



CSIS California School Information Services

Cypress School District

Special Education Review

August 14, 2017



Michael H. Fine
Chief Executive Officer





August 14, 2017

Anne Silavs, Superintendent
Cypress Elementary School District
9470 Moody Street
Cypress, CA 90630

Dear Superintendent Silavs:

In January 2017, the Cypress Elementary School District and the Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team (FCMAT) entered into an agreement for a study, which was amended in May 2017 to add scope point 4 below. The study agreement stated that FCMAT agreed to do the following:

1. Review the district's implementation of student success team (SST), Response to Intervention (RtI), and Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) and make recommendations for improvement, if any.
2. Analyze special education teacher staffing ratios, class and caseload size using statutory requirements for mandated services and statewide guidelines and make recommendations for improvement, if any.
3. Review the staffing of both classroom and 1-to-1 special education paraeducators for efficiency and make recommendations for improvement, if any. Review the procedures for identifying the need for paraeducators, and the processes for monitoring the assignment of paraeducators and determining the need for continued support from year to year.
4. Analyze staffing and caseloads for speech therapists and psychologists, and make recommendations for improvement, if any.
5. Determine whether the district overidentifies students for special education services compared to the statewide average, and make recommendations that will reduce overidentification, if needed.
6. Review the Special Education Department central office administrative and support staffing and make recommendations for improvement, if any.

FCMAT

Michael H. Fine, Chief Executive Officer

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7. Analyze whether the district provides a continuum of special education and related services for students from preschool through 22 years of age and make recommendations for improvement, if any.
8. Review the special education transportation delivery system for efficiency and effectiveness, and provide recommendations for potential cost savings measures, if any. The review will include but not be limited to the role of the IEP, routing, scheduling, operations and staffing.
9. Review the district's unrestricted general fund contribution to special education and make recommendations for greater efficiency, if any.

This final report contains the study team's findings and recommendations in the above areas of review. FCMAT appreciates the opportunity to serve the Cypress School District, and extends thanks to all the staff for their assistance during fieldwork.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael H. Fine". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Michael" and last name "Fine" clearly distinguishable.

Michael H. Fine
Chief Executive Officer

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About FCMAT

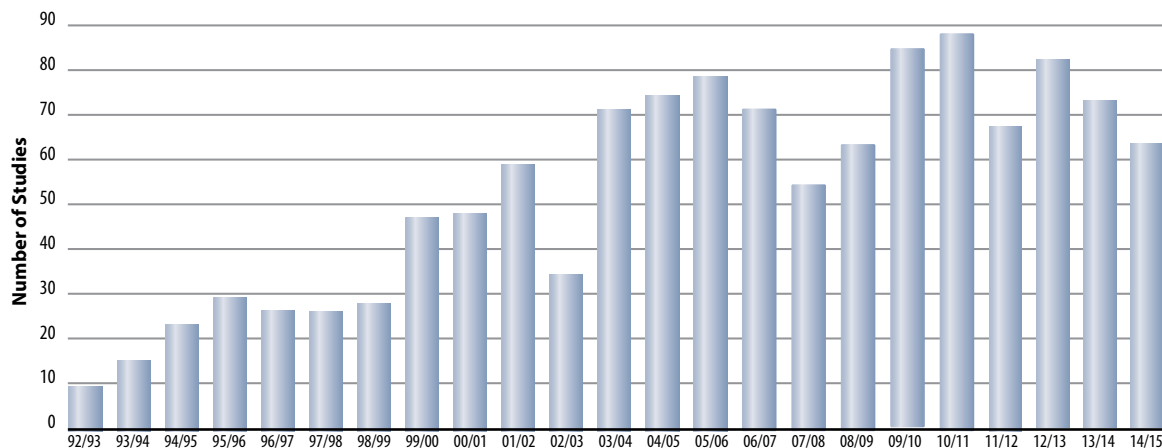
FCMAT's primary mission is to assist California's local K-14 educational agencies to identify, prevent, and resolve financial, human resources and data management challenges. FCMAT provides fiscal and data management assistance, professional development training, product development and other related school business and data services. FCMAT's fiscal and management assistance services are used not just to help avert fiscal crisis, but to promote sound financial practices, support the training and development of chief business officials and help to create efficient organizational operations. FCMAT's data management services are used to help local educational agencies (LEAs) meet state reporting responsibilities, improve data quality, and inform instructional program decisions.

FCMAT may be requested to provide fiscal crisis or management assistance by a school district, charter school, community college, county office of education, the state Superintendent of Public Instruction, or the Legislature.

When a request or assignment is received, FCMAT assembles a study team that works closely with the LEA to define the scope of work, conduct on-site fieldwork and provide a written report with findings and recommendations to help resolve issues, overcome challenges and plan for the future.

FCMAT has continued to make adjustments in the types of support provided based on the changing dynamics of K-14 LEAs and the implementation of major educational reforms.

Studies by Fiscal Year



FCMAT also develops and provides numerous publications, software tools, workshops and professional development opportunities to help LEAs operate more effectively and fulfill their fiscal oversight and data management responsibilities. The California School Information Services (CSIS) division of FCMAT assists the California Department of Education with the implementation of the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS). CSIS also hosts and maintains the Ed-Data website (www.ed-data.org) and provides technical expertise to the Ed-Data partnership: the California Department of Education, EdSource and FCMAT.

FCMAT was created by Assembly Bill (AB) 1200 in 1992 to assist LEAs to meet and sustain their financial obligations. AB 107 in 1997 charged FCMAT with responsibility for CSIS and its state-wide data management work. AB 1115 in 1999 codified CSIS' mission.

AB 1200 is also a statewide plan for county offices of education and school districts to work together locally to improve fiscal procedures and accountability standards. AB 2756 (2004) provides specific responsibilities to FCMAT with regard to districts that have received emergency state loans.

In January 2006, Senate Bill 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 more than 1,000 reviews for LEAs, including school districts, county offices of education, charter schools and community colleges. The Kern County Superintendent of Schools is the administrative agent for FCMAT. The team is led by 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.

Introduction

Background

Located in northern Orange County, the Cypress Elementary School District serves approximately 3,969 students in grades TK–6 at six elementary schools. The district also operates a moderate/severe regional autism program. No charter schools are authorized by the district.

The district is part of the Greater Anaheim Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA). According to 2016-17 data from the California Department of Education (CDE), 390 students ages birth to sixth grade who live in the district are identified as having special needs.

In January 2017, the district and the Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team (FCMAT) entered into an agreement for FCMAT to review the district's special education program.

Study and Report Guidelines

FCMAT visited the district on May 23-25, 2017 to conduct interviews, collect data, and begin reviewing documents. This report is the result of those activities and is divided into the following sections:

- Executive Summary
- Fiscal Considerations
- SST/RtI2/MTSS
- Identification Rate
- Continuum of Services
- Special Education Staffing and Caseloads
- Instructional Aide and Paraeducator Staffing
- Related Service Provider Staffing and Caseloads
- Organizational Structure
- Special Education Transportation
- Appendices

In writing its reports, FCMAT uses the Associated Press Stylebook, a comprehensive guide to usage and accepted style that emphasizes conciseness and clarity. In addition, this guide emphasizes plain language, discourages the use of jargon and capitalizes relatively few terms.

Study Team

The study team was composed of the following members:

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*As members of this study team, these individuals were not representing their respective employers but were working solely as independent contractors for FCMAT. Each team member reviewed the draft report to confirm its accuracy and to achieve consensus on the final recommendations.

Executive Summary

School districts throughout the state face an ongoing challenge in funding special education as the difference between federal and state funding provided and the mandated costs for essential services continues to increase. The district's unrestricted general fund contribution to special education was 51% of total special education expenditures in 2014-15 and 50% in 2015-16. The district's contribution is expected to increase to 54% for the 2016-17 school year.

Identification of students with special needs is influenced by a district's implementation of general education processes and interventions, such as Student Study Teams (SSTs), Response to Intervention and Instruction (RtI²), and Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS). Although there is some evidence of intervention support, the district lacks a systemic approach to support RtI². Implementing a comprehensive RtI² system can ensure all students are supported by defining a process of rigorous instruction, universal screening, timely interventions being implemented consistently, progress monitoring and targeted interventions for students not progressing commensurate with their peers.

The district's K-6 identification rate for district of residence disabled students is 8.4%, which is below the statewide average of 10.1%. FCMAT compared the district percentage of special education students by disability to the county and statewide average percentage. This comparison found that the district's speech or language impairment (SLI) and autism (AUT) identification rates well exceed both the county and statewide averages. The percentage of students identified with autism does not include students with autism from other districts who are enrolled in the regional autism program at Vessels Elementary School. In contrast, the district identifies far fewer students with a specific learning disability (SLD), other health impaired (OHI) or emotional disturbance (ED) than both the county and statewide averages.

FCMAT reviewed the programs and range of service options available to the district's special education students and found nearly a complete spectrum of services as described in the Greater Anaheim SELPA Local Plan and as required by state and federal regulations. The district provides specialized academic instruction from preschool through sixth grade in a variety of settings based on individualized education programs (IEPs). The district provides specialized academic instruction through inclusion, the learning center model, in a traditional pullout resource specialist program (RSP), specialized push-in mild/moderate, and self-contained special day class (SDC) programs with mainstreaming opportunities. In addition to the more traditional SDC and RSP models, the district provides specialized intensive programs for students with autism and other moderate/severe disabilities.

The district either provides or contracts for all related services required by state and federal regulations, including state special schools and nonpublic schools. Although the district provides a continuum of specialized services, it does not provide adequate supports to students requiring social/emotional supports through intervention services nor a location that allows students a break or calming area. Staff report they are concerned that many students need and do not receive this support. Cypress students who display an intensive social/emotional need attend a nonpublic school outside the district boundaries.

