



Clovis Unified School District

Special Education Review

June 13, 2007

Joel D. Montero
Chief Executive Officer



CSIS California School Information Services

June 13, 2007

Dr. Terry Bradley, Superintendent
Clovis Unified School District
1450 Herndon Avenue
Clovis, California 93611-0567

Dear Superintendent Bradley,

In January 2007, the Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team (FCMAT) entered into an agreement for a Special Education review with the Clovis Unified School District. The request specified that FCMAT would:

1. Review the efficiency and effectiveness of the district's Special Education fiscal and program delivery system.
2. Review the district process on determining the hiring of one-on-one paraprofessionals and make recommendations.
3. Review Special Education staffing ratios and the allocation of FTE teachers to student class size.
4. Review the computerized program the district is attempting to implement regarding IEPs. Make recommendations on effectiveness, timeline for implementation, and cost effectiveness compared to other options that may be available.
5. Review interdepartmental processes, including personnel requisition and position control.
6. Review the organizational structure of the Special Education central office management and clerical staff.
7. Review effective utilization of the current student information system and the CASEMIS systems related to accurate record keeping and decision making tools.
8. Review effectiveness and efficiency of the Special Education budget development and monitoring process and the interface with the business services department.

The attached final report contains the study team's findings with regard to the above areas of review. We appreciate the opportunity to serve you, and we extend our thanks to all the staff of the Clovis Unified School District.

Sincerely,

Joel Montero
Chief Executive Officer

FCMAT

Joel D. Montero, Chief Executive Officer

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Foreword

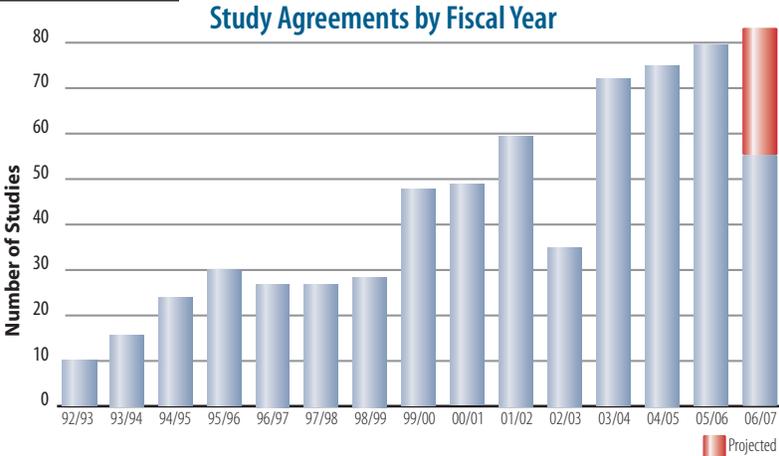
FCMAT Background

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 in complying with fiscal accountability standards.

AB 1200 was established from a need to ensure that local educational agencies 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

Since 1992, FCMAT has been engaged to perform more than 600 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.....	637
Total Number of Districts in CA	982
● Management Assistance.....	603 (94.66%)
● Fiscal Crisis/Emergency	34 (5.34%)
Note: Some districts had multiple studies.	
● Districts (7) that have received emergency loans from the state.	(Rev. 4/3/07)



Introduction

The Clovis Unified School District is located in a fast-growing section of California's Central Valley. Its student population resides in the cities of Clovis and Fresno and surrounding areas. Four comprehensive high schools, four middle schools, and 30 elementary schools, plus community day and independent study programs serve students' educational needs. A seven-member Governing Board oversees district operations.

The educational philosophy of the Clovis Unified School District is based on the principle that "each student shall be given an opportunity to maximize his/her potential in the areas of mind, body and spirit, and become a productive, contributing member of our society." Toward that end, the district offers a full range of Special Education services, with some specialized services offered at designated sites.

In December 2006, the Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team (FCMAT) received a request from the district for a Special Education review. The scope and objectives of the study agreement between the district and FCMAT are as follows:

1. Review the efficiency and effectiveness of the district's Special Education fiscal and program delivery system.
2. Review the district process on determining the hiring of one-on-one paraprofessionals and make recommendations.
3. Review Special Education staffing ratios and the allocation of FTE teachers to student class size.
4. Review the computerized program the district is attempting to implement regarding IEPs. Make recommendations on effectiveness, time line for implementation, and cost effectiveness compared to other options that may be available.
5. Review interdepartmental processes, including personnel requisition and position control.
6. Review the organizational structure of the Special Education central office management and clerical staff.
7. Review effective utilization of the current student information system and the CASEMIS system related to accurate record-keeping and decision-making tools.
8. Review the effectiveness and efficiency of the Special Education budget development and monitoring process and the interface with the Business Services Department.

Study Team

The FCMAT study team was composed of the following members:

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Red Bluff, California

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* As a member of the review team, this individual served as a consultant for FCMAT and did not represent her employer.

Study Guidelines

FCMAT consultants visited the district in March 2007 to conduct interviews, collect data and review documentation. This report is the result of those activities. Findings and recommendations are presented in the following sections:

- Executive Summary
- Fiscal Effectiveness
- Program Effectiveness
- Staffing and Organization
- Management Information System

Executive Summary

Over the last three years, the effectiveness of the district's Special Education fiscal management system appears to have been hampered by the lack of a fiscal analyst position. The district elected to revitalize that position in January 2007, and it has been filled. The fiscal analyst will play a very significant role in assisting the Special Education Department to function within the parameters of the program budget. It appears that the fiscal analyst will facilitate effective budget supervision and regularly convey the fiscal status of the program to department administrators.

The district appropriately utilizes the SACS coding system for its Special Education program except that there seems to be some confusion with regard to "regionalized services" (SACS Goal 5050) and "regionalized program specialist services" (SACS Goal 5060). The district needs to clarify the differences between these two areas. The district might also consider making use of appropriate subgoals to monitor expenditures for a given population or service.

The district takes pride in its efficient and effective educational system for all students and has developed unique educational service models for both general and Special Education. Many of the district's schools are identifying non-performing students and employing alternatives before referring students to Special Education. This has resulted in an identification rate of 7.59%, much lower than the statewide rate of 10.82%. The district has made a major effort to provide alternative educational programs and reduce the number of students served in the mild to moderate disabilities categories, particularly specific learning disabilities and speech and language disorders. The notable exception is students with other health impairments.

Significant increases have occurred in the numbers of students with low incidence disabilities (vision, hearing, and orthopedic impairments) and with autism spectrum disorder. This reflects statewide and nationwide trends. These students require intensive services and very low pupil-to-staff ratios.

