perspectives.

FCMAT's interviews and fieldwork suggests that SECA members are primarily concerned with fiscal encroachment issues while SEC members are concerned about programmatic needs. Holding joint meetings of the two groups at least twice a year would help promote understanding and cohesion. Communication would improve if SECA meetings occurred at least every other month or six times per year.

Superintendents who attend governing council and SEC meetings and serve in several capacities for their districts have a better understanding of the SELPA and county office and the decisions of both entities.

The fiscal information discussed at committee meetings is frequently not conveyed to district chief business officers (CBOs). This information would help CBOs budget and plan. None of the joint meetings that occur include CBOs. These meetings should occur at least twice a year, with fiscal information regularly conveyed to CBOs and the fiscal staff via e-mail.

The superintendents, district directors and district fiscal personnel do not receive regular communication and training regarding the SELPA funding allocation plan. The SELPA does not hold regular AB602 meetings. As turnover occurs in the governance structure, it becomes even more important to promote a clear understanding of the SELPA funding allocation plan and AB602.

The SELPA should consider revising its governance structure to improve communication, openness and decision-making. The SELPA lacks a joint oversight committee. Committees of this type have been established at other SELPAs and allow representatives with different perspectives of special education to provide input and expertise, improving decision-making.

A joint oversight committee would also perform the following:

- Ensure that local, state, and federal resources are used cost-effectively
- Monitor the efficiency of funding allocation plans

- Make recommendations regarding fiscal effectiveness
- Monitor the county office funding model for efficiency
- Ensure the SELPA's overall cost efficiency and effectiveness
- Meet before each governing council and report any fiscal or programmatic issues to the council

The committee should be made up of two superintendents, two program directors, two CBOs from the LEAs and one representative from the county office. The SELPA director should chair this meeting, develop agendas, and take the minutes.

The SELPA does not conduct an annual orientation for new superintendents, district directors, and district fiscal personnel. Veteran members should also have the opportunity to participate. At the orientation, the SELPA should share a treasurer's report such as the sample attached as part of Appendix A to this report.

This type of report allows the SELPA governance be kept apprised of revenues and expenditures at least annually.

Recommendations

The SELPA should:

1. Schedule at least two meetings a year that include the SECA Governing Council, SEC, and CBOs to improve the communication.
2. Schedule at least two meetings a year that include the SECA Governing Council and the SEC to discuss the mission of each group. This should improve communication and decision-making.
3. Ensure that the governing council meets at least every two months or six times per year.
4. Ensure that the information provided during meetings of the governing council and SEC is regularly conveyed to the district CBOs or fiscal staff. This information could be disseminated via e-mail after and between meetings.
5. Invite CBOs to at least two meetings per year so they can stay abreast of fiscal matters regarding the SELPA and districts they serve.
6. Provide regular and ongoing training regarding the funding allocation plan and AB602.
7. Revise the governance structure to include a joint oversight committee made up of governing council members, SEC members, and CBOs to improve communication, openness and decision-making. This committee should be made up of two superintendents/administrators, two program directors and two CBOs from member districts.
8. Develop an annual orientation for new superintendents, district directors, and district fiscal staff on all the basic aspects of the SELPA. Veteran members should also be able to attend these orientations.
9. Develop and distribute a SELPA treasurer's report to the members at least annually to improve communication.

Openness and Decision-Making

Interviews with staff members of each entity indicate there is an overall lack of trust between the SELPA governance members and the county office. Communication has suffered because of a lack of openness in sharing detailed program and staffing information on the actual costs of operating county office programs. The county office provides the governing council with only per-pupil costs, which the members consider minimally useful. However, the county office does not provide members of the SELPA governance structure with regular program and staff cost breakdowns of the programs operated on the districts' behalf.

Much of the information disseminated at governing Council and SEC meetings is difficult to understand. Since county office programs are funded before allocations are made to districts, it is important that districts know the cost of programs and services. A more detailed breakdown would demonstrate openness.

The "Off-the-Top Model Table" attached as part of Appendix A to this report should be completed by county office Special Education Department and provided to the governing council and the SELPA director to improve communication. Ideally, this information should also be available to other members. It is important for the county office to capture all costs associated with the program it operates. The table should be completed using Microsoft Excel.

After capturing the total program costs, the county office should use the tables included as part of Appendix A to provide the exact costs of specific programs.

Ideally the county office would provide the governing council and SELPA director with a chart of programs/services. This table should include the FTEs/numbers of administrative staff members, secretaries, fiscal personnel, itinerant staff/teachers, and instructional assistants. The staff-to-student ratios should also be included. This information should be divided by center-based, integrated severely handicapped, and itinerant programs and services.

The "Sample Chart for Summary of Classroom Costs" included as part of Appendix A provides a summary of classroom costs. This table should be completed by county office and provided to the governing council at least annually.

Ideally, the county office would provide the governing council and SEC members with a monthly class loading recap. Every class or center that the county office operates should be included. This table is a changing document that should be discussed at every SECA and SEC meeting.

The above tables should balance to the exact dollar amount that used to operate county office programs. All costs should be captured in the tables.

The "Sample Forms for Special Day Class Loading" attached as part of Appendix A to this report should be updated monthly to reflect county office class loading and should be discussed at every SECA and SEC meeting.

Governance members are frustrated over the lack of control that districts have over compliance issues. Districts are responsible for 75% of costs associated with due process/mediation, and the county office is responsible for the remaining 25%. The governance council is not provided with current program information. However, if parents of students in county office programs file for due process or mediation, the districts (governing council) are responsible for 75% of associated costs. These costs are primarily tied to mediation.

Interviews with staff members of each entity indicate there is an overall lack of trust between the SELPA governance members and the county office.

The county office special education programs have not been named as the primary respondent in a due process complaint for a student actually enrolled in a county office program since the 2007-2008 school year.

However, districts are experiencing an increase in the number of due process cases in which they have offered a county office or district special education program as a free appropriate public education (FAPE) In these cases, even though the county office is named as a co-respondent, the student either has never actually been enrolled in a county office program or was an interim 30-day placement. These due process complaints have primarily been filed by parents of students on the autism spectrum,

District staff members indicated their telephone calls to the county office requesting assistance are frequently not returned in a timely manner or not returned at all. Districts will develop greater confidence in customer service if the county office special education staff responds to phone calls and requests for assistance in a timely manner.

The county office should conduct an extensive survey with the districts to determine how to improve communication, openness, decision-making and services to the members.

Governing council and SEC members do not regularly visit county office programs. These visits improve communication and familiarize members with programs and students.

Recommendations

The county office should:

1. Address the lack of trust from member districts by providing detailed documentation of program operational costs and increased opportunities for member districts including CBOs to meet with program staff.
2. Provide the governing council with all program and staff costs using the tables provided above. Providing a per-pupil cost is insufficient to satisfy obligations to the governing council.
3. Understand the differences between an “off-the-top” funding model and a fee-for-service model.
4. Take the necessary steps to convey to members that the programs provided by the county office are efficient and effective and that costs are continuously monitored.
5. Complete and distribute the detailed operational expenses using the following forms provided by FCMAT in the previous section as a sample, and discuss them with the appropriate employees and/or entities as follows:

FORM	EMPLOYEE/ENTITY
SCCOE Off-the-Top Model Table	Governing council, SELPA director
SCCOE Special Education Table of Programs/Services	Governing council, SEC members
SCCOE Operated Programs – Summary of Classroom Costs for 2009/10	Governing council, SELPA director
Special Education Class Loading Recap Table	Governing council, SEC members (monthly)

6. Address the districts' responsibility for 75% of the mediations costs. If districts are responsible for 75% of the costs, they should be involved in decision-making and have a sense that the county office operates cost efficient programs.
7. Address customer service issues to ensure that phone calls are returned, assistance is provided when needed and pertinent information is shared.
8. Encourage the governing council and SEC members to visit county office programs at least annually.

Regionalized Dollars/Program Specialists

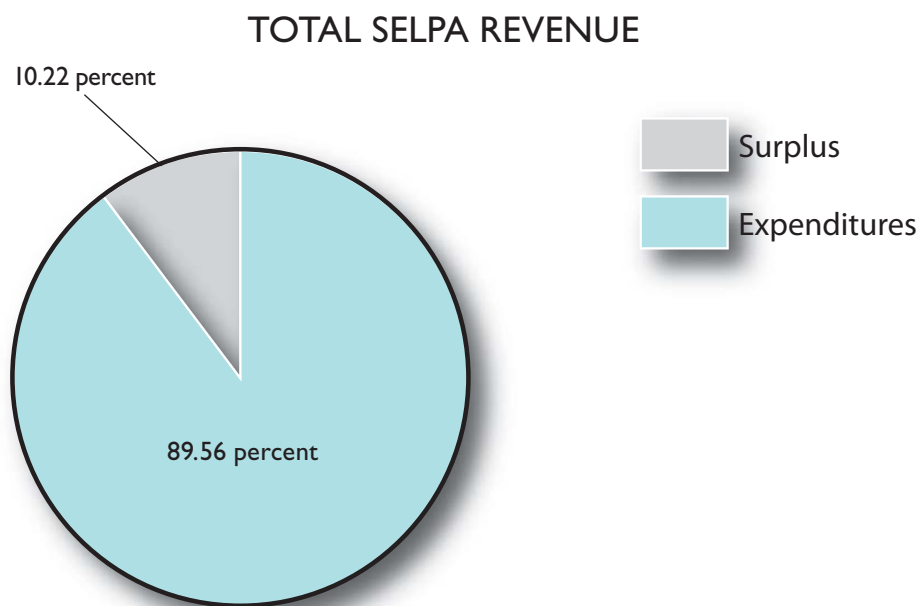
According to the 2009-10 P1 certification, the SELPA is receiving \$281,000 to provide regionalized services and/or program specialist services, additional funding for pass-through to the districts, accumulated interest, and some funds from specific grants, carryover balances, and several other sources (Medi-Cal Administrative Services, Region V California Services for Technical Assistance and Training). The SELPA also receives \$39,000 in low-incidence materials/equipment funds in the current year that must be used solely to provide necessary equipment and materials for students with disabilities.

The total revenue, \$471,932 is used as follows:

- \$54,870 are expended for salaries and benefits
- \$52,000 for books, materials, and supplies
- \$5,340 for travel and conference
- \$3,000 for dues and memberships
- \$3,900 for insurance
- \$11,800 for rents, leases, and repairs
- \$3,600 for postage and communications
- \$5,700 for capital outlay equipment

Contracts total about \$140,000, including contracts for .5 FTE fiscal analyst services with the county office, other county offices and memorandum-of-understanding services, the Special Education Information System (SEIS) with the San Joaquin County Office of Education, Southern Regional Peninsula, and Vavrinek, Trine, Day and Co.

The expenditures total \$422,680, leaving a projected surplus of \$48,252, well short of the approximately \$90,000 to \$100,000 that would be necessary to compensate a program specialist. Since these revenues/expenditures include resources other than the \$281,000 provided by AB602 for regionalized services and program specialists, available funds are insufficient for program specialist services under the current budget scenario.