The district meets its K-sixth grade least restrictive environment requirements through the CDE Special Education Performance Indicators. The 2015-16 Annual Performance Report Measure prepared by CDE indicates that the district met targets established for Indicator 5: Least Restrictive Environment (LRE), which is designed to increase participation of students

with disabilities, ages 6 to 22, in general education. The 2015-16 Annual Performance Report indicates that the district did not meet its LRE for preschool students ages 3-5.

FCMAT requested documents to determine special education staffing, full-time staff equivalency, and the number of students served. Several documents were provided in various forms; however, staffing assignments, staffing full-time equivalent (FTE), and student caseload numbers were inconsistent. For this study, three sources were used in an attempt to establish consistency and reliability in certificated staffing and student caseload: Special Education Information System (SEIS) and two Student Support Services Department generated documents. Significant inconsistencies existed among all three of the sources, and no one source of information could be considered reliably accurate. FCMAT made a thorough effort to resolve inconsistencies using the available data, but absolute accuracy in establishing total caseloads by type of service provider or grade level was not possible. It would benefit the district to have the Student Support Services, Business Services and Human Resources departments rigorously analyze teacher staffing and student caseload data and routinely review and update it to ensure accuracy.

The district provides many special education programs that meet either Education Code requirements or industry standards for staffing and caseloads. However, there are many instructional assistants, paraeducators and 1-to-1 special circumstance instructional assistant (SCIA) paraeducators in the classrooms, thus creating a great staffing overage with some extremely low adult-to-student ratios. The district recently developed and implemented an SCIA assessment process, but it has not been fully implemented. Full implementation will help to determine when individual support is required to meet a student's special needs. This assessment should be performed under the procedures of a formal special education assessment, which provides additional rigor in the determination process. Once it has been determined through the IEP process that a student requires 1-to-1 assistance, it is important to develop a fade plan or goals for reaching independence from the additional assistance in the IEP and then review and revise it annually.

Overall the caseloads for speech pathologists are within the statutory requirements at the preschool level and slightly above the average for K-6. FCMAT recommends an audit of the indirect caseloads and the exit rates for students receiving speech and language services prior to increasing staff.

The district is below the industry standard for psychologist staffing. Prior to decreasing staff, FCMAT recommends the review of psychologists covering for the lack of a behavior specialist.

FCMAT compared the administrative structures of three comparably sized districts and found that the district administration is understaffed in student services by 0.7 FTE administration and 0.7 FTE program specialist. This is an opportunity to design additional support structures from which both special education and student services can benefit. In addition, the clerical support is at least 0.3 FTE below comparably sized districts.

From California Special Education Management Information System (CASEMIS) data, approximately 385 students have IEPs. Of those, 103 have transportation identified as a necessary related service on their IEP. This is approximately 26.8%, which is a higher percentage compared to other districts that FCMAT has studied. Of the 103 students identified to receive transportation, 62 students (60.2%) are transported (51 by the district and 11 through a SELPA or nonpublic school (NPS) contract). Approximately 182 general education students also receive transportation support.

The district's identification of special education students eligible for transportation support is indicative of a rich offering of service and most likely not based on any established and relevant

criteria. There was no evidence of any formal identification process for transportation. Once a student is offered transportation, it appears the parents fill out a form that essentially guarantees curb-to-curb service, with no discussion or goals established in the IEP to encourage student independence or application of transportation support in the least restrictive manner possible.

District transportation expenses are not effectively separated among home-to-school, severely disabled/orthopedically impaired (SD/OI) and other related transportation support such as extra-curricular and co-curricular activity trips. The district is not capturing its full pupil transportation costs in its pupil transportation budget. The district should consider maintaining an accurate separation of home-to-school, SD/OI special education and any other general transportation expenses to more effectively understand the transportation expense associated with the special education total expense.

School districts can best utilize their school bus fleets, and ensure use of the fewest buses, when they establish sufficiently tiered master bell schedules. FCMAT reviewed the district's bell schedule for its six schools. A well separated master bell schedule having two distinct start and end times with a minimum of 45 minutes of separation could improve bus routing efficiency and eliminate one to two bus routes.

Findings and Recommendations

Fiscal Considerations

The current special education funding structure was established by and is commonly referred to as Assembly Bill (AB) 602, which was introduced and signed into law in 1997 and became effective with the 1998-99 fiscal year.

Under AB 602, special education funding is based on the average daily attendance (ADA) of all students in a school district, regardless of the number of students served in special education programs or the cost to serve them. California distributes special education funds to special education local plan areas (SELPA) based on their member districts' total ADA counts. The district is served by the Greater Anaheim SELPA, which encompasses six school districts located in the northern part of Orange County.

In addition to AB 602 state funding, districts/SELPA's receive a small amount of federal funds. Neither source of funding is designed to support a standalone program; they supplement the general education program. Therefore, the combined state and federal financial resources are insufficient to cover even the most efficient special education programs. Local districts must transfer funding from their unrestricted general fund, dollars generated by all students, to pay for the portion of special education costs that exceeds program revenues.

The special education financial reporting methods used by districts, county offices, and SELPA's can vary. For example, some districts include transportation while others do not. There also are variations in how special education funds are allocated through a SELPA's approved allocation plans. Therefore, it is not always possible to accurately compare a district's unrestricted general fund contribution to that of other districts. However, if a general fund contribution is excessive relative to other districts or is increasing disproportionately compared to other costs, attention and action are likely warranted.

Federal statute requires districts to spend at least the same amount of state and local funds on special education services in each succeeding year. This requirement is commonly referred to as the maintenance of effort (MOE). There are limited exceptions to the MOE requirement, and if a district is considering reductions to its total general fund contribution to special education, it is required to follow the guidelines in the MOE document (20 U.S.C.1413 (a)(2)(A)). The California Department of Education (CDE) lists the following as exceptions that allow the district to reduce the amount of state and local funds spent on special education:

1. Voluntary departure, by retirement or otherwise, or departure for just cause, of special education or related services personnel.
2. A decrease in the enrollment of children with disabilities.
3. The termination of the obligation of the agency to provide a program of special education to a particular child with a disability that is an exceptionally costly program, as determined by the state educational agency, because the child:
 - a. Has left the jurisdiction of the agency;
 - b. Has reached the age at which the obligation of the agency to provide free and appropriate public education (FAPE) to the child has terminated; or

- c. No longer needs the program of special education.
- 4. The termination of costly expenditures for long-term purchases, such as the acquisition of equipment or the construction of school facilities.

The district's MOE documents indicate that its general fund contribution was \$2,839,731 or 51% of its total special education expenditures in 2014-15 and \$3,086,011 (50%) in 2015-16. The district's 2016-17 projected budget for special education is \$7,103,210 based on the second interim MOE document provided. The district's general fund contribution is projected to be \$3,820,622, which is 54% of the special education budgeted expenditures. The district's projected MOE special education contribution has increased by \$980,891 (34.5%) since 2014-15.

According to the March 2015 *Special Education Task Force Report*, the most recent data available, the statewide average general fund contribution percentage to special education is 43%. The report can be found at: <http://www.smcoe.org/assets/files/about-smcoe/superintendents-office/statewide-special-education-task-force/Task%20Force%20Report%205.18.15.pdf>

The California Legislative Analyst's Office *2017-18 Budget: Proposition 98 Education Analysis* dated February 9, 2017, states that as of 2014-15 "state and federal categorical funding covers about 40 percent of special education costs in California. Schools cover remaining special education costs with unrestricted funding (mostly) LCFF." This information indicates that the statewide average unrestricted general fund contribution has increased to approximately 60%.

Several factors affect a district's general fund contribution, including revenue received to operate the programs; expenditures for salaries, benefits, staffing and caseloads; nonpublic school and nonpublic agency costs; and transportation. Litigation can also increase the contribution.

The Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) was enacted with the passage of the 2013-14 State Budget Act and replaced the previous K-12 finance system. The formula for school districts and charter schools is composed of uniform base grants by grade spans (K-3, 4-6, 7-8, 9-12) and includes additional funding for certain student demographic groups.

Under the previous K-12 finance system, revenue limit ADA funding generated by special day class attendance was transferred from the unrestricted general fund to the special education program. This ADA is no longer reported separately, and the CDE determined that the transfer will no longer take place under the LCFF. Implementation of the LCFF has automatically increased many districts' general fund contribution to special education because of this accounting change.

Effective in 2013-14, special education transportation revenue became an add-on to the LCFF and is no longer restricted special education revenue.

The table below compares the special education revenue the district receives from federal, state, and local resources. The special education revenue data provided to FCMAT was posted to the district's special education program in its financial system. Since 2014-15 the district's revenue received to operate special education programs has decreased by \$42,525 (-1.3%).

Special Education Revenues from 2014-15 to Projected 2016-17

Description	2014-15	2015-16	Projected 2016-17	Difference from 2014-15 to projected 2016-17
IDEA Entitlement	\$556,932	\$581,040	\$581,040	\$24,108
IDEA Preschool	\$74,353	\$94,913	\$94,913	\$20,560
IDEA Mental Health	\$44,304	\$44,660	\$44,660	\$356
AB 602 State Apportionment	\$1,968,930	\$2,015,873	\$1,963,748	-\$5,182
AB 602 State Apportionment, Prior Year Adjustments	\$54,026	\$31,894	\$0	-\$54,026
State Local Assistance Grant	\$0	\$1,110	\$0	\$0
State Mental Health	\$229,545	\$237,594	\$234,244	\$4,699
Other Local	\$113,249	\$164,837	\$97,193	-\$16,056
Tuition	\$269,936	\$341,653	\$252,952	-\$16,984
Total, Revenues	\$3,311,275	\$3,513,574	\$3,268,750	-\$42,525

Source: District financial system data

Rounding used in calculations

School districts throughout the state have an ongoing challenge in funding the costs to serve special education students. Districts are faced with mounting increases in the differences between the federal and state government funding and the mandated costs for these essential student services.