The efficient and effective delivery of Special Education programs depends in large part on coordination with other district services. Areas that the district might address to further improve Special Education program delivery are technology, professional development, and curricular alignment. These should be cooperatively reviewed and revised with the appropriate departments.

The greatest portion of fees for legal services in 2005-2006, \$264,195, was for telephone consultations. It is quite probable that other SELPAs have had similar situations and could provide effective strategies for avoiding such a large accrual of legal fees. To deter litigation against the district and reduce the numbers of more difficult cases, and/or the reliance on legal consultation, ongoing professional development must be provided to all staff.

The role of the Program Specialist appears to combine the regionalized duties associated with such a position plus an extensive coordination/supervisory role. The district should consider reviewing these positions and their responsibilities.

Many school sites have fully embraced their students with disabilities and consider them full members of their school communities. Some schools, however, need more training and encouragement to replicate this attitude.

The district receives a very high level of support from parents of students with disabilities and has an excellent reputation.

The district provides a rich educational program and service environment for students by implementing smaller than traditional caseloads and providing appropriate levels of support staff. However, the use and supervision of instructional paraprofessionals needs review and revision, particularly with regard to one-on-one paraprofessionals.

The district lacks an electronic Individualized Education Program (IEP) template. Thus, information from the IEP is not promptly entered into the CASEMIS database. The current CASEMIS system is cumbersome, outdated, does not generate useful and timely information, and has resulted in late reports to the state. The CASEMIS requirements have become far more sophisticated over the last decade and should be handled by a technology analyst. The district should explore implementing a computerized IEP system, even if that means replacing Zangle, which the district now uses for Special Education data reporting.

The current structure of the Special Education Department and its interactions with other key departments should be reviewed and plans developed to improve collaboration among all the departments. Special Education should be structured so that it can expand as district enrollment increases over the next decade, yet remain responsive to students' needs.

Fiscal Effectiveness

Fiscal Analyst

Over the last three years, the effectiveness of the district's Special Education fiscal management appears to have been hampered by the absence of a fiscal analyst position, which was eliminated by necessary budget reductions. This position provides a necessary interface between the district's Business Department and the Special Education Department for the day-to-day implementation of its Special Education budget. In January 2007, the district elected to revitalize the position, which has been filled. The district has directed the analyst to begin working in the Business Department to facilitate understanding its roles, functions, responsibilities, and expectations. The analyst will play a very significant role in assisting the Special Education Department to function within the fiscal parameters of the program's budget.

The staffs of the Business and Special Education departments appear optimistic that reactivating the fiscal analyst position will yield significant improvements. The fiscal analyst and the Business Department staff state that they are already preparing to develop the 2007-08 budget. This suggests that the process of budget development will be cooperative, and the resulting budget may well produce a more accurate fiscal blueprint for the Special Education Department's programs and services.

It appears that the fiscal analyst will facilitate effective budget supervision and will regularly convey the fiscal status of the program to department administrators.

The district has scheduled the fiscal analyst to spend significant time for the first couple of months in the Business Department, which will enable a better grasp and understanding of the department's procedures, practices, and expectations. This bodes well for a greatly improved relationship between the Special Education and Business departments. Given the interwoven nature of Special Education, Business, and Human Resources, the district should strongly consider having the fiscal analyst spend time in the Human Resources Department as well. The position is structured to play a key role in business, personnel, and program operations and could contribute greatly to effective working relationships among these departments.

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Allow a reasonable learning curve for the fiscal analyst to develop knowledge and experience in the position's duties and in interacting with other departments.
2. Provide the fiscal analyst the opportunity to work in the Human Resources Department to become fully familiarized with its procedures, practices and expectations as they relate to Special Education.

Budget Development

A collaborative process for developing the 2007-08 Special Education budget has already begun and should result in a much more accurate and useful budget.

The budget generally uses appropriate SACS codes for Special Education accounting. However, there seems to be a lack of clarity with regard to “regionalized services” (Goal 5050) and “regionalized program specialist services” (Goal 5060).

Regionalized services may include regionalized program specialist services, but the reverse is not true. For example, Goal 5050 may include regionalized program specialist services, but Goal 5060 should not include other regionalized services.

While the district employs the term “program specialist” as a specific job title, most of the duties appear to be program coordination or supervision rather than typical program specialist activities.

The district uses the basic SACS goal codes, but does not use optional subgoal codes to track certain types of Special Education expenditures. For example, Goal 5750 is used for services to students with severe disabilities or low incidence disabilities. Using optional subgoal code 5760-769, the district could monitor the expenditures for low-incidence disabilities. Similarly, the district could monitor expenditures for particular services or for services to specific populations, such as autistic or emotionally disturbed students, by using other goal or function subcodes.

The district uses an Allocated Personnel Unit (APU) system to determine staffing needs and staffing levels at school sites or in specific programs, but there does not appear to be such a system in use for Special Education. The monitoring of staffing needs, particularly for the classified instructional staff, is cumbersome and inefficient. There is often a long lag between opening an instructional assistant position and filling that position.

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Clarify that expenditures are appropriately charged to SACS Goal Codes 5050 and 5060. Refer to Education Code Section 56836.23, which is attached in Appendix A to this report.
2. Review a list of proposed optional subcodes for SACS goal and function codes and determine whether using specific code options would provide the district with meaningful and useful information.
3. Adapt the staffing system for use with Special Education personnel or develop a position control system for use in staffing and budgeting positions in this program.

Program Effectiveness

Historical Data

Clovis Unified School District has developed unique educational service models in both general and Special Education. Many district schools try several alternatives with non-performing students before referring them to Special Education. This has helped reduce identification rates to levels much lower than the statewide averages.

Special Education Pupil Count Data

(1062117 Clovis Unified)

YEAR	CBEDS	Special Education Pupil Count		Dist Res	% +/-
		Dist Svc	% +/-		
2003-2004	34,663	2,932	8.46%	3,021	8.72%
2004-2005	35,344	2,861	8.09%	2,885	8.16%
% +/-	1.96%	-2.42%		-4.50%	
2005-2006	36,378	2,874	7.90%	2,897	7.96%
% +/-	2.93%	0.45%		0.42%	
2006-2007	37,041	2,812	7.59%	Data not available	
% +/-	1.82%	-2.16%			

2003-2007 chg.	6.86%	-4.09%
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The historical pupil count data indicates a steady decline in the number of students requiring Special Education services. The district's Special Education pupil count enrollment (2006-07) of 7.59% is well below the state average of 10.82% (2005-06 pupil count and CBEDS data).