Last fiscal year, the SELPA expended \$84,343.70 for contracted and other services under object code 5800. In addition to state aid, the SELPA has some funds from specific grants, carryover balances, and several other sources (Medi-Cal Administrative Services, Region V California Services for Technical Assistance and Training). No funds are available for program specialist services under the current budget scenario.

The SELPA has one program specialist employed by the county office. Sixty percent of the cost for this program specialist is funded by special education and 40 percent by the New Teacher Project. The New Teacher Project was formed in 1997 to address teacher shortages and teacher quality throughout the country. The specialist position's duties include providing teacher support through mentoring, coaching and training. The program specialist does not attend high profile IEPs or provide program support or coordination. This is inconsistent with the role of program specialists in other SELPAs, which follow the requirements in Part 30 EC 56368 (a)-(c). The duties of the program specialist should be re-evaluated and reassigned to include these duties and functions. This position should be expanded to include the regular functions of a program specialist.

An additional program specialist is employed and funded by Santa Cruz City Schools. The district does not receive program specialist dollars from the SELPA to support this position. Since the district supports this position on its own, the district also determines the duties and functions.

All program specialist funds for regionalized services are committed. Additional program specialist services would require local funds. The governing council should determine whether to pursue this option.

The county office has a position that functions as .5 FTE program specialist and .5 FTE mentor teacher and is funded through Medi-Cal Administrative Activities (MAA) and the New Teacher Project.

Recommendations

The SELPA and county office should:

1. Send the county office program specialist to high-profile IEPs as a support.
2. Ensure the program specialist provides program support.
3. Determine whether districts want to use local funds to support additional program specialist positions.
4. Consider reviewing and redirecting regionalized services/program specialist funds to make funding available for regional program specialist services.
5. Review and revise the "off-the-top" allocations for regional program providers and the allocations of state and federal funds to the districts to provide funding for regional program specialist services.
6. Obtain job descriptions and function/duty statements for program specialists from other SELPAs to determine what the North Santa Cruz County SELPA wants of its program specialists and how they should function.

District Collaboration

Some SELPA members are concerned that some districts refer high numbers of students for assessment and others refer few students to county office programs. Many SELPAs address this issue by adopting a fee-for-service funding model. Others develop a table that indicates the percentage of students served in severe special day class (SDC) programs. The information is sorted by district of residence (DOR) and should be completed by the county office and discussed with the governing council and SEC members at least two times annually. A sample of this type of table without the required data is as follows:

Percentage of Students served in severe SDC classes sorted by District of Residence

Special Education/Santa Cruz County Programs Percentage of Students Served in Severe SDC's Sorted by DOR December 2009 CASEMIS								
DISTRICT	Autism		ED		MODERATE/SEVERE		¹ Adjusted 2009/2010 P-I	
	% of Total Students Served	Total Students	% of Total Students Served	Total Students	% of Total Students Served	Total Students	ADAK-12	ADA%
Bonny Doon Union Elementary School District								
Delta Charter School								
Happy Valley Elementary								
Live Oak Elementary School District								
Mountain Elementary School District								
Pacific Collegiate Charter								
Pacific Elementary School District								
San Lorenzo Valley Unified School District								
Santa Cruz City Schools (Elem & High School)								
Scotts Valley Unified School District								
Soquel Union Elementary								
Total Students by Program								

¹ADA adjusted by adding 93% of total Preschool and Adult pupil count to actual PI ADA
² Note: P-I ADA includes Special Education and Court/Community programs

This table indicates the percentage of students from each district enrolled in severely disabled (SD), autistic, and emotionally disturbed (ED) county office programs. The chart allows the governing council to determine whether districts use a disproportional share of county office program services and the areas where this may occur.

Collaboration between the SELPA and county office is necessary to generate the chart, which should be completed quarterly. If it is determined that some districts receive a disproportional share of county office services, the governing council may decide to transition to a fee-for-service funding model. With this model, each district is billed only for the services it receives from the county office.

The governing council should determine whether the four smaller SELPA districts can afford to operate under this model since providing for one high-cost student can be fiscally difficult. The relevant data should be carefully analyzed before considering this change since members may find that services are equitably provided at present. Members should also realize that one of the SELPA’s functions is to ensure that services and programs are available for students with special needs. The document attached as Appendix A to this report is an example of a table that documents districts’ program costs. If this particular table is used, a different one would have to be completed for each district.

Recommendations

The SELPA and SCCOE should:

1. Continue to encourage the districts to work collaboratively and assist each other when it is possible, especially the small districts.
2. Complete the table titled “Percentage of Students Served in Severe SDC’s Sorted by DOR,” and discuss it with the governing council and SEC members at least twice a year. The county office and SELPA should collaborate to gather this data.
3. Ascertain whether the governing council wants to determine if some districts receive a disproportionate share of county office services and programs. If members want to pursue this issue further, an Off-the-Top Model Table can be completed for each district.
4. Ensure that members are familiar with the smaller districts and their fiscal limitations.

Staff Development

SELPA-provided staff development offers open registration to all SELPA LEAs. However, the districts indicated they would benefit from additional opportunities for staff development. If the SELPA finds it costly to provide all the necessary staff development, it should consider charging a fee to cover speaker costs.

The tables below show the staff development offered to the SELPA for the last three years and the number of participants from each district.

Form for Reporting Staff Development Training

Staff Development Training 2007/08														
Training Title	BDUE	DCS	HVE	LO	ME	PCC	PE	SLVU	SCCS	SCCOE	SVU	SUE	O	
The Eyes Have It: Tapping the Visual Modality to Increase Teaching Effectiveness - CANCELLED	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
NEPSY®- II A Developmental Neuropsychological Assessment	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	1	1	2	0	1	2	

DISTRICT COLLABORATION

Autism Spectrum Disorders: Best Practices for Assessment	2	0	0	9	0	2	0	0	13	10	0	7	4
Transition Planning for adolescents with Autism Spectrum Disorder	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	1	5	3	3	0	8
Promoting Social Competence: Effective Strategies for Busy Teachers	1	0	1	9	1	0	2	3	14	1	1	2	0

*This table reflects the number of participants that attended each training from each district

Note: Other= Districts outside of SCCOE, Other Agencies (both inside and outside SELPA), Other COEs, Santa Cruz UC and Mental Health

Staff Development Training 2008/09													
Training Title	BDUE	DCS	HVE	LO	ME	PCC	PE	SLVU	SCCS	SCCOE	SVU	SUE	O
New Special Education Staff Orientation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	10	12	6	4	0
DRDP Training - CANCELLED	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
BICM Refresher	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	6	0	0	2	1
BICM Training	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	5	2	0	3
Promoting Positive Classroom Behavior Preschool	1	0	2	2	2	0	0	3	5	0	2	4	1
Legal Workshop, Assessment Reports	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	3	1	8	0	4	8
For Para Educators Only: Providing Support for Special Education Students in General Education Classrooms	5	0	0	0	6	0	0	12	2	5	4	3	4
WAIS IV Workshop	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	2	0	0
Students with Asperger Syndrome and High Functioning Autism in General Education: How Principals Can Lead the Way	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	4	0	3	1
Middle and High School Transition Portfolios - CANCELLED	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Executive Functioning: Helping Students Learn How to Learn	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	7	5	6	5	1	9

Staff Development Training 2009/10													
Training Title	BDUE	DCS	HVE	LO	ME	PCC	PE	SLVU	SCCS	SCCOE	SVU	SUE	O
New Teacher Orientation	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	5	4	8	1	0
Teaching Students with Moderate to Severe Intellectual Disabilities	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	4	1	2	13
The ABC's of Transition Functional Assessment Model (TFAM): Connecting Assessment to Transition Goals - CANCELLED	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Will He Catch Up? Talking to Parents about Cognitive Impairment - CANCELLED	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Straight Talk About Deficit/Hyper-activity Disorder: Evidence-based Instruction	2	0	0	7	5	0	2	3	10	1	0	3	9
The Art and Science of Collaboration in Special Education	1	0	0	7	1	0	0	12	6	3	3	5	17
Legal "Development of Defendable Assessments" & "Controlling & Bringing Closure to the IEP Process" – PENDING	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*This table reflects the number of participants that attended each training from each district Note: Other= Districts outside of SCCOE, Other Agencies (both inside and outside SELPA), Other COEs, Santa Cruz UC and Mental Health													

Some staff development offered by the SELPA was cancelled because of low registration. During the current fiscal crisis, it is difficult for districts to fund release time for the teaching staff. The SELPA should explore creative options for offering training during evenings or in the summer to avoid increased staffing costs and low registration.

Additional staff development should be considered in the following areas:

- Autism (SELPA-wide)
- AB602 Funding (SECA, SEC, CBOs)
- The SELPA funding allocation plan (SECA, SEC, CBOs)

- County office program costs (SECA, SEC, and CBOs)
- Special circumstance instructional assistants (SCIAs)
- Instructional assistants – The Los Angeles County Office of Education offers On-line Paraeducator Academy Courses (Information is attached to the appendix section of this report).

A review of sign-in sheets from each staff development session found that participation appears to be fairly representative of the LEAs in the SELPA. However, a few districts should consider attending more staff development opportunities.

Recommendations

The SELPA should:

1. Consider charging a fee for staff development to expand its current offerings.
2. Consider offering staff development sessions during the summer or evenings to avoid costly expenses for release time and subsequent low registration.
3. Ensure more trainings are provided in the areas of autism, AB602 funding, the funding allocation plan, county office program costs, special circumstance instructional assistants, and instructional assistants.
4. Consider using the Los Angeles County Office of Education On-line Paraeducator Academy courses to train instructional assistants.
5. Encourage further participation by the members to prevent staff development opportunities from being cancelled.

SELPA Policies

The SELPA local plan states that policies governing the SELPA are adopted by the governing council and included in the plan. The governing council is the policy-making body for SELPA and its member LEAs. The policy agreements, regulations and procedures adopted by the governing council under the authority of the adopting LEA board have the same status as other LEA board policies and may be contained in a variety of documents approved by the governing council. In addition, each agency is required to cooperate with other agencies to serve disabled students that cannot be served in programs at the LEA of residence. This type of cooperation ensures that a range of program options is available throughout North Santa Cruz County. The SELPA staff implements the policies and decisions of the governing council.

A review of SELPA policies for consistency with state and federal law found that Policy 10503 – Independent Educational Evaluations could be simplified as follows:

Notice to Parents

The first bullet in the policy states: “Please read this document before obtaining or paying for an Independent Educational Assessment. This document may limit your right to reimbursement.”

To soften the language and make it more understandable, it should read: “Parents should be sure to read the entire document carefully. Your right to reimbursement may be limited if the evaluation is not obtained in accordance with the district guidelines.”

North Santa Cruz County SELPA’s Response to Request for an Independent Evaluation

The current language currently reads as follows:

If parents request an Independent Educational Evaluation at public expense, the district will, without unnecessary delay, offer the parent an alternative examiner (option 1 below) and also provide options for an Independent Educational Evaluation at public expense (option 2, 3, or 4 below) as follows:

1. A staff member from another school;
2. A staff member from another LEA in the SELPA;
3. A staff member from another SELPA;
4. A private sector provider

Once the parent chooses an option, the district will arrange for the alternative evaluator, contract with an independent examiner, or otherwise ensure that an Independent Education Evaluation is provided at public expense.