The table below shows the district's special education program expenditures. The special education expenditure data is based on the MOE documents provided to FCMAT. Since 2014-15 the district's expenditures to operate special education programs, including transportation, has increased by \$1,580,590 (28.6%). Salaries and employer-paid benefits is the largest component of the increase. Since 2014-15, certificated salaries have increased by 16.9%, classified salaries have increased by 14.0%, and employer-paid benefits have increased by 44.3%. A portion of this increase is borne by the special education programs due to the increase in State Teachers' Retirement System (STRS) and Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS) pension costs. Since 2014-15 contracted services and operating costs have increased by 39.9%.

Special Education Expenditures from 2014-15 to Projected 2016-17*

Description	2014-15	2015-16	Projected 2016-17	Difference from 2014-15 to projected 2016-17
Certificated Salaries	\$2,356,573	\$2,601,636	\$2,755,406	\$398,833 or 16.9%
Classified Salaries	\$1,508,208	\$1,622,179	\$1,718,920	\$210,712 or 14.0%
Benefits	\$956,092	\$1,124,949	\$1,380,019	\$423,927 or 44.3%
Materials and Supplies	\$15,231	\$7,317	\$26,226	\$10,995 or 72.2%
Contracts and Operating	\$686,515	\$809,860	\$960,476	\$273,961 or 39.9%
Sub-Total, Direct Costs	\$5,522,619	\$6,165,941	\$6,841,047	\$1,318,427 or 23.9%
Indirect Charges	\$0	\$3,657	\$262,163	\$262,163 or 100.0%
Total, Expenditures	\$5,522,619	\$6,169,598	\$7,103,210	\$1,580,590 or 28.6%

Source: MOE documents

Rounding used in calculations

*Excludes the Program Cost Report Allocation

The table below compares the district's December 1 identified special education district of service pupil count and the expenditures per identified pupil count. Since 2014-15 the district's identified special education district of service pupil count has increased by 49 (13.5%) and the expenditures per identified special education pupil have increased by \$2,027 (13.4%).

December 1 Identified Pupil Count and Expenditure per Pupil

Description	2014-15	2015-16	Projected 2016-17	Difference from 2014-15 to projected 2016-17
December 1 Identified Pupil Count	364	379	413	49 or 13.5%
Expenditures per Pupil	\$15,172	\$16,279	\$17,199	\$2,027 or 13.4%

Source: DataQuest (district of service) and MOE documents

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Monitor its unrestricted general fund contribution through the annual MOE and determine if the district can reduce expenditures using any of the exemptions allowed.
2. Monitor attendance rates, including attendance rates in special day classes.
3. Review the staffing and related costs being charged to the special education budget, and charge only staff serving identified students to that budget. Charge direct service special education staff serving non-identified students proportionally. Adjust the account coding for any staff that provide services to both identified and non-identified students to ensure that the special education budget is accurate.
4. Review all of the contracted services that are charged to the special education budget and consider whether hiring staff would be more cost efficient.

SST/RTI2/MTSS

Response to Intervention

In 2004, the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA 2004) provided support for models that included a response to scientific, research-based interventions. The law stated that these methods may be used as an alternative to the discrepancy model in identifying students with learning disabilities. IDEA 2004 also shifted research-based interventions from special education to general education, stressing that this method would apply to all students. The law left each individual state to develop its own guidelines and regulations. Response to Intervention (RtI), which the CDE now refers to as Response to Instruction and Intervention (RtI²), provides districts with a method to drive educational decisions and measure academic growth. The CDE information states:

RtI² is meant to communicate the full spectrum of instruction, from general core to supplemental or intensive, to meet the academic and behavioral needs of students. RtI² integrates resources from general education, categorical programs, and special education through a comprehensive system of core instruction and interventions to benefit every student.

The CDE states that RtI² is used in the following three ways:

1. Prevention:

All students are screened to determine their level of performance in relation to the grade-level benchmarks, standards, and potential indicators of academic and behavioral difficulties. Rather than wait for students to fail, schools provide research-based instruction within general education.

2. Intervention:

Based on frequent progress monitoring, interventions are provided for general education students not progressing at a rate or level of achievement commensurate with their peers. These students are selected to receive more intense interventions.

3. Component of specific learning disability (SLD) determination:

The RtI² approach can be one component of the SLD determination as addressed in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) 2004 statute and regulations. The data from the RtI² process may be used to demonstrate that a student has received research-based instruction and interventions as part of the eligibility determination process.

The CDE is in the process of further defining how RtI² could be used in the eligibility process. See <http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/se/sr/documents/sldeligibiltyrti2.doc>, Determining Specific Learning Disability Using Response to Instruction and Intervention.

Although there is some evidence of intervention support, the district lacks a systemic approach to support RtI². Implementing a comprehensive RtI² system can ensure all students are supported by defining a process of rigorous instruction, universal screening, timely interventions implemented consistently, progress monitoring and targeted interventions for students not progressing commensurate with their peers.

The district adopted board policy for RtI on September 10, 2015; however, the district has struggled with implementation. Staff indicated that the district lacks an RtI² process that is consistently implemented. FCMAT found that Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills was used at all sites, although staff indicated they have not had sufficient training in diagnostic tools. Intervention groups are consistently provided throughout the district by kindergarten teachers each afternoon for primary students at risk. Some school sites are using “Read Naturally” and/or “Read Well” as an intervention. If needed, resource teachers use “Language!” as a core replacement intervention.

In the past, the district used intervention teachers to assist with the implementation of RtI²; however, those positions are no longer in place. The staff lacks the understanding that RtI² is a function of general education, not special education or other designated staff. The district can evaluate both school and district readiness to implement RtI² with tools like the District Capacity Assessment available through the National Implementation Research Network at <http://implementation.fpg.unc.edu/>.

FCMAT found no consistent districtwide evidence of universal screening tools or the expectation that sites use approved intervention curriculum. FCMAT could not discern through interviews or evidence that the district has implemented a set of activities and or practices associated with RtI².

Staff indicated that behavior is a primary concern with students at risk in the district. It was reported that some district employees have been trained on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). Some elements of PBIS have been implemented at isolated sites but with little buy-in from general education teachers.

Staff reported that the district lacks a clearly defined student study team (SST) system. Most schools have an SST process in place and principals attend. The members of SST teams vary across the district but may include psychologists, speech pathologists, general education teachers, special education teachers and site administrators. The SST process is viewed by some as the process for initiating an evaluation for special education eligibility rather than interventions as part of the RtI² process.

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Define and develop the SST process, handbook and forms in the context of RtI².
2. Provide training for all staff on board policies for RtI² and general education interventions.
3. Provide the site administration, certificated staff and parents with professional development on the SST process.
4. Develop data forms to help SSTs determine need or successes.
5. Provide ongoing professional development with how to use data collection as evidence of implementation.

6. Collect data on the number of SSTs moving toward assessment and results of assessment to further analyze district target rates for interventions and identifications.
7. Develop a strategic plan for the implementation of RtI² incorporating all stakeholders to build ownership of the intervention process in general education.
8. Ensure that the plan is endorsed by the superintendent and submitted to the board for approval and adoption.
9. Ensure staff is aware that RtI2 is a general education function, and seek acceptance from the entire staff.
10. Develop a training module for RtI2 and ensure that intensive training occurs.
11. Continue to develop a systematic PBIS.
12. Build levels of accountability for full implementation of RtI2 and PBIS.

Identification Rate

The district's K-6 identification rate for district of residence disabled students is 8.4%, which is below the statewide average of 10.1%. FCMAT compared the district percentage of special education students by disability to the county and statewide average percentage by disability. This comparison found that the district's speech or language impairment (SLI) and autism identification rates exceed both the county and statewide averages. The percentage of students identified with autism does not include students with autism from other districts who are enrolled in the regional autism program at Vessels Elementary School.

Percentage of Special Education Students Identified with SLI and Autism

Disability	District	Orange County	State
SLI	39%	26.2%	21.7%
Autism	26%*	18.8%	13.2%

Source: DataQuest 2016

*Excludes students from other districts who are enrolled in the regional autism program at Cypress SD

The district identifies 23.7% less than the statewide average of 39.2% and 13.6% less than the county average of 29.1% in SLD. The district also identifies 3.1% less than the statewide average and 4.5% less than the county average of 12.6% in other health impaired (OHI). The district identifies 2.58% less than the countywide average in emotional disturbance (ED) of 2.6% and 3.18% less than the state average of 3.2%.

Percentage of Special Education Students Identified with SLD, OHI, and ED

Disability	District	Orange County	State
SLD	15.5%	29.1%	39.2%
OHI	8.1%	12.6%	11.2%
ED	.02%	2.6%	3.2%

Source: DataQuest 2016

Additional review of California Special Education Management Information System (CASEMIS) 2016 found that the district identification rate has increased from 8% in 2015-16 to 8.4% in 2016-17. The California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS) snapshot report provided by the district showed a total enrollment of 3,969 for 2016-17, an increase of 27 students.

Efficient management of student information is impacted by the direct linkage between the Aeries student information system for all students and the Special Education Information System (SEIS). The information for students with disabilities is not aligned in both systems. This is a widespread problem in many districts; however, new software is available that provides the necessary bridge between the student data in both systems.

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Review the criteria used for the identification of speech or language impaired and autism disabilities. Include psychologists, speech pathologists, autism specialists and a behavior specialist in this review to gain background and knowledge about the criteria used for identification in these areas and determine why there is such a discrepancy between the district identification rate in these areas and the county and state identification rates.
2. Explore options to access software that provides a bridge between Aeries and SEIS to ensure accuracy of student information across systems.
3. Provide training and support to school site staff entering special education data into Aeries to ensure alignment with student information across systems.

Continuum of Services

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires schools to provide each disabled student with a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) (Title 34, Code of Federal Regulations, 300.17). FAPE is defined as an educational program that is individualized to a specific child, designed to meet his or her unique needs and provide educational benefit. The requirement that students be served in the least restrictive environment (LRE) ensures that when-ever possible, handicapped students are educated with students who are not handicapped. IDEA prohibits the removal of any student from the general education setting unless the handicap is severe enough to prevent him or her from being educated satisfactorily using supplementary aids and services. The legislation permits a student to be placed outside the general education program to ensure that his or her IEP can be implemented; therefore, a district has discretion regarding how best to serve its special education students. Districts are also required to provide students with access to a full range of services (Title 34, Code of Federal Regulations, 300.115 and Education Code 56361).