While the district's CBEDS enrollment has increased 6.86% from 2003-04 to 2006-07, the Special Education pupil count has decreased by 4.09%. This reflects district efforts to provide alternative educational programs and reduce the number of students served in the Mild to Moderate Disabilities categories.

Mild to Moderate Disabilities

Year	SLI	OHI	SLD	Total
2003-2004	966	196	1,264	2,426
2004-2005	951	207	1,154	2,312
% +/-	-1.55%	5.61%	-8.70%	-4.70%
2005-2006	951	225	1,094	2,270
% +/-	0.00%	8.70%	-5.20%	-1.82%
2006-2007	907	275	996	2,178
% +/-	-4.63%	22.22%	-8.96%	-4.05%

4-Year % Change	-6.11%	40.31%	-21.20%	-10.22%
4-Year Change in No. of Students	-59	79	-268	-248

The district has had a significant reduction in Severe Learning Disabilities and a smaller decrease in Speech and Language Impaired. Other Health Impaired shows a steep increase. This may affect the duties and workload of the district's health services personnel.

Low Incidence Disabilities

Year	(HH)	(DEAF)	(VI)	(OI)	Total
2003-2004	39	5	32	69	145
2004-2005	38	9	30	69	146
% +/-	-2.56%	80.00%	-6.25%	0.00%	0.69%
2005-2006	43	10	36	65	154
% +/-	13.16%	11.11%	20.00%	-5.80%	5.48%
2006-2007	45	13	47	59	164
% +/-	4.65%	30.00%	30.56%	-9.23%	6.49%

4-Year % Change	15.38%	160.00%	46.88%	-14.49%	13.10%
4-Year Change in No. of Students	6	8	15	-10	19

There is a significant increase in low incidence disabilities service requirements. In the past three years the Hard of Hearing, Deaf and Visually Impaired categories have had significant growth. The new requirements and standards for sign language interpreters may significantly affect the district's budget.

Moderate to Severe Disabilities

Year	(MR)	(ED)	(MD)	(DB)	(AUT)	(TBI)	Total
2003-2004	189	76	2	0	81	13	361
2004-2005	208	76	6	3	94	16	403
% +/-	10.05%	0.00%	200.00%	100.00%	16.05%	23.08%	11.63%
2005-2006	228	78	9	3	116	16	450
% +/-	9.62%	2.63%	50.00%	0.00%	23.40%	0.00%	11.66%
2006-2007	225	82	7	4	136	16	470
% +/-	-1.32%	5.13%	-22.22%	33.33%	17.24%	0.00%	4.44%

4-Year % Change	19.05%	7.89%	250.00%	100.00%	67.90%	23.08%	30.19%
4-Year Change in No. of Students	36	6	5	4	55	3	109

There has been significant growth in the autism population. Many of these students require intensive services and small pupil-to-staff ratios and could significantly affect the district’s budget.

Professional Development

The Special Education Department and Curriculum Services and Innovations Department should collaborate on an ongoing professional development plan. Professional development is the backbone of effective and efficient programs and promotes good curriculum and instruction.

To provide effective professional development, a needs assessment should be conducted annually for general education staff, Special Education staff and parents. The needs assessment should be available in English and Spanish. The Special Education Department at Napa Valley Unified School District has developed a needs assessment that asks staff and parents if they are interested in professional development in areas such as behavior intervention and improving math and reading skills.

Other research-based professional development activities must be provided in Special Education to help guide instruction. This is particularly true with regard to autism as that student population continues to increase.

Each training activity should include a data sheet containing the following information: cost of the training, budget category, names or numbers of people receiving the training, location of training, a copy of the flier announcing the program, a summary of the evaluations, and other information deemed necessary. This file should be maintained by clerical support staff. It will provide a professional development history and allow the district to more accurately report these activities to the California Department of Education. It will provide evidence of training in due process activities, and assist in professional development planning.

Litigation

The increase in litigation under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act has had a significant impact on time and resources in districts across the state. The federal law provides the procedural safeguards to parents to ensure that their students receive a free appropriate public education and offers the opportunity to appeal their case should a dispute arise. During the last quarter of 2006 there were 657 requests for due process hearings across the state, with 170 of those cases involving students with autism. During that same time frame, Clovis had two cases filed, with a total of three this year to date. Litigation is costly for the district and time intensive for the district Special Education administration, which can negatively affect the effective management of department operations.

To deter litigation against the district, reduce the numbers of more difficult cases, and/or reduce the reliance on legal consultation, ongoing professional development should be provided to all staff and parents. During 2005-06, the Special Education Department accumulated legal fees of \$264,195. The greatest portion of those fees was for telephone consultations with law firms to try to resolve Special Education issues with parents at an early stage in the process. It is quite probable that other SELPAs have had similar situations and could provide strategies to reduce the need for legal counsel, thus avoiding the accrual of legal fees.

FCMAT found no indication that the district had an ongoing system for keeping site administrators and key special and general education staff updated on ever-emerging compliance issues that derive from court decisions, fair hearing rulings, and statutory changes. This leaves the staff open to inadvertently initiating reactions that could lead to litigation.

A number of staff members have received training in the facilitated IEP process and other alternative dispute resolution practices. These skills should continue to be used on an ongoing basis as a means of reducing the potential for acrimonious disagreements.

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Develop an annual Special Education needs assessment for parents and Special Education staff.
2. Form a Professional Development Committee consisting of Special Education staff, general education staff and parents to review the needs assessment data and develop a two-year professional development plan.
3. Provide ongoing training on IEP compliance to administrators, and to the general education and Special Education staffs.

4. Identify an Assistant Director of Special Education to be responsible for professional development and collaboration with the Curriculum Services and Innovations Department.
5. Develop a standard evaluation form for all professional development activities.
6. Annually develop and post a professional development calendar on the district's Web site, making it more accessible for professionals and parents.
7. Continue to annually set aside funds for professional development and training.
8. Develop a dispute prevention plan and ensure that program specialists and assistant directors have skills and training in working with litigious situations.
9. Have the SELPA Director and the Associate Superintendent, Curriculum Services and Innovations Department, provide a list of professional training activities for each month and post the activities on the district's Web site.

Site Roles in Special Education

Most of the district's schools assume full responsibility for the Special Education programs on their site as part of the district's decentralized culture. However, some sites have not fully folded Special Education into that culture. This places Special Education somewhere between centralized and decentralized supervision. The lack of clarity in direction and coordination produces confusion as to who is responsible for Special Education programs and services at some school sites. Time and attention need to be allocated specifically to ensure that all school sites understand the decentralized system and take full ownership of all programs serving their student community. Leadership must be provided in supporting all school programs, including Special Education. This may include coaching programs for principals and assistant principals, as well as training for office assistants and managers regarding Special Education and the importance of inclusion.