If the district initiates a hearing and the final decision is that the district’s evaluation is appropriate, the parent still has the right to an Independent Educational Evaluation, but not at public expense.

The language should be simplified to state the following:

District Response to Request

If parents request an independent educational evaluation at public expense, the district will, without unnecessary delay:

- Provide the parents with the independent educational evaluation guidelines AND
- Review existing evaluations to determine if agreement can be achieved by providing additional district evaluations by an alternative district or SELPA evaluator; OR
- Ensure an independent educational evaluation is provided at public expense; OR
- Initiate a due processing hearing

Time line Regarding Independent Education Evaluations

The third paragraph of this section states as follows:

The district will make arrangements for a new evaluation, or contract with a qualified independent examiner who is able to provide a written report for an IEP meeting, within 50 days of the date of contracting for an evaluation

This paragraph should be revised as follows:

The district will make arrangements for a new evaluation, or contract with a qualified independent examiner who is able to provide a written report for an IEP meeting, within 60 days of the date of contracting for an evaluation.

Evaluations Ordered by Hearing Officers

This section reads as follows:

If a hearing officer requests an Independent Educational Evaluation as part of a hearing the cost of the evaluation must be at the district's expense

The section should be revised to read as follows:

Due Process/Evaluations Ordered by Hearing Officers

If a hearing officer requests an independent educational evaluation as part of a hearing, the cost of the evaluation must be at the public's expense.

If the district initiates a hearing and a final decision determines that the district's evaluation is appropriate, the parent still has the right to an independent educational evaluation, but not at public expense.

If the district initiates a due process hearing to show that the district's evaluation is appropriate, reimbursement will be made if ordered by a hearing officer.

Procedure 10503.1 – Independent Education Evaluations

This entire procedure could be condensed and simplified for better understanding.

The SELPA should consider adding a policy on disproportionality. Some SELPAs have added this policy and could provide an example.

Recommendations

The SELPA should:

1. Simplify and clarify policy 10503 – Independent Educational Evaluations by incorporating the suggestions provided above.
2. Consider developing a SELPA policy addressing disproportionality.

Staffing and Caseloads

FCMAT reviewed the staffing of all special education programs at the county office as well as a random sample of district programs. The following districts were used in the random sample: Live Oak School District, Pacific Elementary, San Lorenzo Valley Unified, Santa Cruz City Schools, and Soquel Union Elementary. The county office operates a full range of special day classes, but no resource specialist programs.

North Santa Cruz County and Regional Programs

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (2004) requires disabled students from birth to 22 years of age (or until high school graduation) to be provided with the education and related services necessary to receive a Free Appropriate Public Education (Title 34 Section 300.101). North Santa Cruz SELPA students with disabilities that require specialized programs and services beyond those available in local school districts are referred to county office programs.

The county office operates 20 programs for students with severe disabilities from preschool through post high school. The student enrollment is 235 served in 25 classrooms on 14 sites, including four Early Start classes. The districts indicated they rely on the county office to provide programs and services for approximately 189 severely handicapped students at an annual cost ranging from \$37,000 to \$38,000 per student. There are additional costs when a student requires a one-to-one instructional aide.

County office programs for autistic students operate at an annual cost of \$52,000 per student. In addition, the districts use two nonpublic school options; Bright Path for emotionally disturbed students at an annual cost of \$49,000 per student and Bay School for autistic students at an annual cost of \$110,000 per student.

Some local districts perceive that although they are making significant reductions in special education staffing, county office special education programs are not reduced on a proportional basis. The district staff indicated that the primacy concerns are the high support ratios in classrooms and the high administrative ratio at the county office.

Administration

FCMAT reviewed data from a random sample of five districts and the county office, which budget administrators with special education resources. Most remaining districts did not have an administrator for special education.

Comparison of Special Education Administrators North Santa Cruz County SELPA district/county office SELPA members

Districts	Administrators	Students	Comments
Santa Cruz County Office of Education	1.0 Senior Director .8 Associate Supt	189	Serves Prek-Post High School/all Severely Handicapped Programs
Live Oak District	.7 Administrator	291	K-8 with a Charter High School
San Lorenzo Unified	.6	1250	K-12 Unified; many Charter Schools
Santa Cruz City Schools	1.0 Director 1.0 Program Specialist	K-5 Elementary 357 6-12 High School 573 Total: 930 students	2 districts with one governing board; one special education program serving both
Scotts Valley	.85 Director	231	K-12
Soquel Union	.5	219	K-8

Sources: District and Santa Cruz County Office of Education report on administrative staffing and student data from the California Special Education Management System (CASEMIS). Note: The county office program specialist is not an administrative position, but is on a 182-day contract on the teacher salary schedule.

The county office senior director of special education is a full-time position that supervises the daily operation of county office programs for 235 students. Duties include interacting with district special education directors, parents and advocates with a primary role of resolving due process issues. The director also hires, supervises and reviews the performance of 100 county office classified and certificated employees. No other duties are assigned.

The associate superintendent (.6 FTE) also oversees the daily operation for special education programs. Additional duties include supervising categorical programs, with .4 FTE of this position funded from those programs.

Special education supervisory duties at the districts are performed by administrators funded by special education or the general fund. These administrators have numerous duties in addition to special education. The county office maintains a higher ratio of administrators to students than the districts.

The senior director is responsible for Early Start, which has 46 students served in four classes and support services. For more specific information on the job duties of the director, they are available at http://www.santacruz.k12.ca.us/student_services/hr/job_descriptions/mgmt/dir_spec_ed.pdf

Recommendations

The county office should:

1. Consider reducing the level of administrative support for special education programs over the next two years as follows:
 - Reduce the county office director position from 100% to 50% (a savings of approximately \$60,000) and combine it with the duties of the current SELPA director that is funded at 50%.
 - Transfer oversight of the county office special education programs and services from the associate superintendent to the senior director as outlined above (county/SELPA). This will save result in a 60% savings or approximately \$75,000 for the county office special education budget.
 - Use the remaining 40% to fully fund the program specialist position from the SELPA. The functions of this position should be revised to support SELPA and district functions (an increase of approximately \$100,000).

County Office and Regional Program Staffing

Comparison of District/County Office Programs with Guidelines from Statewide Industry Standards and/or Education Code Requirements

Districts/County	Certificated Program Staffing	Caseload Averages	School Services Inc
Live Oak School District	6.49 RSP FTE	23 students	28 students*
	1 Preschool SDC/SH	4 students	8-10 students
	5 (K-8) SDC/SH	7 students	8-10 students
Santa Cruz County Office of Education	6 (9-12) SDC/SH (includes 1@ 6-12)	12 students	8-10 students
	3 (Prek-3)Autism	9 students	8 students
	6 ED (K-12)	8 students	8-10 students
San Lorenzo Valley	7 RSP 6 SDC/NSH	26 students 13 students	28 students 12-15 students
Santa Cruz City Schools	24 RSP 11.2 SDC/NSH	22 students 11 students	28 students 12-15 students
Scotts Valley Unified	5 RSP 4 SDC/NSH	40 students 11 students	28 students 12-15 students
Soquel Union Elementary	4 RSP 4 SDC/LH	28 students 12 students	28 students 12-15 students

Notes: The industry standard for staffing caseloads is established by School Services Inc. 2008 and is written using statewide practice reported by school districts. The resource specialist caseloads are legislated in EC 56362. In some cases, districts may use different program models which permit higher caseloads. Consult with district program descriptions before comparing caseload averages with Education Code requirements. This chart does not reflect the three elementary, two middle and three-post-senior SH SDC classrooms. Additional information is available from the county office.

Key:

RSP: Resource specialist program

SDC/SH: Special day class/severely handicapped operated by the county office or regional program

SDC/NSH: Special day class/nonseverely handicapped operated in local school districts

SDC/Autism: Special day classes with specially designed instruction for students with Autism

SDC/ED: Special day classes with specially designed instruction and support services for students with emotional disturbance

Most special day classes in the county office and local districts operate within the guidelines established by School Services Inc; however, the preschool’s SDC class enrollment is significantly below the recommendation. The county office staff should regularly review SDC caseloads and make appropriate adjustments to class sizes and resources when class sized do not meet expectations by December 1 of each school year. This will ensure greater efficiency.

Recommendations

The county office should:

1. Evaluate the number of incoming three-year-olds that may increase enrollment in the preschool program from March to June 2010.
2. Redistribute resources to assist other special education programs in the county office if there are no prospective students to increase the enrollment,
3. Establish a standard practice of evaluating all caseloads by December 1 of each school year and make appropriate adjustments to resources.

Instructional Aides

Comparison of Instructional Aides in District/County Programs to Industry Standards and/or Education Code Requirements

District/County	Classified Program Staffing	School Services, Inc
Live Oak School District	3.78 FTE Resource Aides	5-6 hours per RSP*
Santa Cruz County Office of Education	2.0 FTE aides per class	2.0 aides per SDC class
San Lorenzo Valley	6.24 RSP aides 6.84 SDC/NSH aides	5-6 hours per RSP 1 aide per SDC class
Santa Cruz City Schools	14.12 FTE RSP 11.5 FTE SDC/NSH	6 hour aides 6 hour aides
Scotts Valley	5.0 RSP aides 4.0 SDC/NSH aides	5-6 hours per RSP 1 aide per SDC class
Soquel Elementary	3.26 FTE SDC aides	1 aides per SDC class

Note: EC 56362 (6)(f) requires at least 80% of the resource specialists within a local plan to be provided with an instructional aide. It does not require a full-time aide for each resource specialist.

The number of instructional aides in resource specialist/special day class programs at the districts and the instructional aide staffing for special day classes at the county office are within the guidelines and/or Education Code requirements and are maintained at an efficient level.

Recommendation

The districts and county office should:

1. Maintain current staffing for instructional aides in RSP and special day classes that align with industry standards.

Designated Instructional Services

FCMAT reviewed staffing and caseloads for speech and language, adapted physical education, and occupational therapy services to determine efficiencies.

Comparison of Designated Instruction staffing and caseloads in District/County Office to the industry standards and/or Education Code requirements.

Program/Provider	Average Student Caseload	School Services Guidelines Based on 1.0 FTE
Live Oak School District		
Adapted PE	.16 FTE @ 17 students	45-55 students
Occupational Therapy		
Speech Therapy	51 students	20-35 students*
	49 students	55 students
Santa Cruz County Office of Education		
Adapted PE	68 students	45-55 students
Occupational Therapy		
Speech Therapy	59 students	20-35 students
	42 students	55 students
San Lorenzo Valley		
Adapted PE	36 students	45 – 55 students
Occupational Therapy		
Speech Therapy	45 students	20-35 students
	50 students	55 students
Santa Cruz City Schools		
Adapted PE	47 students	45-55 students
Occupational Therapy		
Speech Therapy	43 students	20-35 students
	45 students	55 students
Scotts Valley		
Adapted PE	.60 FTE @ 20 students	45-55 students
Occupational Therapy		
Speech Therapy	54 students	20-35 students
	53 students	55 students
Soquel Elementary		
Adapted PE	.5 FTE @ 12 students	45-55 students
Occupational Therapy		
Speech Therapy	.7 FTE @ 44 students	20-35 students
	56 students	55 students

Source: District provided data; Guidelines from School Services of California, Inc. 2008

FCMAT found that the caseloads for designated instruction services in the randomly selected districts and the county office are consistent with the guidelines from School Services of California, Inc. with one exception. The districts and county office have occupational therapy caseloads that exceed the SSC guideline; however, FCMAT has found that districts throughout the state operate closer to caseloads of 55.