FCMAT reviewed the programs and range of service options available to the district's special education students and found the district provides nearly a complete spectrum of services as described in the Greater Anaheim SELPA Local Plan and as required by state and federal regulations. The district provides specialized academic instruction (SAI) from preschool through sixth grade in a variety of settings based on IEPs. This is done through inclusion, the learning center model, in a traditional pullout RSP, specialized push-in mild/moderate, and self-contained SDC programs with mainstreaming opportunities. In addition to the more traditional SDC and RSP models, the district provides specialized intensive programs for students with autism and other moderate/severe disabilities.

The district either provides or contracts for all related services required by state and federal regulations, including state special schools and nonpublic schools. Although the district provides a continuum of specialized services, it does not provide adequate supports to students requiring social/emotional supports through intervention services nor a location in which to allow students a break or calming area. Staff report they are concerned that many students need and do not receive this support. Cypress students who display an intensive social/emotional need attend a nonpublic school outside the district boundaries.

The district has developed a lengthy description of the learning center, and a parent brochure for the preschool program; however, there are no other formal descriptions regarding other in-district services as evidenced by multiple staff interviews and staffing spreadsheets.

The district describes the learning center program and objective through a document provided to staff, which states the following:

The Cypress School District is in the process of designing and implementing Learning Centers to deliver special education services to Resource Specialist Program (RSP) and Special Day Class (SDC) students, as well as interventions for general education students in English-Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics. Learning Centers will allow for increased flexibility, while still serving all students, by lowering the number of students being referred for special education services. It will also allow for earlier and more targeted academic interventions for all students who are in need. Learning Centers allow staff to create individualized programs for any student, not just for students who have been identified as qualifying for special education services. Cypress School District will be able to pursue the vision of "special education as a service, not a place." Students will return to

their home school to receive services as identified in their IEP. Students will be included in the general education program and will receive Learning Center support as determined by their IEPs or individual needs. Students in the Regional Autism Program will continue to be served in their self-contained classes. A typical Learning Center staffing will include two full time teachers and a minimum of 60 hours of instructional assistant support serving approximately sixty students each week. Included in the number of students will be general education students who will be provided short term instructional interventions lasting several weeks to several months, depending on progress. In addition, each Learning Center will be staffed with a speech and language pathologist, a part or full time school psychologist, and part-time behavior support staff.

The district reorganized the delivery of some mild/moderate special education services using an SAI learning center model in 2016-17 as a pilot program at two school sites. Staff consistently expressed concern regarding the lack of preparation and staff training prior to implementation of the two learning centers. Previously, mild/moderate services to special education students were delivered in traditional RSP and mild/moderate SDC settings. With the learning center model, those services are combined to create more seamless service delivery that ensures each identified student receives maximum access to general education classrooms and curriculum as appropriate to their needs. The learning center model is applied where one or more special education teachers and instructional assistants serve students either in their general education classroom or in combination with a special education setting on campus. The learning center would be considered the second level of least restrictive environment, second only to students being fully included in the general education classroom. The district continues to provide SAI services through a combination of services in the general education classroom, an RSP and an SDC setting at other sites. Students who require SAI receive the services per their IEP.

The district meets its K-sixth grade least restrictive environment requirements through the CDE Special Education Performance Indicators. Interviews indicated that the learning center has been a contributing factor as well as integrating more students into the general education classroom, including those who are placed in the moderate/severe regional autism program. The 2015-16 Annual Performance Report Measure prepared by CDE indicates that the district met targets established for Indicator 5: Least Restrictive Environment, which is designed to increase participation of students with disabilities in general education.

Indicator 5 Results on the Annual Performance Measure for Cypress School District

Least Restrictive Environment: the average amount of time students ages 6 through 22 receive their special education or services in settings apart from their non-disabled peers:

- A. Inside regular class 80% or more of the school day
- B. Inside regular class less than 40% of the school day
- C. In separate schools, residential facilities or homebound/hospital placements

Measure	Percent of Students in Environment Receiving Special Education	Target This Year	Target Met
>80%	62.87%	>49.2%	Yes
<40%	17.65%	<24.6%	Yes
Separate Schools	1.84%	<4.4%	Yes

Source: 2015-16 District Level Special Education Annual Performance Report Measure compiled by the CDE

The 2015-16 Annual Performance Report indicates that the district did not meet its least restrictive environment targets for students in preschool ages 3-5.

Indicator 6 Results on the Annual Performance Measure for Cypress School District

Preschool Least Restrictive Environment: The percent of children ages 3-5 with IEPs attending:

- A. A regular early childhood program and receiving a majority of special education and related services in the regular program
- B. A separate special education class, separate school or residential facility

Measure	Percent of Students in Environment Receiving Special Education	Target This Year	Target Met
A. Regular Program	16.28%	>41.8%	No
B. Separate	45.35%	<34.4%	No

Source: 2015-16 District Level Special Education Annual Performance Report Measure compiled by the CDE

The district operates a state general education preschool program, and may want to consider avenues to support special education students in the general education setting. The district buys spots in the preschool housed on the same site as its SDC preschool program for this purpose; however, it should be expanded to meet the target for LRE in the table above. Some districts utilize reverse mainstreaming where general education students are included in the special education setting, which then becomes the general education setting during the integration periods.

The preschool SDCs operate 4.75 hours per day. Most districts provide 10-15 hours of preschool per week, or 2-3 hours per day. If the district ran two sessions per teacher per day, the staff to student ratio would be lower and more intensive supports could be provided. The preschool teachers need time to complete many initial assessments, attend infant to preschool transition meetings along with end of year preschool to kindergarten transition meetings, and complete the individualized assessment and Desired Results Developmental Profile required by the state. Some districts operate a four-day-a-week program with teachers working on the other duties on the fifth day, while others provide frequent release days throughout the school year.

Staff reported that the preschool playground is not appropriately equipped for student play equal to general education preschool playgrounds. FCMAT did not observe the playground but suggests that the district evaluate its accessibility.

The staff inconsistently described the job-alike meetings offered for special education staff. Some staff indicated that the meetings are scheduled and consistently held, whereas other staff stated the meetings are scheduled but frequently cancelled. Job-alike meetings offer a time to discuss the continuum of options and professional development needs.

The staff reported a significant increase in professional development for classified special education staff over the last two years. Although it has been optional and staff are paid to participate, some staff suggested that the training should be mandatory due to the increase in student needs.

The district provides extended school year (ESY) for students with IEPs; however, there is no formal process for determining the requirement for such services.

The need for ESY services in accordance with 34 CFR Sec. 300.309, defined as the time between the end of one school year and the beginning of the next, is an IEP team decision. ESY is not

the standard summer school class. Students who may require ESY services are those who have significant disabilities that are likely to continue for a prolonged period of time or indefinitely. ESY is required when the interruption of the student's specialized program will cause a loss of skills and, when coupled with the limited recoupment capacity, makes it unlikely or impossible that the student will attain the level of self-sufficiency and independence that would otherwise be expected. ESY services should be considered based on individual IEP goals, and may not be required for all goals in the student's IEP, depending on the student's regression and recoupment. ESY is not required or intended to maximize educational opportunities for any student with disabilities. Annual review and determination through the documentation of recoupment/regression should be completed. The district lacks a formal process to determine ESY requirements. Many SELPAs throughout the state have developed ESY manuals.

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Research and determine the need to provide an intensive service delivery option for students with social/emotional challenges.
2. Provide ongoing professional development to all staff before, during and after the school year specific to supporting the differing needs of special education students in the general education setting.
3. Consider professional development offerings as mandatory job duties.
4. Develop and disseminate a description of all service delivery options from least restrictive to most restrictive environments and share with parents, administration, classified and certificated staff.
5. Continue to include students in the general education environment to the maximum extent possible.
6. Increase preschool integration options for students with special needs.
7. Implement and require attendance at monthly job-alike meetings with specific agendas and minutes.
8. Consider alternative preschool sessions and hours of operation.
9. Develop an ESY manual for staff and provide related professional development.
10. Review the need for preschool playground access and determine alternatives, if needed.

Special Education Staffing and Caseloads

FCMAT requested documents to determine special education staffing, full-time staff equivalency, and the number of students served. Several documents were provided in various forms; however, staffing assignments, staffing FTE, and student caseload numbers were inconsistent. For this study, three sources were used in an attempt to establish consistency and reliability in certificated staffing and student caseload: SEIS and two Student Support Services Department generated documents. Significant inconsistencies existed among all three sources, and no one source of information could be considered reliably accurate. The study team made a thorough effort to resolve inconsistencies using the available data, but absolute accuracy in establishing total caseloads by type of service provider or grade level was not possible. It would benefit the district to have the Student Support Services, Business Services and Human Resources departments rigorously analyze teacher staffing and student caseload data and routinely review and update it to ensure accuracy.

This section discusses the number of certificated staff per program model and the number of instructional hours needed according to Education Code or industry standards. The district identifies two levels of classroom support staff: an instructional aide and a paraeducator. An instructional aide's primary role and responsibility is to support students in the special education program and general education classrooms, with a focus on academics. The paraeducator's primary role is to support academics in addition to focusing on behaviors, toileting, safety and communication. These positions have different rates of pay; therefore, this report reflects a different cost per FTE in each classification.

Resource Specialist Program (RSP)

According to Education Code 56362(c), caseloads for resource specialists shall be stated in the local policies developed pursuant to Section 56195.8 and in accordance with regulations established by the board. No resource specialist shall have a caseload that exceeds 28 pupils. In addition, Education Code 56362 (f) states that at least 80% of the resource specialists in a local plan will be provided with an instructional aide.