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Have area assistant superintendents and the SELPA Director develop action plans to address site roles in Special Education.
2. Develop a support system to ensure that all schools embrace and operate inclusive and effective Special Education programs.
3. Provide training for Special Education staff regarding their roles on campus and the importance of communication and cooperation with the general education community.
4. Develop a general education teacher support system on each campus so that the teachers feel more comfortable working with students with severe disabilities.

Parent Relationships

The district's parents are very supportive and proud of the Special Education programs offered. Parents were very interested in bringing back many of the Special Education programs operated previously by Fresno County Office of Education. This transition has occurred and has resulted in site and community ownership of students, programs and services. Many of these programs include medically fragile students.

The Community Advisory Committee (CAC) is a very active organization and provides support as well as ongoing parent education. The committee is also involved in student recognition programs that are visible throughout the district. The district actively supports the Family Resource Center (FRC).

Currently, the CAC and FRC Web sites are links under Special Education on the district's Web site, and CAC members feel that parents have difficulty accessing the CAC Web page. A "parent and family" Web page could offer easier access to these resources and other appropriate district/parent information.

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Arrange for the SELPA Director, CAC representatives and the Technology Department to meet and discuss changes to make the access to Special Education Web pages more user-friendly.
2. Continue supporting the Community Advisory Committee and the Family Resource Center, both of which are effective and provide valuable services to district families.

Staffing and Organization

Allocation of Resources

The central office structure and staffing reflect the district's decentralized culture. For example, program specialists are assigned to regional areas rather than the central office. This requires a greater dependence on delegation from the central office to the area assistant superintendents and from the director to the assistant directors. The clerical and certificated staffing is appropriate for a program of this size and scope, but duties are not evenly distributed among the two assistant directors and the Director of Special Education. If the duties were balanced the administrative resources would meet the program needs. Clerical staffing levels seem appropriate, but a lack of coordinated day-to-day operations appears to contribute to inconsistent procedures for routine clerical tasks. These routine tasks, such as processing requisitions and responding to report requests in a timely and efficient manner, are essential to effective interdepartmental operations.

The Special Education Department does not use an Allocation Personnel Unit (APU) formula in determining department staffing. An APU formula is used in other district departments and reflects position control and position budgeting. The classified hiring process and monitoring of personnel and substitutes do not provide effective position control to the Special Education, Human Resources or Fiscal/Business departments. This has resulted in significant delays in medically necessary specialized health care for students enrolled in the district's medically fragile center. Program specialists are responsible for classified aides, and the certificated personnel process has been distributed to the SELPA Director, assistant directors, site principals and other staff.

The hiring process for Special Education instructional assistants is disorganized and requires multiple employees to handle the paperwork. The resultant delays can negatively affect services to students and result in inaccurate fiscal information and inadequate personnel tracking. In February 2003, a flow chart was developed to expedite the process, but it is not being followed and involves excessive paperwork. The director, or "designee," must sign off in every instance and at least two departmental reviews are required. Once the approvals are obtained, the candidate is processed by the Human Resources Department.

When the paperwork is completed, the Human Resources Department contacts the Principal or designee for the start date. This has created delays in filling positions of two to three months. The projected start date should be noted on the paperwork, and Human Resources should notify all parties of the start date when processing is completed. The positions and services involved stem from the student's Individualized Education Program, so delays can dramatically affect student support in classrooms. This process could be streamlined by delegating it to the area assistant superintendents or principals, with input from the Special Education program specialists. Beyond that, the use of a designee such as a Program Specialist is not an effective use of time and resources.

The hiring of specialized health care assistants should be coordinated with the Health Services component of the Curriculum Supervision and Innovations Department. This will promote better position control in the provision of these services.

A substitute pool of trained classified staff with experience and training in significant needs (such as low incidence disabilities, medical fragility and behavioral issues) would enhance the district's ability to work effectively with those students.

A disproportionate amount of administrative time is spent working with attorneys and focusing on litigation. Until recently the district has not participated in the statewide SELPA organization. This inhibits the director's ability to guide and support department operations. The assistant directors are not delegated the authority to make the administrative decisions required to provide smooth day-to-day operations.

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Assign the Associate Superintendent of Administrative Services to coordinate the efforts of the Director of Special Education, Associate Superintendent of Human Resources and Assistant Superintendent of Business Services to develop a plan for adapting and implementing the district's staffing system to address the staffing needs of Special Education. Alternatively, develop a system for position control and position budgeting for use in Special Education. Seek a review of the plan by the Superintendent and regularly report progress on the plan to the Cabinet.
2. Require representatives from the Special Education, Payroll, HR and Business Services departments to meet monthly regarding the following issues and concerns:
 - a. Accurate Special Education budgets.
 - b. Overseeing position control among all three departments.
 - c. Development of position budgeting.
3. Improve the coordination of the Health Services and Special Education departments in providing services to Special Education students.
4. Assign site principals the responsibility for Special Education classified aide positions, including hiring, assignment and evaluation. Principals should work with the Financial Analyst to determine whether funds are available and how the positions will be charged and coded.
5. Develop a more streamlined flow chart for hiring and reassigning Special Education personnel to ensure a smooth process.

6. Revise the Instructional Aides - Special Education Hiring Process Flow Chart dated 2-21-03. Consider removing the “designee” from this chart and eliminate the numerous duplications to streamline the process.
7. Create computerized processes for Special Education, business, and HR to handle hiring, substitute issues, and personnel transfers.
8. Consider creating a substitute pool of qualified classified employees that have received professional development regarding students who are medically fragile, have behavioral issues, or have low incidence disabilities.
9. Develop a plan to redistribute and balance the responsibilities for the day-to-day operations of Special Education between the two assistant director positions. Consider the possibility of appointing a Lead Psychologist for each area.

Program Specialists

Program specialists play a central role in providing efficient and effective Special Education programs. The district’s program specialists have expanded duties and responsibilities that detract from the traditional expectations of the position. Under California Education Code 56368(a)(b)(5), a program specialist should hold a valid Special Education credential, clinical services credential, health services credential, or a school psychologist authorization and have advanced training and related experience in educating individuals with disabilities. They should also possess in-depth knowledge of preschool disabilities, vocational development, or one or more areas of major disabling conditions. The responsibilities of a program specialist include but are not limited to the following:

- Observe, consult with and assist resource specialists, instructional personnel and other service providers (such as speech and language therapists).
- Plan programs, coordinate curricular resources, and evaluate effectiveness of programs for students with exceptional needs.
- Participate in each school’s staff development, program development and innovation of special methods and approaches.
- Provide coordination, consultation and program development in their specialized area or areas of expertise.
- Ensure that students have full educational opportunities.
- Provide services as directed by the administration.