Recommendations

The districts and county office should:

1. Continue following the guidelines for average caseloads from School Services and the Education Code as appropriate.
2. Work closely with each other to share resources whenever possible, particularly when caseloads are below standards.
3. Continue using district- or county-office- hired staff and avoid the use of nonpublic agencies for services.

One-to-One Instructional Aides

There is a general perception among school personnel that districts and the county office overuse one-to-one aides, particularly for students with autism. California has no industry standards to compare one-to-one instructional aide usage from district to district or county office; however, research is available to guide school districts.

The National Research Council performed a thorough review of programs for students with autism and concluded that “A child must receive sufficient individualized attention on a daily basis so that the individual objectives can be effectively implemented.” While the council recommended that a student be provided with sufficient individual support and small group instruction to accomplish his or her goals and objectives, it did not indicate that one-to-one staffing was required.

Several SELPAs and districts throughout the state including the North Santa Cruz County SELPA have implemented guidelines for assessing the need for special circumstances instructional aides. The three main elements of this assessment are as follows:

1. An assessment of the use of classroom supports and accommodations and the level of success
2. Teacher interviews to determine the need for one-to-one support
3. A transition or “fading” plan to promote student independence over time

A review of SELPA procedure 10460.1 found that it includes assessment and teacher interviews; but not a “fading” plan during evaluation. The primary objective of one-to-one aide services should be for the student to achieve as much independence as possible. The SELPA should expand the procedures of one-to-one aide evaluation to include a section on “fading” that leads to student independence.

Using a random sample of district SELPAs, FCMAT compared the numbers of students with one-to-one instructional aides with the percentage of one-to-one aides assigned to students in each district’s special education program. A separate analysis focused on the number and percentage of one-to-one aides assigned in the county office. District and county office data were separated because the student populations were different. The students in county office programs represent the most severe disabilities that districts are unable to serve. The district data represents a broader population of mild to moderate disabilities.

Comparative of One-to-One Instructional Aides In Random Districts in North Santa Cruz County SELPA

School District	#One-to-One Instructional Aides	% of One-to-One aides to Special Education Pupil Count
Live Oak School	7	2%
San Lorenzo Valley	15	4%
Santa Cruz City School	33	4%
Scotts Valley	24	10.3%
Soquel Union Elementary	17	8%

Analysis of One-to-One Instructional Aide Usage in the Santa Cruz County Office of Education

County Office	# One-to-One Instructional Aides	% of One-to-One aides to special education pupil count
North Santa Cruz County Office	33	18%

The county office has a high use rate for one-to-one instructional aides. Most county office classes operate at ratio of one adult to two students, however, some classrooms operate at one to one.

The Chrysalis Center offers a county office program for preschool students with autism. This program was developed as an alternative to costly nonpublic school placements at the Bay Center. The ratio of adults to students in these classes is one to one. The Chrysalis Center is supervised by the county office, and the Morgan Center has a \$200,000 contract to advise and support county office programs. The staffing ratio in the Chrysalis Center mirrors that of the Morgan Center.

The three programs in question are designed, staffed, operated and supervised by the county office. The Morgan Center contracts with the county office to provide the county office administration and classroom staff with ongoing staff development and consultation services in implementing the Morgan Center model. Morgan Center consultants have no decision-making, supervisory, or operational role in the county office Chrysalis programs. However, districts perceive that the county office has limited input into staffing ratios.

The administrative staff indicated that this staffing pattern is required for the county office to provider a defensible autism program. In a review of comprehensive program environments for students with autism, the National Research Council found that most programs had an adult-to-student range of ratios of from 1:3 to 1:8. The council also found that a number of programs “intentionally fade the adult: child ratios across time in intervention, in order to prepare children to function independently in future sites.”

Recommendations

The SELPA, districts and county office should:

1. Begin to track the number and percent of special education students receiving one-to-one instructional aides support. The data in the first table above can be used as a baseline.
2. Track the number of students requiring one-to-one instructional aides that have transitioned away this level of support over time.
3. Expand the procedures for evaluating the need for one-to-one instructional aides outlined in SELPA policy to include “fading” as a strategy for increasing independence in students.

Nonpublic Schools/Agencies

Each SELPA district develops and monitors contracts for nonpublic schools and agencies. The county office operates as a school district member in the SELPA and also develops and monitors its own contracts for nonpublic schools and agencies. The SELPA has a master contract that is available to participating SELPA members; however, many districts do not use the SELPA contract. There are no standardized rates for nonpublic schools in the area.

Recommendation

The SELPA should:

1. Encourage the districts to use a common master contract for nonpublic schools and agencies to ensure continuity in rate structures and common programmatic elements.

Transfer of Programs

The district and county office have partnered to provide special education services to district-identified students with severe disabilities and in some cases nonsevere disabilities in county office programs for many years.

The partnership has succeeded, but not without some difficulties. Several district staff members indicated they are often unaware of the contents of county office students' IEPs and do not attend IEP meetings. In a number of cases, the staff members did not know the students they were assigned or the services and instruction these students received.

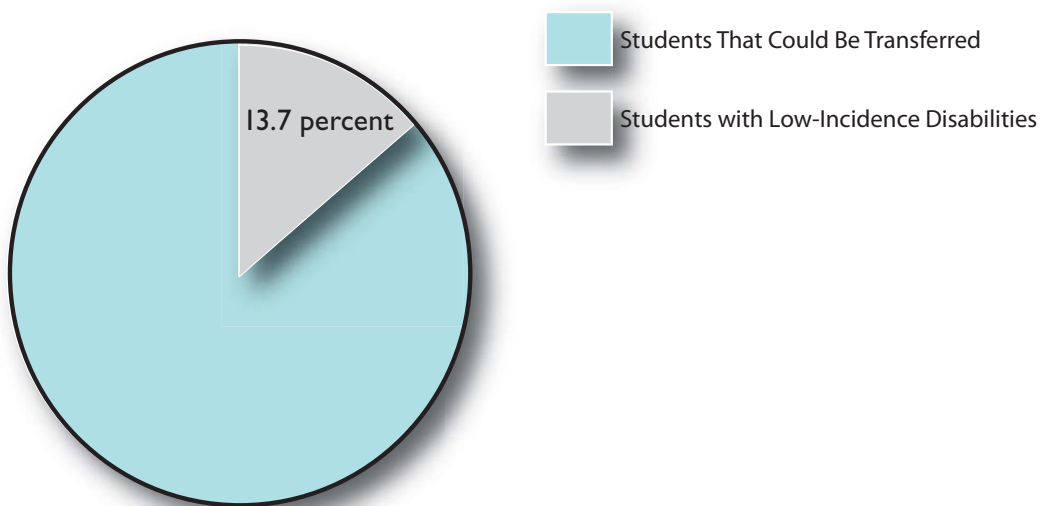
Many severely disabled students served by the county office integrate with the students on the regular education campus where the program is located. However, this is not a pervasive practice and is usually prompted by the individual principal and county office teacher(s).

While districts do not receive bill-backs from the county office for services provided to their students, they are concerned that state aid and federal local assistance may support programs that are not as cost-effective as those operated by individual districts. Since all funds for program operation come "off the top," no state aid is available to help districts with excess costs.

Some districts want to determine whether they should provide some of these services instead of the county office. As a result, they requested that FCMAT analyze the fiscal effects of pursuing this course of action. The county office and SELPA recognize these issues and intend to cooperate with the districts in discussing and planning for a possible transfer of programs.

In the 2008-09 fiscal year, the county office provided special education services to 211 disabled students who were of school age. One-hundred forty-three had severe disabilities, and 68 had nonsevere disabilities. Removing the 29 students with low-incidence disabilities, FCMAT estimates that 182 disabled students could be considered for transfer to services provided by the school districts. Of these, 68 had nonsevere disabilities; 14 with other health impairments; 53 with specific learning disabilities and one with a speech/language disability. Unless these disabilities have resulted in extraordinary educational needs, most of the 68 students could probably be provided services in district-operated classes. Forty-five of the remaining 114 students exhibited serious emotional disturbance; 42 were mentally retarded; 21 displayed autistic mannerisms; and six were multidisabled. This number does not represent the county office's 46 Early Start students.

TOTAL NUMBER OF DISABLED STUDENTS



The North Santa Cruz County Schools may pursue the possibility of serving some or all the 68 nonsevere students, and the districts may serve the 114 students with severe disabilities. If these changes occur, there should be a high level of openness for all concerned including the parents of district students in county office programs, the county office and its staff, and district staff. This will be particularly sensitive since students will be served by another school district. It is important for parents and school board members to clearly understand the collaborative nature of these programs.

If North Santa Cruz County Schools moves toward transferring programs, it should consider hiring one additional full-time program specialist. This individual should have expertise in the nature and needs of students with moderate to severe disabilities, including autism, emotional disturbance and behavior management, developmental delays, and medical fragility. In addition, the program specialist should be knowledgeable in curriculum and program planning for these students.

The responsibilities of this employee would include planning for program transition, organizing and/or providing training for district staff, conducting transfer IEP meetings for all students, monitoring and implementing programs for the students transferred, assisting with CAPA testing, assisting with classroom behavioral issues, and serving as liaison for any county office services.

FCMAT conducted an analysis of the comparative budgets, the unduplicated counts of pupils with disabilities, and other reports from the county office and school districts. The data is as follows:

District	5001 Unspecified	5710 Infant	5730 Preschool	5750 Severely Disabled	5770 Nonseverely disabled	Total
Santa Cruz COE	\$8,393.40	\$18,301.25	\$52,416.16	\$36,347.35	\$8,438.05	\$35,896.37
Scotts Valley	\$1,809.71	-	\$15,873.45	\$20,697.26	\$11,858.00	\$15,323.39
Santa Cruz City Schools	\$3,455.43	-	\$5,182.06	\$34,713.45	\$7,218.13	\$13,715.49
Bonny Doon	\$1,087.72	-	(6,827.10)	\$12,894.67	\$12,564.09	\$12,764.89
Happy Valley	\$2,133.36	-	-	-	\$15,351.02	\$12,367.37
Live Oak	\$2,764.91	-	\$3,221.13	\$4,930.69	\$9,772,976	\$11,222.26
Soquel	\$1,700.25	-	\$7,303.72	\$18,076.55	\$7,072.00	\$10,210.97
Pacific	\$1,088.01	-	-	-	\$8,524.15	\$9,156.41
San Lorenzo Valley	\$3,072,38	-	\$2,216.02	\$13,324.76	\$4,820.32	\$8,798.71
Mountain	\$1,204.06	-	-	-	\$6,698.14	\$7,567.29

In 2008-09, the county office served 278 students with disabilities at a cost of \$9,929,190 or \$35,896 per pupil. The districts' expenditures per pupil ranged from \$7,567 to \$15,323.