According to EC 56362(c) caseload requirements, the district needs 4.5 FTE resource specialists. The district employs 4.0 FTE resource specialists and thus is understaffed by 0.5 FTE for a potential cost of \$50,800.50 that includes salary and benefits. This is a snapshot in time of current caseloads, and FCMAT recognizes that the district might not increase staffing toward the end of the school year. If the district staffed 1:28 with 4.5 RSP teachers, it would require 4.5 six-hour aides districtwide. The district employs 3.75 six-hour equivalent aides and is understaffed by 0.75 of a six-hour aide at a cost of approximately \$33,659.10 (salary and benefits). The district also employs 2.3 six-hour equivalent 1-to-1 special circumstance instructional assistants (SCIAs) in the program. The district could realize a cost savings by reducing 2.3 FTE of six-hour equivalent paraeducators for a savings of approximately \$107,506.14 (salary and benefits). Calculating all adult staff in the RSP yields an adult-to-student ratio of 1-to-12.55. Several of the resource specialists were over the EC 56362(c) maximum caseload of 28 students. When this occurs the district is required to apply for a caseload waiver not to exceed 32 students. Cypress had not completed this waiver at the time of FCMAT's fieldwork.

Resource Specialist Caseloads

Total Teacher FTE	Total Caseload	Caseload Average	Education Code	Instructional Aide total hrs/ 6-hr. FTE*	1:1 SCIA total hrs/ 6-hr. FTE*	District Ratio adult:student
4	126	1:31.5	1:28	22.5/3.75	13.75/2.3	1:12.55

Source: Education Code 56362 (c)&(f) and district data

*Calculations based on a six-hour day; however, instructional aides and paraeducators are employed from 3 to 6.5 hours.

Learning Centers

Districts are utilizing blended programs, such as learning centers, in lieu of traditional RSP and SDC programs for students with mild to moderate disabilities. This is based on the amount of SAI a student requires rather than on a program placement specific to RSP or SDC. This reinforces that special education is a **service** not a **place**. Typically, a blended model includes a group of students receiving SAI in a general education classroom, and a small number of students who require more SAI rotate in and out of the learning center classroom. A blended model of RSP and SDC is designed to be efficient in serving students, and depends on the district's needs. This model typically would serve a combination of SDC and RSP students with mild/moderate disabilities. The teacher-to-student ratio is normally 1-to-24 with one six-hour FTE aide. Combining SDC and RSP classes maximizes site resources and provides services at students' home school site, reducing transportation costs and supporting the LRE.

Five district teachers support the learning center model. Based on 92 students, using the industry standard of 1-to-24 teacher-to-student ratio and one six-hour FTE aide, the district is potentially overstaffed by 1.2 teachers and 3.5 six-hour FTE aides. The teachers' current caseload average is 1-to-18.4. Two additional factors are not considered with this specific formula. First, specific collective bargaining contract language cites the adult-to-student ratios depending on the teacher's credentialing and type of class. This would alter the staffing calculation; however, FCMAT could not determine the type of ratio due to students' specific IEPs, which were not reviewed. The second consideration is that the district's learning center model is new this year and piloted at only two school sites. Therefore, the district purposely staffed the learning centers at a lower ratio to enable staff to learn by implementing the model. In the future, the district may want to consider the industry standard formula if it benefits the students and district. There are 6.8 six-hour equivalent 1-to-1 SCIA's who provide additional support to seven students. The district has a total adult-to-student ratio of 1-to-4.82.

Learning Center Caseloads

Total Teacher FTE	Total Caseload	Caseload Average	Instructional Aide total hrs./ 6-hr.FTE*	1:1 SCIA total hrs./6-hr. FTE*	District Ratio adult:student	Industry Standard
5	92	1:18.4	43.75/7.3	40.75/6.8	1:4.82	1:24 (teacher to student)

Source: District data

*Calculations were completed based on a six-hour day; however, instructional aides and paraeducators are employed by the district from 3 to 6.5 hours.

Mild/Moderate Special Day Class

No Education Code dictates class sizes for SDC; however, there are industry standards. FCMAT utilized several documents to determine staffing, type of program and caseloads. Industry standards throughout California are one teacher and one six-hour instructional aide per class with an average of 12-15 students. Reviewing the class descriptions, students and programs, the district provides two mild/moderate SDCs with an average teacher to student caseload of 12.5. The district is richly staffed with instructional aides and/or paraeducators. Based on a six-hour day, 4.3 FTE instructional aides support the two mild to moderate classes. According to industry standards the district is overstaffed by 2.3 six-hour FTE instructional aides in this program. Additionally, 7.3 six-hour equivalent 1:1 SCIA's in the two classes support seven students. The total adult-to-student ratio is 1-to-1.84. The district could conservatively reduce instructional assistants by 2.3 six-hour FTE for a savings of approximately \$103,221.24 (salary and benefits), reviewing each class and program to determine need. More information is reported in the Instructional Aide and Paraeducator Staffing section below.

Mild/Moderate Special Day Class Caseloads

Total Teacher FTE	Total Caseload	Caseload Average	Instructional Aides total hrs./ 6-hr. FTE*	1:1 SCIA total hrs./ 6-hr. FTE*	District Ratio adult:student	Industry Standard
2	25	12.5	25.75/4.3	43.75/7.3	1:1.84	1:12-15

Source: District data

*Calculations were completed based on a six-hour day; however, instructional aides and paraprofessionals are employed by the district from 3 to 6.5 hours.

Moderate/Severe Special Day Class (Regional Autism Program)

The district provides moderate to severe programs. Again, there is no Education Code for SDC sizes; however, there are industry standards and best practices. For moderate/severe classes, the industry standard is one teacher and two six-hour paraeducators per class size of 10-12 students. However, for classes that serve only the autism population, the class size ratio is 8-10 students. The district is staffed appropriately with teachers and class sizes. However, the district is overstaffed by 6.9 six-hour FTE paraeducators. There are 12.9 paraeducators assigned to the three moderate/severe classes. The district has an additional seven 1-to-1 SCIA aides based on a six-hour day. This does not include health aides or LVNs. The district could reduce paraeducators by 6.9 six-hour FTE for a savings of \$322,518.42 (salary and benefits), which does not include SCIA aides. The moderate/severe classes are staffed at one adult to 1.44 students. The district should review each class and program to determine need.

Moderate/Severe Special Day Class (Regional Autism Program) Caseloads

Total Teacher FTE	Total Caseload	Caseload Average	Paraeducators total hrs./6-hr. FTE*	1:1 SCIA total hrs./6-hr. FTE*	District Ratio adult:student	Industry Standard
3	33	1:11	77.5/12.9	42/7.0	1:1.44	1:8-10

Source: District data

*Calculations were completed based on a six-hour day; however, instructional aides and paraeducators are employed by the district from 3 to 6.5 hours.

Preschool Program

Below is an example of the various industry standards and Education Code requirements for preschool.

Preschool Program	# Students	# Teachers / # Aides	Adult-to-Student Ratio
General Education	16	1/1	1:8
SDC Mild/Moderate	14	1/1	1:7
SDC Moderate/Severe	10	1/1	1:5
SDC Autism	9	1/2	1:3

Source: 22 CCR § 101216.3 and EC 56441.7

The district operates two preschool SDCs on a traditional elementary school campus. The district operates two programs that are 4.75 hours per session. There are two teachers for the two classes, 4.5 paraeducators and 1.7 additional 1:1 SCIA support. The total adult-to-student ratio is 1-to-3.41. The district should review the type of program ratio necessary for the preschool students and staff. Additional information about the program and recommendations is included under the Continuum of Services section of this report.

Preschool Program Caseloads

Total Teacher FTE	Total Caseload	Caseload Average	Paraeducator total hrs./6-hr. FTE	1:1 SCIA total hrs./6-hr. FTE	Industry Standard adult:student per session	District Ratio adult:student per session
2	28	1:14	26.75/4.5	10/1.7	1:5-7	1: 3.41

Source: District data

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Develop cabinet level interdepartmental guidelines on the appropriate caseload numbers for special education staff that will be used to establish the need for additions or reductions of both certificated and classified special education staff.
2. Develop an administrative cabinet procedure for determining the need for midyear special education staffing adjustments. Utilize the applicable data that is consistently collected in the Student Support Services Department and include appropriate steps such as a comprehensive review of existing staff assignments and direct communication between cabinet and the director of student support services.
3. Develop and disseminate a transparent description of class size ratios and staffing support by program, and review the possibility of reducing classified staffing.
4. Review caseloads and assignments using one consistent document containing teachers and additional support staff to determine if staffing adjustments would be appropriate.
5. Complete required RSP caseload waivers as per CDE requirements.

Instructional Aide and Paraeducator Staffing

Interviews of district staff and the review of documents provided to FCMAT show that the district employs two categories of classified support staff for special education: instructional aides and paraeducators. As mentioned above, the instructional aides provide support primarily in the academic areas, whereas the paraeducators provide some academic support and most of the support for behavioral/social and significant health-related needs. The paraeducators receive more professional development and training than the instructional aides. Many staff reported that the instructional aides are being assigned to students who require more than just academic support; therefore, they need additional professional development.

District records show that the Student Support Services Department maintains staff tracking documents and the Business Services and Human Resources departments maintain position control documents that are inconsistent. Staff expressed that they believe the Human Resources Department documents are more current and accurate, and stated there is no system to consistently share current Student Support Services Department information with other departments. When a student who receives 1-to-1 SCIA support moves out of the district, there is no tracking system to confirm that staff is not needed at that site nor a process to transfer the staff to a different open position.

Based on six-hour FTE support staff, there are 32.8 classroom instructional aides and paraeducators and an additional 25.1 FTE 1-to-1 SCIA paraeducators. Of the 1-to-1 SCIA positions, 17.7 FTE are assigned due to behavior needs. The class size ratios of adults to students range from 1-to-1.44 to 1-to-12.55. Twelve classes have an adult-to-student ratio of 1-to-1.44 to 1-to-4.82. The complete analysis is included in the Special Education Staffing and Caseload section of this report.