The district’s program specialists are responsible for overseeing the classified instructional staff, which allows limited time to perform the duties and responsibilities specified above. Program specialists estimate that 25% of their time is spent resolving classified staffing issues at the sites. This impedes their ability to provide program support at the school sites. They have become the link and the communication channel between the

sites and the Special Education, Human Resources and Business departments, particularly with regard to payroll issues.

The program specialist role was created in the redesign of Special Education in California in the late 1970's to provide Special Education personnel, general education staff, and parents with specific expertise and guidance in working with students with disabilities. This position has provided coordination, consultation, and program development services. Over the years, California's program specialists have had a significant effect on the delivery of educational programs to students with exceptional needs. Generally, they are most effective when they do not also have supervision responsibilities.

The district could benefit from a review and determination of the most appropriate roles and responsibilities for the Program Specialist position. The following issues should be included in developing and conducting such a review:

- a. The skills and expertise of each Program Specialist.
- b. The duties, responsibilities and assignments of program specialists in the five district areas.
- c. The number of program specialists assigned to each area.
- d. The current assignment of each Program Specialist.
- e. The number of litigation cases in each of the five areas.
- f. The effectiveness of the program specialists and their working relationship with area assistant superintendents and principals.
- g. The number of IEP meetings that program specialists attend and their role at IEP meetings. For example: How many program specialists chair IEP meetings in place of someone who can commit district fiscal resources, such as the Principal? Program Specialists should attend IEP meetings to address the appropriate programs for individual students.
- h. The methods by which area assistant superintendents can monitor and reinforce the importance of site principals and/or assistant principals attending IEP meetings as the administrator instead of designating the Program Specialist for that role.
- i. The procedure for filling open Program Specialist positions.
- j. The district's Local Plan, policies, brochures, and other materials as they relate to the role of program specialists and program supervisors or coordinators.
- k. Developing and/or revising policies and procedures regarding program specialists.
- l. Any additional information regarding the effectiveness of the program specialists' services, such as their areas of expertise in working with students and in professional development.

- m. Providing program specialists with the Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment program as a tool in working with teachers.

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Conduct a Program Specialist usage review, collecting data from program specialists, site principals, Special Education teachers and area assistant superintendents on the program specialists' duties, responsibilities and assignments.
2. Review the activities and responsibilities of each Program Specialist and determine whether the title correctly identifies the role or whether "program coordinator or "program supervisor" might be more appropriate. Consider removing the personnel and evaluation responsibilities to increase the amount of time available for program and staff support and training.

Staffing Ratios

Clovis USD's Special Education Department caseloads are smaller than in most other districts, and support staff levels are appropriate.

The department does not have an effective management information system to coordinate, monitor, and track certificated staff, classified staff and the certificated caseload (students assigned to a teacher). The district cannot compile a list of teacher FTEs, Instructional Assistant FTEs or number of students per service setting. Without this information, it is not possible to develop a pupil-to-staffing ratio to help plan for program and service expansion.

CASEMIS data can be obtained by case manager (teacher or specialist), but more than one case manager is listed for some students. This may cause some confusion regarding staff responsibilities for mandated requirements such as annual IEPs and three-year evaluations.

The Special Education Department has an employee to enter data into the state's CASEMIS program. It does not have an Information System Support Analyst to help utilize CASEMIS to provide useful reports and information on the district's Special Education programs and services trends or to monitor staffing ratios for future program needs.

The district has adopted a service setting caseload for SDC and RSP based upon the functional needs of students:

Program	Caseload
SDC – Functional Curriculum	10-12
SDC – Emotionally Disturbed/Autism	8-10
RSP – Mild Disabilities	28
RSP – Academic Core	12-14
RSP – Collaboration	22-23

An undetermined number of 1:1 Instructional Assistant hours are allocated to this area to support students in the Special Education and regular programs. There is a district policy, “Standards for Time Allocated for Instructional Assistants by Programs/Services” (see Appendix B). However, this policy does not contain the level of detail needed to effectively determine when a Special Education student needs a 1:1 paraprofessional.

The instructional assistants are assigned to school sites. Assignments can change from day to day, with no management information system used to track the assignments.

A template similar to the “Standards for Time Allocated for Instructional Assistants by Programs/Services” could be adapted to provide real-time data on staffing/student ratios by area of disability and/or service. This would allow sites, areas and the district office to monitor staffing/student ratios and take appropriate actions when necessary.

Instructional assistant hours range from 3.5 to 7 hours per day. Most instructional assistants work fewer than 5.4 hours. This results in a high turnover rate, which in turn requires continuous, time-consuming requisitioning, interviewing, hiring and training of new personnel. This process is assigned to the area-level program specialists.

The processes and procedures for monitoring instructional assistant assignments, absences and substitutes vary among areas, sites and programs. A centralized district office process could reduce timelines from identified need to placement and enable the district office to monitor and track personnel and fiscal resources. This may also reduce the non-program specialist duties, allowing program specialists to provide more support time to the growing moderate to severe disabilities student populations. Alternatively, the Special Education personnel requisition process could be integrated with the regular site-level process to try to reduce timelines and release program specialists to perform program-related duties.

There is no comprehensive, specific in-service training program for new personnel. New employees receive on-the-job training by the on-site staff of the program or service.

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Structure instructional assistants' assignments so they are monitored by the teacher of the student(s) with whom they work.
2. Monitor Special Education personnel assignments, vacancies and absences with the same site-level monitoring systems used for the general education staff.
3. Develop and implement a management information systems process that identifies teacher, Instructional Assistant and student caseload. Expand on the policy that governs when a Special Education student needs a 1:1 paraprofessional.
4. Review the personnel requisition process in the Special Education Department.
5. Develop in-service training modules and assign staff such as program specialists to train new employees. The training may be program specific and/or student specific.

Paraprofessionals

The district has no policy or procedure to determine when a Special Education student needs a 1:1 paraprofessional or to what degree. The accounting system for 1:1 paraprofessionals is inaccurate. The data reviewed included the names of the student and the assigned paraprofessional, and the hours per student, which ranged from 1.10 to 6.50. No data was available to determine the length of employment or the cost to the district.