The county office expended \$5,197,671 for services for 143 students with severe disabilities for a per-student rate of \$36,347. The other regional program provider, Santa Cruz City Schools, expended a total of \$3,749,053, or \$34,713 per student, for its 108 students with severe disabilities. The next highest expenditure-per-student rate for disabled students was Scott Valley with a cost of \$20,697. Compared to Scott Valley, the expenditure rates per severely disabled student for the two current regional program providers were 176 percent greater for the county office and

TRANSFER OF PROGRAMS

168 percent greater for Santa Cruz City Schools. This strongly suggests that the county office's cost per severely disabled student are comparable to that of other providers.

The county office expended \$2,233,365 for unspecified support services or \$8,393 per pupil, more than twice the amount per pupil expended by Santa Cruz City Schools. This difference reflects these student's needs, which require more labor-intensive services and a greater variety of related services. In fact, many of these students receive three or more services in areas such as speech, physical therapy, occupational therapy, adaptive physical education, behavior management, health and nursing, and specialized health care. These students also have a higher need for one-on-one assistance from instructional aides.

When compared to five other county offices, the Santa Cruz County Office of Education's costs per student are within the normal range as shown below.

County Office	Cost Per Pupil
Ventura	\$37,160.82
San Joaquin	\$36,425.96
Santa Barbara	\$36,075.54
Santa Cruz	\$35,896.37
Los Angeles	\$32,763.54
Contra Costa	\$26,780.00

Student needs will still need to be met even if districts begin providing these services.

Consequently, the districts may see an exponential increase in per-pupil costs. After a transfer of services, the districts probably will not receive sufficient funding to cover the full impact of increased costs. In addition, cost containment and consolidation of resources may be hindered if the programs are distributed throughout the county.

The districts have an insufficient number of appropriately qualified staff members to address the needs of these students. Staff members that perform related services will be necessary in addition to qualified teachers of students with severe disabilities such as autism, mental retardation, and emotional disturbance. Without additional personnel, the current level of speech therapy services could be insufficient. Other related service personnel such as physical and occupational therapists, adaptive physical education therapists, nursing and specialized services personnel would also need to be on staff.

The districts have limited direct experience with severely disabled students. In addition to having qualified special education staff members, districts will need to train their general education teaching staff to work with these students. Program transfers stand a better chance of success when all parties are adequately prepared.

If North Santa Cruz County Schools opts for this change, it should develop a long-term plan for the transfer of program operations for students with severe disabilities. A change of this magnitude should not be attempted in one or two years. With thorough preparation, the earliest that any program should be transferred would be the 2012-13 school year, with the process continuing over two or three years. However, consideration could be given to transferring students with nonsevere disabilities as early as 2011-12.

Recommendations

The district should:

Determine whether the districts can fiscally and logistically provide appropriate programs for the special-education students to be transferred.

Develop a long-term systematic plan for transferring program operations from the county office to the districts when appropriate.

Establish and utilize ways for those affected by the transfers to be involved in planning and implementation, especially parents and teachers.

Develop and implement an appropriate supervision and support system with a sufficient number of knowledgeable supervisory staff and program specialists.

Develop and adopt the policies and operational regulations/procedures necessary to educate the transferred students before they are actually transferred.

Preschool Services

In the table titled “Cost per Student Per Student By Goal Summary” above, Goal 5730 represents the expenditure rate per student for the preschool population. There is clearly a great disparity among SELPA members regarding these rates.

Services for disabled preschool children were largely provided by the county office in years past, but school districts gradually assumed a much larger role.

The funds available to provide these services come from the following sources:

- Two federal grants
- Some proportion of the AB 602 base funding based on the relative value of instructional personnel service units for this population when the J-50 funding model was converted to the AB 602 funding model

Whatever additional program resources individual providers opt to dedicate to serving this population

Given the limited nature of the resources and the expanding role that districts are playing in providing preschool services, North Santa Cruz County Schools should re-evaluate its allocation of these resources and develop a service design that uses available resources for the benefit of all SELPA members.

Recommendations

North Santa Cruz County Schools should:

1. Review the current allocation of preschool resources to achieve greater equitability among the providers.
2. Develop a multiyear plan for districts to assume responsibility for these services while recognizing that because of some disabilities, the need for regional programs operated by the county office and/or specified school districts will continue.

Transportation

Of the 13 SELPA local educational agencies (LEAs), six provide or contract for some special education transportation services. The five school districts operating their own special education transportation program are as follows:

1. Live Oak School District, K-8
2. San Lorenzo Valley Unified
3. Santa Cruz City Schools, K-5 and Santa Cruz High School District, 6-12*
4. Scotts Valley Unified
5. Soquel Union Elementary, K-8

**Santa Cruz City Schools and Santa Cruz High School District have a common school board and administrative support unit.*

The Scotts Valley Unified School District contracts for transportation through a private contractor, Student Transportation of America, STA. The Santa Cruz County Office of Education incorporates transportation for six students with the same provider, but it does not physically provide any school bus transportation.

The county office eliminated its in-house transportation program in the 1990s because of escalating excess-cost charge-backs to the contracting districts, and the districts assumed responsibility for their own special education transportation. All districts reinstated or increased existing special needs transportation support and reclaimed responsibility for their own reimbursement on the state TRAN report.

All five SELPA districts with special education transportation programs are small to moderate in size. Most participant districts have experienced declining enrollment and reduced or eliminated their nonmandated home-to-school transportation programs.

Operations and Efficiency

The county office and six school districts that do not receive a state reimbursement for transportation and rarely provide transportation services are as follows:

1. Santa Cruz County Office of Education (contracts for six students to receive transportation through their nonpublic contract provider)
2. Bonny Doon Union Elementary School District, K-6
3. Delta Charter School
4. Happy Valley Elementary School District, K-6
5. Mountain Elementary School District, K-6
6. Pacific Collegiate Charter
7. Pacific Elementary School District, K-6

These districts occasionally have students require special education transportation. In that case, individual arrangements are made that include parent in-lieu contracts, district employee assignments, other parent contracts, and the use of taxi cabs.

The SELPA districts that receive a state reimbursement for home-to-school transportation and/or severely disabled/orthopedically impaired (SD/OI) students are as follows:

1. Live Oak School District, K-8
2. San Lorenzo Valley Unified
3. Santa Cruz City Schools, K-5 and Santa Cruz High School District, 6-12
4. Scotts Valley Unified
5. Soquel Union Elementary, K-8

Some districts that receive state apportionments for both home-to-school and SD/OI special education transportation do not provide regular education transportation. However, they protect this apportionment by claiming their non-SD/OI special education students under home-to-school state apportionment revenue. This is becoming more common and is acceptable under California Education Code Section 41850.

Each district supporting a special education transportation program has varying encroachments on the general operating fund. The State Department of Education ceased fully funding transportation in 1977 and capped LEA reimbursements in the 1982-83 school year. Since then, school districts have reduced or eliminated their nonmandated home-to-school transportation programs.

Numerous school districts transport only students requiring transportation as a related support service according to their Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). Some continue to transport home-to-school regular education students in small numbers. According to data from the 2008-09 state TRAN reports, the transportation services of the above five districts encroach on their general funds by the following percentages:

1. Live Oak School District, K-8=**5.7%**
2. San Lorenzo Valley Unified=**62.7%**
3. Santa Cruz City Schools, K-5 and Santa Cruz High School District, 6-12=**35.3%**
4. Scotts Valley Unified=**89.7%**
5. Soquel Union Elementary, K-8=**22.9%**

The special education transportation encroachments of four of the five districts are significant, with Scotts Valley reaching nearly 90% encroachment. Each school district has curtailed transportation services to minimal levels, with many transporting only their mandated, IEP required special education students.

Supervisory and vehicle maintenance positions were often reduced or eliminated, and transportation oversight tasks are performed by other support staff members or by a contractor as in the case of Scotts Valley Unified. Most SELPA districts providing transportation support services operate minimal service for only those students requiring transportation service. They have few options for further reductions.

The Live Oak and Soquel districts operate with low encroachment percentages. Some SELPA districts may have had higher state reimbursement amounts than others and may have used their home-to-school reimbursements to decrease their special education transportation expense using the approach described above.

Cooperation

Except for a county office transportation program that was disbanded in the early 1990s, there are few cooperative efforts between districts. While districts such as Live Oak and Soquel combine extended school year students for efficiency, all five SELPA districts with transportation programs work independently of one another. The student load factor (the total number of students divided by school buses reported on the State TRAN report) could be improved through cooperative efforts, any attempt to create a joint venture would probably be highly resisted by organized labor because of Senate Bill 1419. This legislation resulted in Education Code section 45103.1, ED45103.1, making it generally prohibitive to contract with another public or private entity for existing services if these were not in place before the creation of SB1419 in 2002. However, since Scotts Valley Unified contracts for all its special education transportation services, other LEAs in the area could competitively respond to any requests for proposals to perform their transportation requirements.

Scotts Valley Unified is centrally located and close to the more urban area of the city of Santa Cruz for easy access. Each SELPA district's buses have a low student load factor. This suggests a lack of efficiency created by any one district's inability to sufficiently load its own buses with students, stay within a reasonable student ride time, and meet county office and district bell schedules. These schedules all generally start within 30 minutes of each other. The student load factors for each SELPA district with a transportation program are as follows:

1. Live Oak School District, K-8=7.3 students average per run
2. San Lorenzo Valley Unified=9.0 students average per run
3. Santa Cruz City Schools, K-5 and Santa Cruz High School District, 6-12*=2.7 students per run
4. Scotts Valley Unified=3.0 students per run
5. Soquel Union Elementary, K-8=10.0 students per run

Scotts Valley Unified should explore potential increased efficiency and savings that could be attained by contracting with a neighboring school district such as San Lorenzo Valley Unified or Santa Cruz City Schools. A cooperative contract between Scotts Valley Unified and one other school district could create increased school bus equipment efficiency for both school districts as well as result in operational savings for both entities.

Recommendations

The SELPA school districts should:

1. Continue to explore ways to cooperate by assisting each other with transportation needs.
2. Encourage Scotts Valley Unified to determine whether neighboring SELPA districts are interested in responding to its request for proposal for transportation services.

Communication

Communication should be more open and inclusive between the SELPA and its member districts that provide special education transportation services. Meetings to discuss transportation were implemented in the past, but ceased as county office leadership changed. Meetings between the SELPA and its participants should be led by the SELPA and address common interests and challenges.

Transportation providers are seldom directly contacted to discuss potentially contentious IEPs. As a result, critical decisions are sometimes made without consulting providers.

Recommendations

The SELPA should:

1. Implement and facilitate a formal SELPA transportation governance committee composed of transportation providers, and schedule regular meetings to discuss common interests.
2. Involve transportation providers in potentially contentious IEP meetings when key transportation decisions will be made.