Staff interviews and records reviewed indicate that the district has a SCIA assessment process that was recently developed and implemented. Interviews also indicate that not all personnel responsible for assessments are trained in the SCIA process. This process will help to determine when individual support is required to meet a student's special needs. This assessment should be performed using the procedures of a formal special education assessment that provides additional rigor in the determination process. Staff reported that once it has been determined through the IEP process that a student requires 1-to-1 assistance, a fade plan or goals for reaching independence from the additional assistance are not developed in the IEP or reviewed and revised annually.

While staff report that the district has made some effort to engage in developing PBIS, it was not implemented as a districtwide system of intervention. PBIS will not eliminate the need for all 1-to-1 support required for behavior; however, it will help imbed the philosophy and practice that positive behavior is a teachable skill on all levels of student functioning. Fidelity and rigor in a PBIS approach will have a beneficial impact on treating behavior disorders and on learning throughout the district. District staff also reported inconsistent special education staff training on strategies for extreme behavior, which is encountered primarily in moderate/severe SDC settings.

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Ensure that the position control and Student Support Services Department staff tracking documentation is consistent.
2. Develop procedures and documentation to frequently and consistently share Student Support Services Department instructional aide and paraeducator job assignment tracking information with the Human Resources and Business Services departments and cabinet.
3. Consider collapsing the instructional aide and paraeducator positions into one job category as students move between levels of service. Train all staff equally to support the varying needs of all students.
4. Develop new employee orientation and a schedule of ongoing professional development activities for instructional aides and paraeducators.
5. Fully implement the SCIA assessment process. Develop a policy to include goals for independence in the IEP of every student who receives 1-to-1 instructional support as a related service. Review and revise the goals annually until the IEP team determines the related service is no longer required.
6. Continue to develop a systematic PBIS as an intervention for behavior disorders.

Related Service Provider Staffing and Caseloads

Related services are the developmental, corrective and other supportive services required to allow a disabled child to benefit from special education (34 CFR 300.34).

Speech and Language Pathologists

Speech and language pathologists (SLPs) provide direct services and consultation supports to students with IEPs. The district employs 7.8 FTE speech pathologists. The Education Code establishes a maximum caseload of 40 students for preschool (EC 56441.7(a)) and an average of 55 for students K-12 (EC 56363.3).

A total of 1.8 FTE is allocated for preschool speech therapy. The 0.8 FTE preschool speech pathologist completes all eligibility evaluations for the preschool assessment team and provides direct service in speech and language to nine students. The other 1.0 FTE preschool speech pathologist provides direct service to the remaining 41 preschool students. The K-6 speech pathologists maintain an average of 56.8 students, which slightly exceeds the statutory SELPA or districtwide average of 55 students.

Speech and Language Pathologist Caseloads

Program	# FTE	Caseload	Caseload Average	Education Code
Speech and Language Pathologist (Preschool)	1.8	50	27.8	I:40 Maximum
Speech and Language Pathologist (K-6)	6.0	341	56.8	I: 55 Average

Source: Education Code 56441.7(a), 56363.3 and district data

Overall the caseloads for speech pathologists are within the statutory requirements at the preschool level and slightly above the average statutory requirement for K-6. Prior to increasing staff, FCMAT recommends an audit of the indirect caseloads and the exit rates for students receiving speech and language services.

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Establish a formula to ensure that preschool and K-6 students are assigned to caseloads in compliance with statutory requirements.
2. Audit the speech and language caseloads to determine the extent to which students are exiting speech services and examine the extent to which students receiving indirect services require support.

Psychologists

The district employs 4.3 FTE school psychologists assigned to K-6 school sites. They perform duties common to school psychologists, which consist primarily of attendance at SST meetings, 504 planning, initial assessments for special education eligibility, report writing, participation in IEP meetings and triennial evaluations. The psychologists serve as administrative designees for IEPs at the school site and regional classes. The preschool psychologist (0.6 FTE) completes

assessments for students ages 3-4 and participates in the transition of students from infant services to preschool.

The district's school psychologists are the main crisis contact at their assigned school. If either a general education or special education student experiences a crisis, such as suicidal ideation or grieving a loved one, the psychologist is expected to meet with and support the student. If several students or classes are affected, the crisis response team may be called to support.

Disabled students needing more intensive counseling are referred for educationally related mental health services assessment and services if needed. The district contracts with Western Youth Services to complete assessments and provide direct counseling services if needed. Additional counseling is also provided through Straight Talk.

Staff reported that job-alike meetings do not occur for the psychologists. Scheduled meetings are often cancelled. Professional development is needed in specific areas unique to the psychologists' needs and interests.

The district does not employ a behavior specialist. Most of the districts FCMAT has reviewed employ at least one behavior specialist. Behavior specialist support services are based on a training model that supports general education teachers, site level training and case specific consultation for students with behavioral needs. Psychologists fill the void in the behavior specialist position by completing observations of students with behavior problems, developing behavioral intervention plans and providing training and support for teachers for individual students. Although the job description for psychologist indicates case management of the behavior intervention plans, the staff indicated that the classroom teachers are the case managers.

Psychologist Caseloads

Program	# FTE	Enrollment	Industry Standard	District Average Caseload
Psychologists (K-6)	4.3	3,969	1:1,100	1:923

Source: District data; CALPADS 2016-17; CalEdFACTS 2015-16

Based on the district's enrollment of 3,969 students, the district caseload average is below the industry standard, with an excess of 0.7 FTE psychologists, which represents a cost savings of approximately \$75,194 (salary and benefits).

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Ensure that job-alike meetings are scheduled and held monthly throughout the year.
2. Establish professional development opportunities for the psychologists' interests and needs.
3. Consider ways for psychologists to support behavior specialist services and/or mental health counseling.

Organizational Structure

FCMAT analyzed the administrative and clerical support structures of three K-8 elementary districts with an enrollment range of 4,437-8,725: Centralia, Fountain Valley and Ocean View.

Areas of Responsibility

District	Enrollment	Special Education Only	Student Services and Special Education
Centralia	4,437		X
Cypress	3,969		X
Fountain Valley	6,371		X
Ocean View	8,725	X	

Source: CALPADS 2015-16 and district report

The districts provided information on both administrative and clerical support staffing. Each district identifies positions differently. FCMAT reviewed the available job descriptions for administrative and clerical positions and combined some categories into like groups for purposes of this study only. Although comparative information is useful, it should not be considered as the only measure of appropriate staffing levels. School districts are complex and vary widely in demographics and resources. Careful evaluation is recommended because generalizations can be misleading if unique district circumstances are not analyzed and considered.

The directors in Centralia, Fountain Valley and Cypress are all responsible for both student services and special education. The director in Ocean View is only responsible for special education; however, their district enrollment is close to double the size of Centralia and Cypress.

Administrative Position Comparison

Administrative Positions	Cypress	Centralia	Fountain Valley	Ocean View	Total Average**
Exec Director/Director	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Coordinator	0	1.0	0	1.0	0.7
Program Specialist	0.6*	0	2.0	2.0	1.3

Source: DataQuest and district report

*SELPA support

**Total average does not include Cypress

The average number of coordinators in the comparison districts is 0.7 FTE. The district does not have coordinator-level administrative support. The average number of program specialists in the comparative districts is 1.3 FTE. The district has 0.6 FTE program specialist provided by the Greater Anaheim SELPA. The district is understaffed by 0.7 FTE at the program specialist level. The district may consider aligning the administrative support in the Student Support Services Department with comparative districts. This is an opportunity to design additional support structures for both special education and student services. Many options do not involve creating additional administrative support. Creating a Teacher on Special Assignment (TOSA) position would provide additional support.

Clerical Support Positions

Position	Cypress	Centralia	Fountain Valley	Ocean View	Total Average*
Administrative Assistant/Secretary	1.0	1.0	2.0	1.0	1.3
Data Technician	0**	1.0	0	0	0.3
Custodian of Records	0**	1.0	0	0	0.3

Source: DataQuest and district report

*Total average does not include Cypress

**Cypress has 1 FTE in Instructional Services that manages the duties of data technician and custodian of records.

The average number of clerical supports in the comparison districts is 1.3 FTE. The district has 1.0 FTE clerical support in special education and student services. The clerical support workload in both student services and special education is complex, time sensitive and unmanageable. The district should consider providing additional clerical support for the Student Support Services Department that, at a minimum, aligns with comparably sized districts.

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Redesign the administrative support structure for student services and special education to include an increase within a range of 0.7 FTE to 1.0 FTE with some level of administrative support.
2. Consider creating a Teacher on Special Assignment position to provide additional support.
3. Consider providing additional clerical support for the Student Support Services Department that aligns with comparably sized districts.

Special Education Transportation

The district transportation program supports approximately 51 of the district's 62 special education students receiving transportation as a related service, as well as approximately 182 general education students who receive transportation.

Per CASEMIS data, approximately 385 students have IEPs. Of those, 103 have transportation identified as a necessary related service. This is approximately 26.8%, which is a higher percentage compared to other districts that FCMAT has studied. Of the 103 students identified to receive transportation, 62 students (60.2%) are provided transportation (51 by the district and 11 through a SELPA or NPS contract).

School Transportation Finance

School transportation is one of most underfunded areas of the education budget in California. Prior to 1977, school transportation was fully funded. School districts would report their operational costs and were fully reimbursed in the subsequent school year. With the adoption of Proposition 13, the state began reducing the percentage of reimbursement. By the 1982-83 school year, districts were reimbursed at 80% of their reported costs. In that year, the state capped the reimbursement at the level of costs the school districts reported in that same year, only occasionally granting a cost of living adjustment. Over the past 34 years, costs have risen significantly, demographics have changed and the need for special education transportation has increased significantly. From 2008 through the 2012-13 school year, the amount each school district has received has been reduced by approximately 20%.