It is likely that the district will show a dramatic increase in 1:1 paraprofessionals for 2006-07. The number of 1:1 paraprofessionals has risen dramatically throughout the state, significantly affecting Special Education funding and programs. Without policies and procedures to determine when the needs of each student warrant such support, the interactions of parents with the IEP team and administration can become adversarial.

Two major issues affecting 1:1 paraprofessionals in Special Education are the use of a 1:1 paraprofessional in a self-contained Special Education program, and parent concerns about the acceptance, support and instructional assistance in general education classes.

Both situations present decision-making challenges to IEP teams. In "Teaching Exceptional Children," Vol. 37, 2005 (Council for Exceptional Children) an article titled "Be Careful What you Wish for ... Five Reasons to be Concerned about the Assignment of Individual Paraprofessionals" addresses these issues. The five reasons for concern include:

- The least qualified staff members are teaching students with the most complex learning characteristics.
- Paraprofessional supports are linked with inadvertent detrimental effects.
- Individual paraprofessional supports are linked with lower levels of teacher involvement.
- Teachers, parents, and students may not be getting what they deserve and expect.
- Providing paraprofessional supports may delay attention to needed changes in schools.

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Develop a 1:1 paraprofessional manual for use by IEP teams to determine the need for this service. These needs could include behavioral issues, as well as medical/health, integration, instructional, psychological and other needs.
2. Develop procedures for implementing a 1:1 paraprofessional plan and include them in the SELPA plan.
3. Conduct professional development programs to train teachers, the CAC, and 1:1 paraprofessionals on the manual and board policy and procedures.
4. Provide initial and ongoing training for all 1:1 paraprofessionals in behavior, medical, tutoring, disability awareness and other issues.
5. Train others such as school psychologists, speech and language therapists, and parents on the 1:1 paraprofessional program.
6. Work with Human Resources and fiscal administrators to develop a job description, budget, salary and effective position control for these positions.
7. Develop a procedure to follow when a 1:1 paraprofessional is absent or otherwise not available.
8. Ensure that IEP teams include an appropriate fading plan in implementing a 1:1 paraprofessional program.
9. Identify the Assistant Director who will be responsible for the 1:1 program.
10. Develop a procedure for evaluating the effectiveness of the program that includes the number of personnel involved, student progress, parent satisfaction and budget impact. Consider the options for students who might not need a 1:1 paraprofessional.
11. Include pertinent pages of the 1:1 Manual in the IEP document to document the IEP teams' decisions. Include a proposed date or criteria in the IEP as to when the 1:1 program can be terminated or reduced.

12. Ensure that the Case Manager also monitors the 1:1 plan for each student and communicates student progress to everyone involved, especially the parents.
13. Review the data collected with district management staff and the CAC.

Long-Range Goals

Although the organizational structure is outlined on the organization chart, there is no clear delineation of accountability. As a result, individual staff members are left to set their own priorities.

There is no evidence of long range planning regarding the organizational structure of the Special Education Department. With the changing landscape of Special Education and dynamic growth in the Clovis Unified School District, long-range strategic planning is necessary to carry the district forward for the next ten years.

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Develop a strategic plan for Special Education that will meet the needs of the changing population and rapid growth in the district over the next five years. Clearly define the next steps for developing future departmental leadership. Facilitate cross training among administrators to enhance communication, understanding, and effectiveness.

Computerized IEP and Management Information System

Although the staff continually refers to the “computerized IEP system,” the district has only an electronic IEP template on staff computers. These templates merely enable staff to produce individual hard copy IEPs but do not provide an easy interchange of information among practitioners or a compilation to feed into the California Special Education Management Information System (CASEMIS) for submitting state-required reports.

The current Special Education student information system does not provide useful and accurate information in real time and its information has to be hand coordinated with Zangle, the district-wide database. Further, when information is needed for management purposes it has to be manually re-created to ensure it is accurate and useful.

The provider of the district’s template system has an available Web-based computerized IEP system. It would not, however, interface with Zangle and would continue to require manual entry from one system to another. A system such as SEIS, which was developed by the San Joaquin County Office of Education, could prove more efficient and user-friendly. SEIS is currently used in more than half of the SELPAs in California. Discussions of this issue have been held between the Special Education and Technology departments, but no technology plan or time line exists to establish a comprehensive plan to address the issue.

These limitations and the continual need for data input from hard copy information has result in the district being unable to submit a CASEMIS report to CDE in a timely manner over the years. This submission delay occurred again with the December 1, 2006 CASEMIS report. As a result, in January 2007, the Superintendent’s paycheck was in danger of being held by the state. Several days of staff support in both the Special Education and technology departments were needed to clear the 38,000 errors reported and submit the CASEMIS report on the due date.

CASEMIS is an information reporting and retrieval system developed by the California Department of Education. This system has been designed to assist Special Education local plan areas (SELPAs) in submitting critical Special Education student level data pursuant to state and federal reporting requirements. As a single-district SELPA, Clovis Unified is required to submit CASEMIS data to the CDE two times per year.

The purpose of the CASEMIS system is to collect and share Special Education student data in an accurate and timely manner. It is used to monitor Special Education programs in California and to identify any unusual growth patterns or changes in those programs.

It is also used at the state and local level for program planning, policymaking and administration of Special Education programs, and to evaluate the programs against statewide general education goals.

CASEMIS helps to determine whether statutory and programmatic needs are met and evaluate individual students' progress, movement to the least restrictive environment and transition to independent living.

The need for student and program information has continued to increase considerably in recent years. Last year alone eight new data fields were added to CASEMIS reporting. Federal reporting requirements continue to increase and there is no indication that this trend will abate. SELPAs will continue to be required to gather data on a large number of data variables and student characteristics that make this a complex task. In the past, CASEMIS requirements could be met with manual data entry because the scope and amount of data could easily be gathered. To meet the current and future CASEMIS needs all SELPAs will need to use current technology. Systems are available that provide customized Web-based IEP and student management functions to facilitate the flow of student data into CASEMIS in "real time."

The complexity in CASEMIS reporting requires the understanding of computerized collection, management, manipulation and distribution of data used for analysis. The Special Education Department has a clerical data entry position, but it does not have a position that requires the more advanced skills and abilities. Such a position could facilitate the computerized collection, management and distribution of data used for analysis and both CASEMIS and district-wide use. A sample job description for an Information Systems Support Analyst is included as Appendix C.