County Office and District Special Education Program Bell Schedules

A review of SELPA district and county office bell schedules for special education programs found that they all start between 8 a.m. and 8:30 a.m., many between 8 a.m. and 8:15 a.m. Therefore, the five SELPA districts attempt to provide transportation to the county office and other district programs within 30 minutes. A staggered bell schedule would allow transportation providers to use their fleets more efficiently and optimize existing resources, allowing some to reduce routing.

Field interviews indicated that the closeness of county office start times presents a serious challenge and is a major factor in the inability to increase student load factors on specific bus runs. Some districts believe they use more buses because they have insufficient time to perform second or third runs. In addition, reasonable ride times would be exceeded if they attempted to increase passenger counts to serve several programs starting simultaneously or within 30 minutes of each other. The SELPA should initiate discussions to determine the benefits of staggering county office start and end times

The lack of a common calendar between the county office and districts exposes districts to increased costs. Minimum days with early dismissal times are not calendared collectively. This prevents districts from saving on labor costs by temporarily ceasing operations when they are not needed since some programs remain in operation and require transportation.

SELPA districts that provide transportation to county office and district programs keep students on buses until the program start time because the program staffs will not accept responsibility until then. Many district and county offices stipulate in their contracts that students are to be accepted at a delivery time that is 10 to 15 minutes before the start time. This ensures program minutes are achieved and allows for transportation providers to gain route time for the next tier or bus run.

Staggered bell schedules and earlier drop-off times allow for an increased delivery window for the providers' next bus run. The SELPA should facilitate discussions with the county programs to arrange for acceptable program delivery windows. In addition, the SELPA districts providing transportation services should work with each other to stagger their district bell schedules and acceptable student delivery times.

Recommendations

The SELPA should:

1. Facilitate discussions on behalf of their participant districts to work with the county office in staggering program start/end times to best meet the needs of the districts.
2. Work with the county office to implement a reasonable student delivery time that is 10 to 15 minutes before each county-office program start time.
3. Encourage all participant school districts to work with their leadership to cooperatively design a countywide school district bell schedule.
4. Take the lead in advocating for a countywide master calendar for all SELPA participants.

Appendices

- A. Sample Tables and Forms
- B. SELPA Funding Model Overview
- C. Los Angeles County Office of Education Training
- D. Study Agreement

Sample Tables and Forms

Sample Treasurer's Report
North Santa Cruz County SELPA
Treasurer's Report

SELPA Revenue and Expenditures	
<u>Beginning Balance and Revenue</u>	
Beginning Balance, July 1, 2009	\$0.00
Revenue	\$0.00
Less Funding Transfer from SELPA to SCCOE Operated Programs	(\$0.00)
Total Beginning Balance and Revenue for 2009-10	\$0.00
<u>Expenditures</u>	
Computer Software	\$0.00
I/P Copier Charges	\$0.00
I/P Advertising (i.e. Position Openings)	\$0.00
Other Supplies and Operating Expenses	\$0.00
County/District Contracts	\$0.00
Medical Services (if applicable)	\$0.00
Total Expenditures for 2009-10	\$0.00
Ending Balance, June 30, 2010	\$0.00
2009-10 SELPA Grants and Revenue	\$0.00
Percentage of Ending Balance to SELPA Grants & Revenue	0%

Sample “Off-the-Top” Funding Model Table

Santa Cruz County Office of Education Off-the-Top Model			
Santa Cruz County Office of Education	Dec 1, 2009 Pupil Count	Amount Per Student	Total Cost of Service
PROGRAM COSTS			
Severely Disabled (SH) Center	0	\$0.00	\$0.00
Severely Disabled (SH) Integrated Site	0	\$0.00	\$0.00
Non Severe (if applicable)	0	\$0.00	\$0.00
Vocational Education (ATP)	0	\$0.00	\$0.00
Emotionally Disturbed (ED)	0	\$0.00	\$0.00
Autism	0	\$0.00	\$0.00
Early Start Program	0	\$0.00	\$0.00
Resource Specialist Program (RSP) – Court Community (if applicable)	0	\$0.00	\$0.00
ITINERANT COSTS	FTE of Service Provided	Amount per -- FTE	
Adapted Physical Education (APE)	0	\$0.00	\$0.00
Speech & Language (SL)	0	\$0.00	\$0.00
Deaf & Hard of Hearing (DHH)	0	\$0.00	\$0.00
Orientation and Mobility (OM)	0	\$0.00	\$0.00
Orthopedically Impaired (OI)	0	\$0.00	\$0.00
Visually Impaired (VI)	0	\$0.00	\$0.00
Services Provided by District Name	Dec. 09 Pupil Count	Amount Per Student	
Deaf & Hard of Hearing (DHH) (Preschool)	0	\$0.00	\$0.00
Deaf & Hard of Hearing (DHH) (K-8)	0	\$0.00	\$0.00
Deaf & Hard of Hearing (DHH) (9-12)	0	\$0.00	\$0.00
Orthopedically Impaired (OI)	0	\$0.00	\$0.00
Visually Impaired (VI)	0	\$0.00	\$0.00
Emotionally Disturbed (ED)	0	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Student Costs Per District before Revenue Offset			\$0.00
Revenue Generated per Pupil			\$0.00
Revenue Limit			\$0.00
Lottery Revenue			\$0.00

Instructional Materials			\$0.00
Sub-Total on Revenues Generated by Pupil			\$0.00
Adjusted District Student Costs			\$0.00
Percentage of Special Education Students being served compared to total District K-12 ADA			

Note: Additional costs currently being paid with Medi-Cal and MAA funds
 Uncertain on the future of the continuation of receiving these funds

Over and above excess costs not included in actual costs above
 Including but not limited to behavioral specialists, specialized physical health care, one-on-one nurse support, one-on-one aide - transportation and or classroom support, OT/PT services, medical consultation and Interpreters

Subject to updates – November 1 and April 1

Sample Form for Program Costs

SCCOE Operated Special Education Chart of Programs/Services 2009/10		
	Admin Support Costs	\$0.00
	Sub-Total Support Costs	\$0.00
	DIRECT SERVICE COSTS	
(Examples: ED & SH)	Severely Disabled (SH) SDC	\$0.00
	Vocational Education (ATP) SDC	\$0.00
	Severe & Vocational Education (ATP) Instructional Aides	\$0.00
	Intervention Services	\$0.00
	Intervention Instructional Aides	\$0.00
	RSP Court/Community (if applicable)	\$0.00
	RSP Court/Community Instructional Aides (if applicable)	\$0.00
	Speech	\$0.00
	Speech Instructional Aides (if applicable)	\$0.00
	Audiologist	\$0.00
	Visually Impaired (VI) Itinerant Staff	\$0.00
	Deaf & Hard of Hearing (DHH) Itinerant Staff	\$0.00
	Orientation & Mobility (O&M) Itinerant Staff	\$0.00
	Orthopedically Impaired (OI) Itinerant Staff	\$0.00
	Adaptive Physical Education (APE) Itinerant Staff	\$0.00
	Autism SDC	\$0.00
	Autism Classified Instructional Aides	\$0.00
	Nonsevere SDC (if applicable)	\$0.00
	Nonsevere Instructional Aides (if applicable)	\$0.00
	Early Start Program	\$0.00
	Assistive Technology (AT)	\$0.00
	Out of Home Care	\$0.00
	Physical Therapy	\$0.00
	Special Circumstance Instructional Aides (SCIAs)	\$0.00
	Home Instruction	\$0.00
	DIS Support to Special Day Class	
	Nurses	\$0.00
	OT Services	\$0.00
	Psychologists	\$0.00
	Specialists	\$0.00
	Extra Help Instructional Aides	\$0.00
	Sub-Total Direct Costs	\$0.00
	Total Administrative Support / Direct Costs	\$0.00
	Contracted Services	

Administrative / Direct Services	\$0.00
Program Operational Costs	\$0.00
Total SCCOE Budget	\$0.00
REVENUES – Revenue Limit	\$0.00
Preschool	\$0.00
J-50 Infant	\$0.00
Infant Part C	\$0.00

Sample Chart for Programs and Services

SCCOE Operated Special Education Programs Chart of Programs/Services 2009/10	
Setting/Program	Center Name/Program Name
<u>Administrative Staff</u>	<u>FTE</u>
Management Staff	0
Secretarial	0
Fiscal Analyst	0
	<u>Costs</u>
Custodial	\$0.00
<u>CENTER BASED</u>	
Staff to Student Ratio	Number of Staff
Classes	0
Teachers	0
Instructional Aides	0
Enrollment	0
<u>INTEGRATED SH</u>	
Elementary Staff to Student Ratio	
Secondary Staff to Student Ratio	Number of Staff
Classes	0
Teachers	0
Instructional Aides	0
Enrollment	0
<u>VOCATIONAL EDUCATION (ATP)</u>	
Staff to Student Ratio	Number of Staff
Services/Classes	0
Staff/Teachers	0
Instructional Aides	0
Enrollment	0
Nurses	___ FTE
Psychologists	___ FTE
Specialists	___ FTE
<u>SPEECH/LANGUAGE SERVICES</u>	
Specialists	0

Instructional Aides	0
Caseloads	0
AVG. Caseload	0
** ___ districts & ___ charter schools	
<u>SPEECH SPECIALISTS</u>	
Autism	0
Caseloads	0
AVG. Caseload	0
Bilingual Assessor	0
<u>AUDIOLOGIST</u>	
Caseloads	0
AVG. Caseload	0
<u>VISUALLY IMPAIRED (VI)</u>	
Staff/Teachers	0
Instructional Aides	0
Tech Support	0
Caseloads	0
AVG. Caseload	0
<u>DEAF & HARD OF HEARING (DHH)</u>	
Staff/Teachers	0
Instructional Aides	0
Caseloads	0
<u>ORIENTATION & MOBILITY (OM)</u>	
Specialists	0
Instructional Aides	0
Caseloads	0
<u>ORTHOPEDEICALLY IMPAIRED (OI)</u>	
Staff/Teachers	0
Instructional Aides	0
Caseloads	0
AVG. Caseload	0

<u>ADAPTED PHYSICAL EDUCATION (APE)</u>	
Specialists	0
Instructional Aides	0
Caseloads	0
AVG. Caseload	0
*Plus ___ for SD specially designed program	
<u>AUTISM – SDC</u>	
Classes	0
Staff/Teachers	0
Instructional Aides	0
Classified	0
Enrollment	0
<u>EARLY START PROGRAM</u>	
Coordinator	0
Certificated Staff	0
Instructional Aides	0
Classified	0
Students	0
<u>ALL OTHER (i.e. PHYSICAL THERAPY, ETC.)</u>	
Staff	0
Students	0
Nurses	___ FTE
Psychologists	___ FTE
**Speech pathologist support is reflected in the total Speech/Language Services	