In the 2013-14 school year California adopted the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF). School transportation has been funded at the same level as the prior year appropriation. In addition, the funding was structured as an add-on to the base grant received by each district. It can only be utilized on school transportation, and districts need to spend at least as much as they receive to maintain the same level of funding. On a statewide average basis, California provides approximately 35% of the funding necessary for school transportation, based on school districts' reported approved costs.

Starting with the 2014-15 budget cycle, related expenses for student transportation are not tracked under the prior standardized account code structure (SACS) resource codes of 7230 for home-to-school and 7240 for severely disabled/orthopedically impaired (SD/OI). In addition, there is no longer a requirement to specifically report transportation data or populate and submit the prior state TRAN report. However, most county offices of education suggest that transportation expenses continue to be separated for home-to-school and SD/OI, suggesting that it can be done through the COE's generated resource codes.

The Cypress ESD received \$227,322 in state funding for transportation in the 2015-16 fiscal year. The district anticipates receiving 96.16% of that amount for the 2016-17 school year under the LCFF calculation. For the 2015-16 fiscal year, district budget documentation identified a pupil transportation expense of \$408,487 and an unrestricted general fund contribution of \$181,165. Cypress ESD is able to cover approximately 55.7%, over half of its expense, from state revenue. This is significantly higher than most districts in the state.

District transportation expenses are not effectively separated between home-to-school, SD/OI and other related transportation support such as extracurricular and co-curricular activity trips. This may or may not be important to the district; however, it gives the impression that the costs for special education transportation are greater than they are. On review of the district's transpor-

tation budget, it appears that the district may be applying an annual percentage separation based on year-end mileage accumulation between its reported special education and general education home-to-school programs. Exact associated vehicle maintenance and labor are not specifically tracked to special education and general education buses per usage. Driver labor is not separated between special education and general education usage, and it is not clear if driver labor is separated from other work performed as utility workers. The district may not be capturing its full pupil transportation costs in its identified pupil transportation budget.

Recommendation

The district should:

1. Maintain an accurate separation of home-to-school, special education and any other general transportation expenses to more effectively understand the transportation support expense associated with the special education total expense.

Transportation Organization and Staffing

The district's transportation program operates as part of the Maintenance, Operations and Transportation (MOT) department. The assistant superintendent of business services is responsible for several departments, including MOT. The director of MOT is directly responsible for the transportation program, with a lead bus driver performing the daily coordination of transportation staff, workflow and school bus route design and assignment. The transportation program office is staffed as follows:

- One lead bus driver
- Five school bus drivers/utility workers

In addition, the transportation program has a long-term consultant under contract performing all necessary driver (original, renewal and proficiency) and in-service training for staff. The consultant assists the lead bus driver in use and operation of a newly purchased industry standard routing software system, TransTraks. The MOT department also has one vehicle mechanic to provide maintenance on all district school buses and support vehicles as well as all grounds support equipment. The MOT director supervises the vehicle mechanic.

The transportation program is structured appropriately for an operation of its size; MOT structures work well with fewer than 25 bus routes. The district only operates six bus routes, with four routes generally dedicated to transporting the district's special education students and two routes generally dedicated to transporting the district's general education students.

The district's lead bus driver position is in the classified collective bargaining unit. This position provides daily supervision and direction to five school bus driver/utility workers and a warehouse utility worker who is being trained as a backup substitute school bus driver. The lead bus driver addresses normal daily parent and school questions, coordinates routine route coverage needs, communicates via two-way radio and addresses/resolves routing changes for special education students that are identified for transportation as a necessary related service, making address or school program changes and accommodating program time changes. In addition, the lead bus driver coordinates warehouse duties and provides supervision and direction to the warehouse

utility worker. A detailed analysis of the lead bus driver position would determine if the position should be reclassified as a transportation coordinator or supervisor under the direction of the MOT director. The district may also want to consider placing the MOT vehicle mechanic under the supervision of a transportation coordinator or supervisor, a position that most often is more familiar with the routine needs and expectations of fleet vehicle maintenance.

The district does not have a state-certified school bus instructor on staff. The long-term consultant performs the necessary duties to ensure the district meets all necessary training and vehicle commercial driving record maintenance under Title 13 California Code of Regulations and CDE requirements and established best practices. Due to the district's small size, the district could consider two options to ensure appropriate and ongoing school bus driver training needs: a continuing contract for these services or requiring state certification as a school bus instructor to a newly created transportation coordinator or supervisor position description under the supervision of the MOT director.

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Perform a detailed analysis of the lead bus driver position to determine if it should be reclassified as transportation coordinator or supervisor under the direction of the MOT director.
2. Consider placing its MOT vehicle mechanic under the supervision of a transportation coordinator or supervisor.
3. Evaluate the benefits of requiring state certification as a school bus instructor in a position description such as transportation coordinator or supervisor in the transportation program.

Routing Efficiency

For the 2016-17 school year, the district operates six school bus routes. Four are generally dedicated special education bus routes and two are generally dedicated general education bus routes. Per district documentation, 51 special education students are transported on four district school bus routes, with an additional 11 students transported under SELPA or NPS contract.

The district provides transportation as a necessary related service as identified in an IEP for 62 students, or approximately 16.1% of the district's total special education population. This is slightly higher than what FCMAT most recently has assessed in related study reports: between 10% and 13%. However, in the district's special education transportation report for 2016-17, approximately 103 students are identified as eligible for special education transportation. Using CASEMIS data showing 385 special education students with Cypress as the district of residence, approximately 26.8% of the district's special education students have been identified as eligible to receive transportation support as a necessary and appropriate related service and 16.1% actually receive transportation support. The district's percentage of special education students receiving transportation is very high in comparison to averages of 10% to 13%. It indicates a rich offering of service and is most likely not based on any established and relevant criteria for transportation as a related service. There is no evidence that the district utilizes a decision tree or other formal

process to identify and apply this transportation support (see Appendix A). District-established criteria for transportation support, along with staff training, would ensure that special education transportation services are provided in the least restrictive manner (see Appendix B).

District bus routing appears to be generally efficient. Based on the number of special education students transported on district buses, the district has an average load ratio of 12.75 students per bus, which is comparable to similar programs. The district has no school buses with wheelchair accessibility. Although it was reported that the district has historically not had many wheelchair students and currently has only one student utilizing a wheelchair through a contracted SELPA-provided bus with wheelchair accessibility, the district may want to review the potential benefit of including wheelchair accessibility in making its next school bus purchase.

District source documentation indicated that the district has a standard form utilized to identify and provide specific information for a special education student requiring transportation support. The district form, Cypress School District Student Services, Student Transportation Information, is not designed so that the IEP team can provide the student with transportation in the least restrictive manner. The form, by design, implies that the student will have curb-to-curb pick-up and drop-off service at the address of residence. Furthermore, in reviewing completed forms on file, it appears that the transportation request form is most often completed by the parent. Therefore, the district is implying that when a student is identified for transportation support, it will be arranged to and from the child's residence, with no discussion or goals established in the IEP to encourage student independence or transportation in the least restrictive manner, such as utilization of a corner school bus stop, having the student transported from their school of residence to the school of program assignment, or utilization of a district general education bus route. A transportation request form that is generated during or immediately following the IEP meeting by the IEP team or case manager, not the parent or guardian, could contain all pertinent information for the student to ensure appropriate and reasonable transportation support in the least restrictive manner. The form could be designed to be utilized for routine student address changes, program changes, program time changes, critical emergency contact information and names of responsible individuals who can meet students when their bus arrives. Effective transportation request forms specifically identify individual student needs such as safety vests, behavior plans and health challenges to ensure that district and SELPA school bus drivers are trained properly to safely transport special education students (see Appendix C).

The district's transportation program staff appears to be universally respected for their student oriented support, quick turn-around of student scheduling and rapport with staff and parents.

FCMAT reviewed the district's bell schedule for its six schools. Districts can best utilize their school bus fleets, and use the fewest buses, when they establish sufficiently tiered master bell schedules that allow routing for longer periods in the a.m. and p.m. student delivery times. This allows a single bus and driver to be optimally utilized by routing a bus to service a school in time tier one, and then pick up or deliver students attending a second school in time tier two. Larger K-12 unified districts may also incorporate a third tier start and end time. A two-tiered master bell schedule requires flexibility of the district's individual schools with an understanding that a two-tiered master bell schedule allows for a single bus to serve up to two schools in the morning and again in the afternoon. Generally, time tier one would have approximately half of the district's schools beginning and ending at the same time. Time tier two would generally have the remaining district schools beginning and ending at the same time.

In most rural and suburban environments, a minimum of 45 minutes is suggested between start and end time tiers. Sometimes, intervals between time tiers can be reduced if district transpor-

tation is permitted to drop students off a maximum of 30 minutes prior to the start of school in time tier one, which allows for an early departure from time tier one schools to begin service for time tier two schools in the morning. Instructional minute requirements may make two distinct tier deliveries in the afternoon a bit more challenging, especially for special education routing, because ride times often are slightly longer than that of general education home-to-school bus routes. However, this ensures a district utilizes the fewest number of school buses to support the greatest number of students based on the school district's transportation eligibility criteria. This works well for both general education service where students have collection points or bus stops, and for special education curb-to-curb delivery.

The district's 2016-17 master bell schedule appears to show a semi-limited two-tiered schedule with some variations. However, there is less than 25 minutes between start and end times. This is essentially a one-tier bell schedule since there is not sufficient time between school start and end times to effectively design and route buses for a full second bus route in the a.m. and p.m. Thus, the district may not be utilizing its bus fleet as effectively as possible. A two-tiered bell schedule may allow the district to reduce one to two bus routes.

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Immediately develop appropriate criteria meeting all FAPE requirements for identifying student transportation as a necessary related support service.
2. Develop criteria and train staff to ensure that transportation support services are provided in the least restrictive manner.
3. Review the potential benefit of including wheelchair accessibility in making the next school bus purchase.
4. Develop a transportation request form that is completed during or immediately following the IEP meeting by the IEP team or case manager, not the parent or guardian.
5. Consider establishing a well separated two-tier district master bell schedule with two distinct start and end times and a minimum of 45 minutes of separation.