CASEMIS data reporting requires careful planning and coordination between the district's technology and Special Education departments. Efficiency and accuracy of the real time data can only be achieved through a good interface with the district's technology capabilities. There appears to have been a lack of communication between the Special Education and Technology departments to address those needs. At FCMAT's request, the Director of Special Education provided a specific outline of the data and system needs for the department. This will provide a framework for building the necessary technology plan. The list of needs is included as Appendix D.

To guide Special Education technology implementation and use, the district may want to form a committee composed of the directors of Special Education and Technology, a Program Specialist, and the individual named to the data analysis position described above. Vendors may be included in committee meetings as needed. This committee should be chaired by the Associate Superintendent of Administrative Services, who oversees the district's technology functions. This committee can ensure that ongoing communication and planning occurs and that the data needs of the Special Education Department are met.

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Implement an effective Web-based IEP and management system such as SEIS developed by the San Joaquin County Office of Education.
2. Consider creating a new classified position to support the complex data needs of the CASEMIS reporting system.
3. Consider forming a Special Education technology committee to oversee Special Education technology needs.
4. Establish time lines to ensure that the SELPA is ready for accurate and timely CASEMIS reporting for the June 2007 report.

Appendices

Appendix A – Education Code Section 56836.23

Appendix B – District Policy, “Standards for Time Allocated for Instructional Assistants by Programs/Services”

Appendix C – Sample Job Description, Information Systems Support Analyst

Appendix D – Outline of Data and System Needs for CASEMIS Reporting

Appendix E – Study Agreement

APPENDIX A

Performance of Functions as Condition to Receiving Funds for Regionalized Operations and Program Specialists

56836.23. Funds for regionalized operations and services and the direct instructional support of program specialists shall be apportioned to the special education local plan areas. As a condition to receiving those funds, the special education local plan area shall ensure that all functions listed below are performed in accordance with the description set forth in its local plan adopted pursuant to Section 56205:

- (a) Coordination of the special education local plan area and the implementation of the local plan.
- (b) Coordinated system of identification and assessment.
- (c) Coordinated system of procedural safeguards.
- (d) Coordinated system of staff development and parent and guardian education.
- (e) Coordinated system of curriculum development and alignment with the core curriculum.
- (f) Coordinated system of internal program review, evaluation of the effectiveness of the local plan, and implementation of a local plan accountability mechanism.
- (g) Coordinated system of data collection and management.
- (h) Coordination of interagency agreements.
- (i) Coordination of services to medical facilities.
- (j) Coordination of services to licensed children's institutions and foster family homes.
- (k) Preparation and transmission of required special education local plan area reports.
- (l) Fiscal and logistical support of the community advisory committee.
- (m) Coordination of transportation services for individuals with exceptional needs.
- (n) Coordination of career and vocational education and transition services.
- (o) Assurance of full educational opportunity.
- (p) Fiscal administration and the allocation of state and federal funds pursuant to Section 56836.01.
- (q) Direct instructional program support that may be provided by program specialists in accordance with Section 56368.

Program Specialists; Definition; Powers; Pupil Services Employee

56368. (a) A program specialist is a specialist who holds a valid special education credential, clinical services credential, health services credential, or a school psychologist authorization and has advanced training and related experience in the education of individuals with exceptional needs and a specialized in-depth knowledge in preschool disabilities, career vocational development, or one or more areas of major disabling conditions.

(b) A program specialist may do all the following:

- (1) Observe, consult with, and assist resource specialists, designated instruction and services instructors, and special class teachers.
- (2) Plan programs, coordinate curricular resources, and evaluate effectiveness of programs for individuals with exceptional needs.

- (3) Participate in each school's staff development, program development, and innovation of special methods and approaches.
- (4) Provide coordination, consultation and program development primarily in one specialized area or areas of his or her expertise.
- (5) Be responsible for assuring that pupils have full educational opportunity regardless of the district of residence.
- (c) For purposes of Section 41403, a program specialist shall be considered a pupil services employee, as defined in subdivision (c) of Section 41401.

APPENDIX B
 CUSD SELPA Policy and Procedures
Criteria for use of Instructional Assistants for Programs and Support for Individual Students

I. Standards for time allocated for Instructional Assistants by Programs/Services.

*Programs	Hours/Day
Elementary RSP	
Academic Core/RSP	5.4 hours/day or 3.5 + 1.9 hours/day
RSP	Based on Caseload
Intermediate/Secondary	
RSP	4 hours/day
SDC All Grade Levels	
Life Skills SDC	7 hours/day
Emotionally Disturbed SDC	12 hours/day
Severely Disabled SDC	12 hours/day
Other Programs	
Preschool/K SDC	7 hours/day
Autism Preschool/K SDC	148 hours/week
Autism SDC (1-3) (4-6)	21 hours/day

*Additional IA hours may be added to classes based on number of students in program, caseload of teacher or unique needs of students, with the approval by the director.

II. Standards for determining temporary or permanent one to one IA for students based on student's unique needs as described in his/her IEP.

- Student is appropriately placed in program/services, and
- Student exhibits severe health ad/or safety issues due to medical or physical problems, or
- Student has an FAA and PBIP for at least 8 weeks and still exhibits severe behavior problems, putting self and/or other at risk for physical harm, or
- Student has a physical disability interfering in student participating in general or special education settings during the instructional day and, if needed, has appropriate assistive technology, or
- Student has a disability requiring an intensive learning

environment with a one to one student to adult ratio.

- Program specialist shall provide a written rationale for one to one IA which may be proposed at an IEP meeting and review it with Director.

APPENDIX C

POWAY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
CLASSIFIED POSITION DESCRIPTION
TECHNICAL

Assistant Superintendent, Personnel
Date: July 2002 Issue No: 2
Page 1 of 3

INFORMATION SYSTEMS SUPPORT ANALYST

BASIC FUNCTION:

Under the direction of an assigned supervisor, develop, maintain and analyze computer systems to fulfill District needs; facilitate the computerized collection, management, manipulation and distribution of data used for analysis; train and provide technical support to District personnel in the operation of computer systems.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS:

The Information Systems Support Analyst classification specializes in one or more software applications and serves as District-wide coordinator for the assigned systems. The Senior Information Systems Support Analyst coordinates more difficult and comprehensive applications requiring a more substantial knowledge of District operations with greater training and system enhancement accountability.

REPRESENTATIVE DUTIES:

Develop, maintain and analyze computer systems to fulfill District needs; modify existing programs to improve reporting and record maintenance; implement changes and additions of policies and procedures related to assigned activities; assure system access for new users.