Sample Chart for Summary of Classroom Costs

SCCOE Operated Programs Summary of Classrooms Costs 2009/10			
Center Name - Severely Disabled (SH)	Salary		
Teacher Name	\$0.00		
Teacher Name	\$0.00		
Teacher Name	\$0.00		
<i>Number of Classes</i> ____			
Total Salary		\$0.00	
AVG Center Salary		\$0.00	
School Name – Severely Disabled (SH) Integrated Sites	Salary		
Teacher Name	\$0.00		
Teacher Name	\$0.00		
Teacher Name	\$0.00		
Teacher Name	\$0.00		
Teacher Name	\$0.00		
Teacher Name	\$0.00		
Total Salary		\$0.00	
<i>Number of Classes</i> ____			
AVG Integrated Sites Salaries		\$0.00	
Instructional Aides ____ FTE		\$0.00	
DIS Services & Operational costs per Class			
Nurses ____ FTE		\$0.00	
Occupational Therapist (OT) Services ____ FTE		\$0.00	
Psychologists _____ days a week		\$0.00	
Speech ____ FTE		\$0.00	
Adaptive Physical Education (APE) ____ FTE		\$0.00	
Low Incidence ____ FTE		\$0.00	
Total		\$0.00	
Severely Disabled (SH) Center Operational Costs		\$0.00	
Severely Disabled (SH) Administration Costs		\$0.00	
Administrator Costs		\$0.00	
Severely Disabled (SH) Center Classroom Cost		\$0.00	
Staff to Student Ratio 0:0		\$0.00	
Severely Disabled (SH) Integrated Classroom Cost		\$0.00	
Staff to Student Ratio 0:0		\$0.00	
SCCOE Operated Programs Summary of Classrooms Costs 2009/10			

Emotionally Disturbed (ED) Classrooms	Salary	
Teacher Name	\$0.00	
Teacher Name	\$0.00	
Teacher Name	\$0.00	
<i>Number of Classes</i> ____		
Total Salary	\$0.00	
AVG Class Salary	\$0.00	
Instructional Aides ____ FTE	\$0.00	
DIS Services & Operational costs per Class		
Nurses ____ FTE	\$0.00	
Occupational Therapist Services ____ FTE	\$0.00	
Psychologists ____ days a week	\$0.00	
Speech Therapists (ST) ____ FTE	\$0.00	
Adaptive Physical Education (APE) ____ FTE	\$0.00	
Low Incidence ____ FTE	\$0.00	
Physical Therapy (PT) ____ FTE	\$0.00	
Total	\$0.00	
Program Operational Costs	\$0.00	
ED/SH Administration Costs	\$0.00	
Administrator Costs	\$0.00	
Program Classroom Cost	\$0.00	
Staff to Student Ratio 0:0	\$0.00	
SCCOE Operated Programs Summary of Classrooms Costs 2009/10		
Vocational Education (ATP)	Salary	
Teacher Name	\$0.00	
Teacher Name	\$0.00	
<i>Number of Classes</i> ____		
Total Salary	\$0.00	
AVG Class Salary	\$0.00	
Instructional Aides ____ FTE	\$0.00	
DIS Services & Operational costs per Class		
Nurses ____ FTE	\$0.00	
Occupational Therapist Services ____ FTE	\$0.00	
Psychologists ____ days a week	\$0.00	
Speech Therapists (ST) ____ FTE	\$0.00	

Adaptive Physical Education (APE) ___ FTE	\$0.00
Low Incidence ___ FTE	\$0.00
Physical Therapist (PT) ___ FTE	\$0.00
Total	\$0.00
Program Operational Costs	\$0.00
SH Administration Costs	\$0.00
Administrator Costs	\$0.00
Program Classroom Cost	\$0.00
Staff to Student Ratio 0:0	\$0.00
SCCOE Operated Programs Summary of Classrooms Costs 2009/10	
Autism Classes	Salary
Teacher Name	\$0.00
Teacher Name	\$0.00
Teacher Name	\$0.00
Teacher Name	\$0.00
<i>Number of Classes ___</i>	
Total Salary	\$0.00
AVG Class Salary	\$0.00
Instructional Aides ___ FTE	\$0.00
DIS Services & Operational costs per Class	
Nurses ___ FTE	\$0.00
Occupational Therapist Services ___ FTE	\$0.00
Psychologists _____ days a week	\$0.00
Speech Therapists (ST) ___ FTE	\$0.00
Adaptive Physical Education (APE) ___ FTE	\$0.00
Low Incidence ___ FTE	\$0.00
Total	\$0.00
Program Operational Costs	\$0.00
SH Administration Costs	\$0.00
Administrator Costs	\$0.00
Program Classroom Cost	\$0.00
Staff to Student Ratio 0:0	\$0.00
SCCOE Operated Programs Summary of Classrooms Costs 2009/10	
Early Start Program	Salary

Teacher Name		\$0.00
Teacher Name		\$0.00
	<i>Number of Classes</i> ___	
	Total Salary	\$0.00
	AVG Class Salary	\$0.00
	Instructional Aides ___ FTE	\$0.00
DIS Services & Operational costs per Class		
	Nurses ___ FTE	\$0.00
	Occupational Therapist Services ___ FTE	\$0.00
	Psychologists _____ days a week	\$0.00
	Speech Therapists (ST) ___ FTE	\$0.00
	Adaptive Physical Education (APE) ___ FTE	\$0.00
	Low Incidence ___ FTE	\$0.00
	Physical Therapist (PT) ___ FTE	\$0.00
	Total	\$0.00
	Program Operational Costs	\$0.00
	SH Administration Costs	\$0.00
	Administrator Costs	\$0.00
	Program Classroom Cost	\$0.00
	Staff to Student Ratio 0:0	\$0.00

Sample Forms for Special Day Class Loading

.Special Education Class Loading Recap		
Month ____, Ending _____		
Program Name (Number of Classes)		
Site Name: Chrysalis Center (example)	Grade	Enrollment
Teacher Name (Class)		0
Teacher Name (Class)		0
Teacher Name (Class)		0
Teacher Name (Class)		0
Teacher Name (Class)		0
Teacher Name (Class)		0
SUBTOTAL (Max #)		Total Enrollment
Program Name (Number of Classes)		
Site Name: Santa Cruz City Schools (example)	Grade	Enrollment
Teacher Name (Class)		0
Teacher Name (Class)		0
Teacher Name (Class)		0
Teacher Name (Class)		0
Teacher Name (Class)		0
Teacher Name (Class)		0
SUBTOTAL (Max #)		Total Enrollment
Number of Referrals		
0 Total Referrals enrolled in Moderate/Severe Program		
0 Total Referrals not enrolling in Moderate/Severe Program		
0 Pending Referrals for Moderate/Severe Program		
0 Total Referrals for Moderate/Severe Program		
0 Total Referrals enrolled in Autism Program		
0 Total Referrals not enrolling in Autism Program		
0 Pending Referrals for Autism Program		
0 Total Referrals for Autism Program		
0 Total Referrals enrolled in ED Program		
0 Total Referrals not enrolling in ED Program		
0 Pending Referrals for ED Program		
0 Total Referrals for ED Program		

SELPA Funding Models Overview

SELPA	Pupil Count	Basic Allocation	Adjustments	Separate Pools
Placer County	7,041	ADA	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Current year SH student count is funded at base rate of \$16,000. 2. Students with LI disability who receive intensive services (1:1 aide, interpreter, or placement in an SDC generate additional \$5,000 in funding. 3. Since preschool students do not generate revenue limit, funding is calculated annually using the current average Placer County elementary school district funded revenue limit. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Programs for NPS/LCI students are funded from Out-of-home-care funds.
Butte County	3,974	ADA	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 50% of new money is allocated by ADA and 50% applied toward equalization. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. NPS/NPA reimbursed for 70% of the cost.
Tehama County	1,006	ADA		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Priorities Fund: \$450,000 is maintained annually: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. \$200,000 toward bill back b. Cover deficit incurred in regionalized services budget c. Leftover funds used to cover costs incurred any extraordinary cost incurred by a district. 2. LCI Bed Count funds <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First priority is to pay for 100% of the cost of placing LCI students in non-public schools less the ADA that they generate and 100% of the cost of non-public agency services. • Students placed in Non Public Schools who are not LCI students will be paid for 50% DOR, 50% LCI funds. • Cover the Cost for the SELPA Behavior Program, which includes a Behavior Specialist and support staff

SELPA Funding Models Overview

					less the districts reimbursement of 70% cost of the Intensive Behavior Interventionists. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The remaining amount will be used to reimburse districts for the purposes described above and/or the creation of new SELPA programs as necessary.
San Luis Obispo	3,992	ADA		1. Juvenile/court allocation is funded annually at \$47,248 and is increased by COLA annually.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> NPS/NPA pool: districts reimbursed at 50% or less of cost based on proration. NPS costs are funded first and if any funds remain a prorated amount covers NPA costs. LEA high cost pool: \$300,000. Districts access for high costs to include legal costs.
Sonoma County	9,541	50% ADA & 50% Pupil Count Distribution of non-SH dollars is based on the 50% ADA & 50% Pupil Count. SH/Full Inclusion Dollars: Districts receive a dollar amount per SH student (est. \$13,437.87) adjusted by COLA annually		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> SELPA-wide revenues are initially reduced by dollar amounts for the following programs: DHOH/VI Itinerant Program, District Exempt from the 50% ADA and 50% Pupil Count Model, Isolated School District Allocation, District NPS Pool Dollars, District NPA Dollars, Adaptive Technology Center, Federal Grant for Juvenile Court Schools, Behavior Specialists Program, LCI Students Attending COE 6-22 AND SELPA Preschool Programs, CCS Facilities and Equipment, Sign Language Interpreters, LCI Transportation Excess Costs, Santa Rosa DHOH Program, Independent Advocate Program 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> NPS Pool Dollars NPA Pool Dollars
Marin County	3,722	ADA		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Base allocation for COE \$5,359,544 to offset the cost of COE programs. ESY funding distributed to participating districts using 1997 base year funding. NPS/LCI distributed to eligible districts. 	
Riverside County	29,328	ADA		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2% of special education property tax is used 	

SELPA Funding Models Overview

			<p>to fund SH programs. If there is excess revenue after the SH programs are funded the remaining amount is distributed to districts by ADA.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Allocation for independent charters is taken off the top. Out-of-home-care funding is distributed to districts and COE operated SH SDC LCI students. OOHHC funds pay for SELPA psychologist support for LCI students in regional programs. For non SH LCI students, funds 50% COE operated SH average allowance. 	
NW Santa Clara County	14,852	ADA	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> \$6M stays with COE programs to offset the cost of COE programs. Excess Costs for COE programs adjusted from revenue transfers, Districts to COE, based on usage Costs for Inter-district transfers adjusted from revenue transfers, Dist-of-residence to Dist-of-Serv. (revenue follows services) Districts share in costs for serving LCI pupils in SDC programs...LCI Cost Sharing 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Students in out of home placements in NPS and skilled nursing facility funded by out-of-home-care revenue.
Nevada County	1,217	Unit model	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Vision services and deaf and hard of hearing services are taken off the top when they are the sole services for the student. 	
Santa Clarita Valley	6,099	ADA		
Siskiyou County	726	75% ADA/25% pupil count	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> COE programs funded off the top. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> NPS pool Extraordinary cost pool