Facilitate the computerized collection, management, manipulation and distribution of data used for analysis; respond to document, report and data requests from District personnel and outside agencies, compiling information from various computer systems; assist with the development of information analysis procedures.

Train and provide technical support to District personnel in the operation of computer systems; assist District personnel with troubleshooting, hardware upgrades, purchasing software and database maintenance; prepare training and informational materials for District personnel as directed; coordinate flow of technical information between various District departments.

Input, process, maintain and evaluate a variety of data and information; audit information and prepare related reports as assigned.

Prepare and maintain a variety of records and reports related to computerized information for District personnel and outside agencies.

Operate a variety of office equipment including a telephone, computer, facsimile, copier, computer and assigned software; operate a vehicle to conduct work.

Communicate with students, District personnel and outside agencies to exchange information and resolve issues or concerns related to computer systems, data and technical issues.

Assist with developing and maintaining the Learning Support Services web page to support student learning.

Coordinate informational staff meetings as assigned; conduct in-service training sessions as directed; attend and participate in assigned meetings, training courses and conferences.

Perform related duties as assigned.

KNOWLEDGE AND ABILITIES:

KNOWLEDGE OF:

Data processing principles and practices.
Computer system management techniques.
Operation of a computer and assigned software.
Record-keeping techniques.
Modern office practices, procedures and equipment.
Oral and written communication skills.
Interpersonal skills using tact, patience and courtesy.
Principles of training and providing work direction.
Technical aspects of field of specialty.

ABILITY TO:

Develop, maintain, analyze and enhance computer systems.
Facilitate the computerized collection, management, manipulation and distribution of data used for analysis.
Train and provide technical support to District personnel in the operation of computer systems.
Learn district organization, operations, policies and objectives.
Learn District policies and procedures related to the collection and maintenance of data.
Operate a computer and assigned software.
Maintain records.
Type or input data at an acceptable rate of speed. *
Compile and verify data and prepare reports.
Communicate effectively both orally and in writing.
Establish and maintain cooperative and effective working relationships with others.
Maintain current knowledge of technological advances in the field.
Analyze situations accurately and adopt an effective course of action.

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE:

Any combination equivalent to: graduation from high school and three years of increasingly responsible experience providing technical support for computer systems.

LICENSES AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS:

Valid California driver's license.

SELF-CERTIFICATION OF TYPING/KEYBOARDING SKILLS:

* This classification requires that incumbents be skilled in typing/keyboarding at a minimum of 45 words per minute. A typing test will not be given. Applicants must certify in writing that they have such skills. Demonstrated proficiency will be expected during the probationary period for the class.

WORKING CONDITIONS:

ENVIRONMENT:

Office environment.

Constant interruptions.

Driving a vehicle to conduct work.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS:

Dexterity of hands and fingers to operate a computer keyboard.

Hearing and speaking to exchange information.

Seeing to view computer monitor and read a variety of materials.

Sitting for extended periods of time.

HAZARDS:

Extended viewing of computer monitor.

APPENDIX D

**Clovis Unified School District
Special Education Management Information System Needs**

Director and Special Education Management needs for Students:

1. Web based management information system for a Special Education Department. May or may not be linked to Zangle.
2. Converts IEP data to CASEMIS data to CASEMIS reports.
3. Provides current CASEMIS data by teachers, programs, schools and district wide to include all CASEMIS data (i.e. caseload information, state testing, transportation, etc).
4. Provides caseload information for teachers and service providers including students and their frequency and duration of services, per cent in special education, grade level, etc.
5. Provides current information by teacher and school on progress reporting of goals and objectives.
6. Provides current information by teacher and school on delinquent annual IEPs and triennial evaluations.
7. Provides link to MediCal billing by teacher and school.
8. Provides information by teacher and other providers of yearly IEP and triennial evaluation dates.
9. Provides documentation by school on outcome of referrals, eligible or not, and number of active referrals.
10. Monitors time lines for assessments, IEP

Teachers and Other Service Providers Needs for IEP and Student Management Information System:

1. Multi user function for MIS.
2. "Educational Benefit" alignment of assessment info to appropriate goals/objectives/benchmarks
3. Bank of IEP goals/objectives/benchmarks for state curriculum and alternative curriculum.
4. Shows omissions, warnings and errors on IEP based on CASEMIS reporting requirements.
5. Track timeline from initial interventions, SST, referral to special education through the initial IEP.
6. Track dates and timelines for caseloads of annual IEPs and triennial evaluations.

Director and Special Education Management Needs for Personnel:

1. Current position control for all special education personnel including open positions.
2. Electronic requisition process which links with position control, especially for instructional assistants.
3. Electronic sign-in process for all part time personnel paid by an hourly wage.
4. Align instructional assistants with special education teacher of assignment in position control or other personnel report.

FISCAL CRISIS AND MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE TEAM
STUDY AGREEMENT

January 8, 2007

The FISCAL CRISIS AND MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE TEAM (FCMAT), hereinafter referred to as the Team, and the Clovis Unified School District, 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 Clovis Unified School District operations, in the area Special Education. 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 the Special Education review are to:

- 1) Review the efficiency and effectiveness of the District's Special Education fiscal and program delivery system.
- 2) Review the district process on determining the hiring of one-on-one paraprofessionals and make recommendations.
- 3) Review Special Education staffing ratios and the allocation of FTE teachers to student class size.
- 4) Review the computerized program the district is attempting to implement regarding IEP's. Make recommendations on effectiveness, timeline for implementation, and cost effectiveness compared to other options that may be available.
- 5) Review Inter-departmental processes, including Personnel Requisition and Position Control.
- 6) Review the organization structure of the Special Education central office management and clerical staff.
- 7) Review effective utilization of the current Student Information System and the CASEMIS systems related to accurate record keeping and decision making tools.
- 8) Review effective and efficiency of the Special Education budget development and monitoring process and the interface with the Business Services Department.

B. Services and Products to be Provided

- 1) Orientation Meeting - The Teams 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 Teams will conduct an on-site review at the District office and at school sites if necessary.
- 3) Progress Reports - The Teams 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 Teams 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 following completion of the review.

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. Dr. William Gillaspie, FCMAT Management Analyst
- B. Three FCMAT Special Education Consultants

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, presenting reports, or participating in meetings.
- B. All out-of-pocket expenses, including travel, meals, lodging, etc. Based on the scope listed in section 2 A, estimated cost is \$19,250. The District will be invoiced at actual costs, with 50% due following the completion of the on-site review and the remaining 50% due upon acceptance of the final report by the District.
- C. Any change to the scope will affect the estimate of 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