SELPA Funding Models Overview

Kern County	10,237	ADA	1. Off the top distribution to the COE of \$650,000 apportioned for four special accounts administered by the SELPA Director. (NPS/NPA services, extraordinary health care costs, excess legal expenditures, and medical therapy units (MTU) for CCS.	1. Extraordinary cost pool
San Joaquin County	6,377	ADA	1. Costs for COE operated programs are taken off the top and the remaining amount is distributed by ADA.	
Glenn County	595	Based on SACS coding from districts.		
Contra Costa	8,762	Augmentation 15% for SES using free and reduced lunch count. 85% allocated by CBEDS.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> OOHC funding allocated to districts. LEA of residence receives \$24,655 annually per pupil residing in LCI. Preschool funding allocation at a rate of 8.57% of the available funding to the LEAs of residence of preschoolers. Grants for preschool children are in addition to the allocation plan revenue. A fixed rate adjustment for districts under 901 CBEDS (\$84,876 for 09/09 adjusted by COLA annually.) COE provided District Specified Services are funded based on prior year costs any carry over is distributed back to districts at the end of the year. 	
Yolo County	3,064	ADA	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Funding off the top for regional programs. Funding to hold harmless for districts with declining ADA. Funding for small districts. 	1. NPS pool
East San Gabriel Valley	15,402	80% ADA/20% Pupil count		

ADVANTAGES

- ✓ Uses Adobe Connect
- ✓ Assessment questions for review at the end of each module
- ✓ Reports available for participant completion-tracking mechanism
- ✓ Password can be set to expire after set time frame
- ✓ LACOE is using as a condition of hire
- ✓ CSEA local chapter approval
- ✓ Notes page includes all audio
- ✓ Visual and audio modalities
- ✓ Password protected

INDEX OF COURSES

Course 1 Introduction: Getting Started

Course 2 Division Expectation

Course 3 Say What-Acronyms

Course 4 Student Populations

Module 1 Division of Special Education Facts

Module 2 Division of Juvenile Court School Facts

Module 3 Division of Alternative Education Facts

Course 5 Division of Special Education

Module 1 Division of Special Education Overview

Module 2 Beliefs and Principals

Module 3 Understanding Students with disabilities

Module 4 People First

Module 5 Mobility Opportunities Via Education

Course 6 Juvenile Court Schools

Module 1 Closing the Gate

Module 2 Safety and security

Course 7 Division of Alternative Education

Module 1 Program Characteristics

Course 8 Facilitating student learning

Module 1 Facilitating student learning

Module 2 Academic (Diploma Bound) Students

Module 3 Instructional strategies for academic

Module 4 Academic Readiness (Non Diploma Bound) Students

Course 9 Working in a Team

Module 1 So you want to be a Para Educator-Introduction

Module 2 Top 10 Things

Module 3 Working Together: Teacher-Para Educator Teams

Module 4 Academic Para Duties

Module 5 Academic Readiness Duties

Course 10 Communication

Module 1 Communication Skills

Module 2 Communication Barriers

Module 3 Reading Nonverbal Communication Cues

Module 4 Creating a Foundation for effective communication

Module 5 Dealing With Others

Course 11 Dealing with Behavioral Challenges

Module 1 Classic Behavior Techniques that Backfire

Module 2 Guidelines for handling challenging behaviors

Module 3 Positive Reinforcement systems

Module 4 Behavioral Prevention Strategies

Module 5 Communicative Functions of Behavior

Module 6 Behavior Intervention CAUTIONS

Course 12 Ethics in the Workplace

Module 1 10 Tips to keep Ethical compass

Module 2 Basic Ethical issues

Module 3 Areas of Ethical consideration

Module 4 Confidentiality

Course 13 Child Abuse: An Educator's Responsibilities

Module 1 What is child abuse?

Module 2 Physical Abuse

Module 3 Physical Neglect

Module 4 Sexual Abuse Part I

Module 5 Sexual Abuse Part II

Module 6 Emotional Maltreatment

Module 7 What is not child abuse

Module 8 FAQ

For Purchasing information please contact:
 Tana Donaghy, Donaghy_Tana@lacoed.edu, 562=803-8209

FCMAT

FISCAL CRISIS & MANAGEMENT
ASSISTANCE TEAM

CSIS California School Information Services

**FISCAL CRISIS & MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE TEAM
STUDY AGREEMENT
February 4, 2010**

The FISCAL CRISIS AND MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE TEAM (FCMAT), hereinafter referred to as the Team, and the Soquel Union School District on behalf of the North Santa Cruz County SELPA, hereinafter referred to as the District, mutually agree as follows:

1. BASIS OF AGREEMENT

The Team provides a variety of services to school districts and county offices of education upon request. The District has requested that the Team provide for the assignment of professionals to study specific aspects of the North Santa Cruz County SELPA operations. These professionals may include staff of the Team, County Offices of Education, the California State Department of Education, school districts, or private contractors. All work shall be performed in accordance with the terms and conditions of this Agreement.

2. SCOPE OF THE WORK

A. Scope and Objectives of the Study

The scope and objectives of this study are to:

1. SELPA
 - A. Review Allocation funding model, and compare with other comparable SELPAs and make recommendations, if necessary to improve equitable allocations to all involved.
 - B. Review governance structure of SELPA and make recommendations for improving communication, transparency and improved decision making.
 - C. Review regionalized dollars and how they are disseminated.
 - D. Review role and responsibilities of program specialists, how they are assigned. Make recommendations on how to improve and maximize program specialist dollars and services.
 - E. Review how districts operate collaboratively within the SELPA with regards to accessing resources and support.

- F. Review how staff development is provided to district staff on an equal basis throughout the county.
- G. Review SELPA policies to assure they are current and consistent with federal and state laws.
- 2. Review staffing and caseloads of programs and make recommendations on efficiency. Review all COE programs, and random sample of some district programs.
- 3. Review 1-1 aide policy, procedures and staffing ratios and determine whether process is effective and make recommendations to improve efficiency and effective use of assigned aides to special education.
- 4. Review NPS and NPA placements and make recommendations for improving process for placement.
- 5. Review COE operated programs and determine whether some programs would be more cost effective if operated by districts. Determine capacity of districts to operate additional programs (such as facilities, staffing etc).
- 6. Provide comprehensive transportation review of special education transportation delivery system.

B. Services and Products to be Provided

- 1) Orientation Meeting - The Team will conduct an orientation session at the District to brief District management and supervisory personnel on the procedures of the Team and on the purpose and schedule of the study.
- 2) On-site Review - The Team will conduct an on-site review at the District office and at school sites if necessary.
- 3) Exit Report - The Team will hold an exit meeting at the conclusion of the on-site review to inform the District of significant findings and recommendations to that point.
- 4) Exit Letter - The Team will issue an exit letter approximately 10 days after the exit meeting detailing significant findings and recommendations to date and memorializing the topics discussed in the exit meeting.
- 5) Draft Reports - Sufficient copies of a preliminary draft report will be delivered to the District administration for review and comment.
- 6) Final Report - Sufficient copies of the final study report will be delivered to the District administration following completion of the review.
- 7) Follow-Up Support – Six months after the completion of the study, FCMAT will return to the District, if requested, to confirm the progress in implementing the recommendations included in the report, at no cost. Status of the recommendations will be documented to the District in a FCMAT Management Letter.

3. PROJECT PERSONNEL

The study team will be supervised by Anthony L. Bridges, Deputy Executive Officer, Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team, Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office. The study team may also include:

- A. Bill Gillaspie* *FCMAT Chief Management Analyst*
- B. James Kennedy* *FCMAT Consultant*
- C. Jo Ann Murphy* *FCMAT Consultant*
- D. Tim Purvis* *FCMAT Consultant*
- E. Michael Rae* *FCMAT Consultant*
- F. Trina Frazier* *FCMAT Consultant*

Other equally qualified consultants will be substituted in the event one of the above noted individuals is unable to participate in the study.

4. PROJECT COSTS

The cost for studies requested pursuant to E.C. 42127.8(d)(1) shall be:

- A. \$500.00 per day for each Team Member while on site, conducting fieldwork at other locations, preparing and presenting reports, or participating in meetings.
- B. All out-of-pocket expenses, including travel, meals, lodging, etc. The District will be billed for the daily rate and expenses of the independent consultant, only. Based on the elements noted in section 2 A, the total cost of the study is estimated not to exceed \$27,400.00. The District will be invoiced at actual costs, with 50% of the estimated cost due following the completion of the on-site review and the remaining amount due upon acceptance of the final report by the District.
- C. Any change to the scope will affect the estimate of total cost.

Payments for FCMAT services are payable to Kern County Superintendent of Schools - Administrative Agent.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DISTRICT

- A. The District will provide office and conference room space while on-site reviews are in progress.
- B. The District will provide the following (if requested):
 - 1) A map of the local area
 - 2) Existing policies, regulations and prior reports addressing the study request

- 3) Current organizational charts
- 4) Current and four (4) prior year's audit reports
- 5) Any documents requested on a supplemental listing

C. The District Administration will review a preliminary draft copy of the study. Any comments regarding the accuracy of the data presented in the report or the practicability of the recommendations will be reviewed with the Team prior to completion of the final report.

Pursuant to EC 45125.1(c), representatives of FCMAT will have limited contact with District pupils. The District shall take appropriate steps to comply with EC 45125.1(c).

6. PROJECT SCHEDULE

The following schedule outlines the planned completion dates for key study milestones:

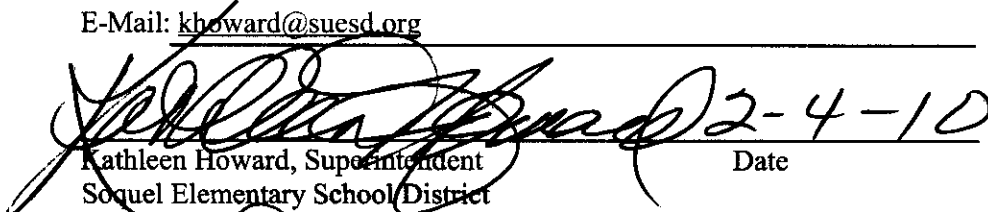
Orientation:	March 15-18, 2010
Staff Interviews:	to be determined
Exit Interviews:	to be determined
Preliminary Report Submitted:	to be determined
Final Report Submitted:	to be determined
Board Presentation:	to be determined
Follow-Up Support:	If requested

7. CONTACT PERSON

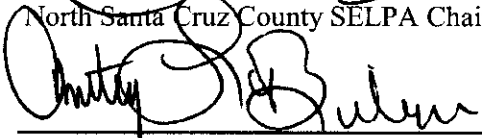
Please print name of contact person: Kathleen Howard, SELPA Chair

Telephone : 831-464-5630 FAX : 831-475-5196

E-Mail: khoward@suesd.org


 Kathleen Howard, Superintendent
 Soquel Elementary School District
 North Santa Cruz County SELPA Chair

2-4-10
Date


 Anthony L. Bridges, Deputy Executive Officer
 Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team

February 4, 2010
Date

In keeping with the provisions of AB1200, the County Superintendent will be notified of this agreement between the District and FCMAT and will receive a copy of the final report.