Appendices

Appendix A

Sample Transportation Decision Tree

Appendix B

Samples – Consideration for Transportation Services, Student Information Data Sheet and Transportation Eligibility Checklist

Appendix C

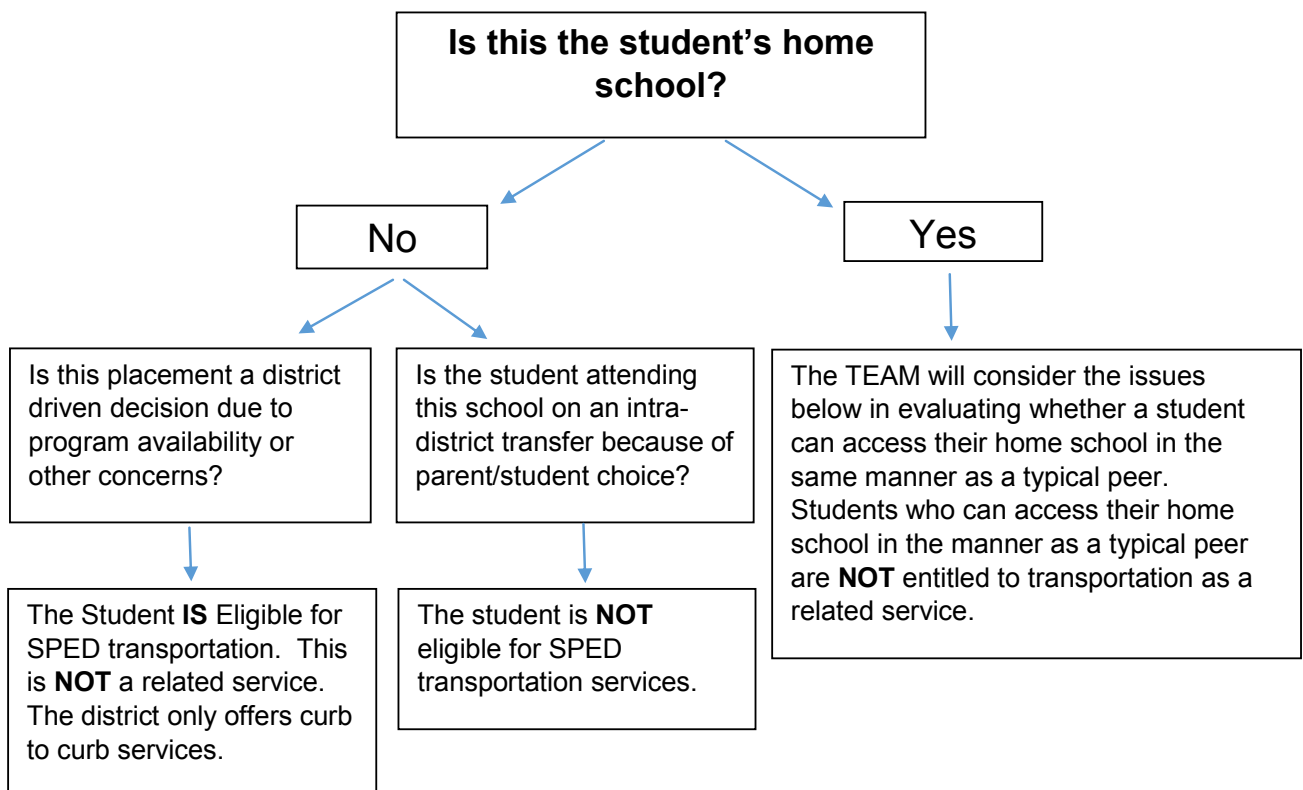
Sample Transportation Request Form

Appendix D

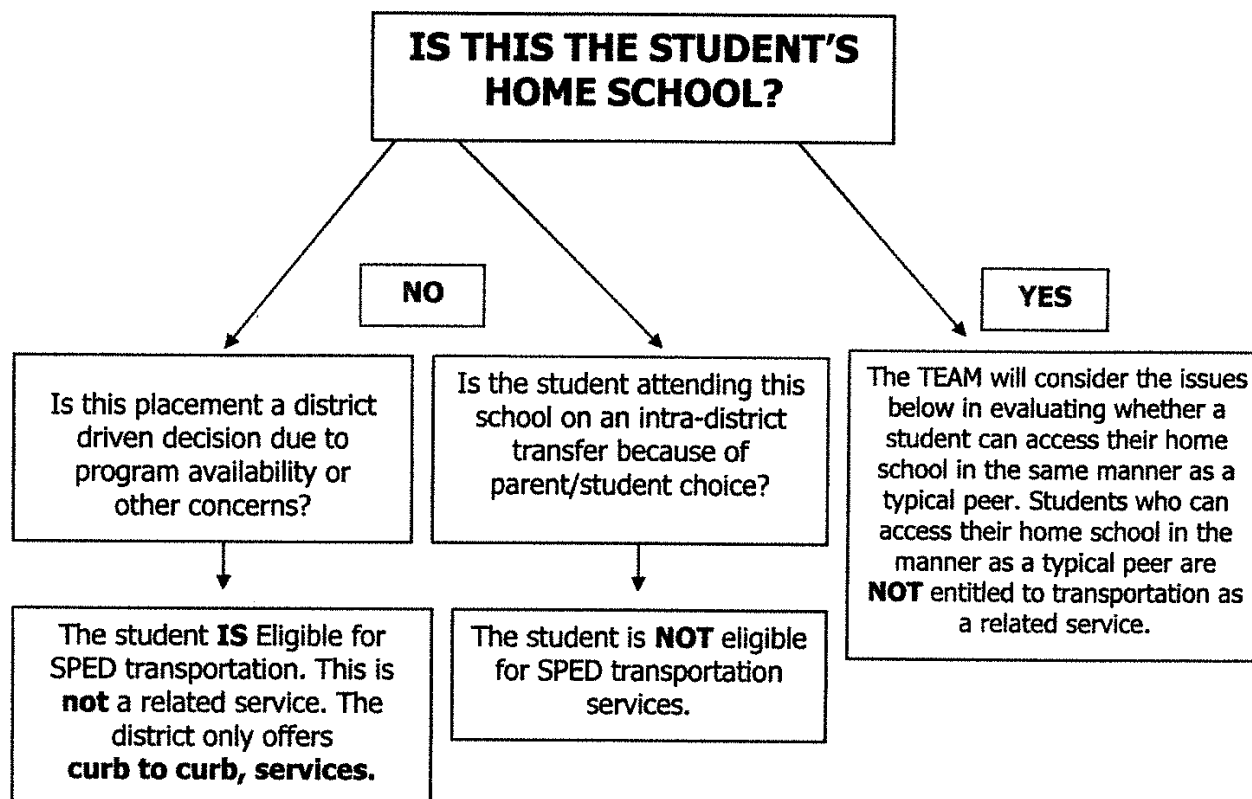
Study Agreement



Consideration for Transportation Services



Consideration for Transportation Services



Issues to consider when deeming whether a SPED student can access the school in the same manner as a typical peer:

1. Will this student make reasonable decisions expected of any student in their grade/age cohort?
2. Does the student require assistance to and from class, or other related services during the school day?
3. Does the student require immediate supervision during breaks such as lunch and recess?
4. Are there any significant medical conditions that might impact the student's access to learning such as seizures or epilepsy? Are they controlled?

****Please send the Menifee Union School District worksheet to the SPED office before holding an IEP to discuss possible addition of Transportation.***

If transportation is added:

1. If Transportation is being added as a new service, invite the Program Specialist assigned to your school.
2. Please document on the "Special Factors" page in SEIS paying close attention to make accurate selections.
3. Make note in "Team Summary" page in SEIS and ensure it is noted within the "Offer of FAPE."
4. Complete the IEP transportation checklist, scan and attach in the NOTES tab in SEIS within 5 days of the IEP meeting. It typically takes 3-5 days for new transportation services to begin.
5. Place all original documents in the confidential file.

Transportation Department Student Information Data Sheet

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____ IEP Meeting Date: ____/____/____
D.O.B ____/____/____

SERVICE INFORMATION

- ☐ New Student Handicapping Condition: _____ Projected Start Date: ____/____/____
- ☐ Home to School ☐ School to School Days of the week needed
- ☐ Route to Route ☐ Other: _____ ☐ M ☐ T ☐ W ☐ TH ☐ F
- ☐ Therapy Location: _____ Time of the Day Needed
- ☐ Change in: ☐ Home Address ☐ School ☐ Time ☐ A.M. only ☐ P.M. only ☐ A.M. & P.M.

STUDENT/SCHOOL INFORMATION

A.M. Address: _____ Language at home: _____

P.M. Address: _____ School/Teacher: ____/____

Home Phone: () - Name: _____ Spec. Ed Program: _____

Alternate Phone: () - Name: _____ School Time: _____

Home Phone: () - Name: _____ Spec. Ed Program: _____

Emergency Phone: () - Name: _____ Minimum Day Information: _____

STUDENT NEEDS

- ☐ YES ☐ NO Does the student have a Health Care Protocol? If yes, please attach
- ☐ YES ☐ NO Does the student have a Behavior Plan? If yes, please attach
- ☐ YES ☐ NO Does the student have a wheelchair or walker?
- ☐ YES ☐ NO Can the student put on his/her seatbelt without assistance?
- ☐ YES ☐ NO Does the student need a harness or safety lock with on his/her seatbelt? If yes, fill in age ____ and weight ____
- ☐ YES ☐ NO Can the student verbally communicate with adults/other students?
Comments: _____
- ☐ YES ☐ NO Is the student on medication? If yes, what should the driver know about it?
Comments: _____
- ☐ YES ☐ NO Are there any fears the student has that the driver should know?
Comments: _____
- ☐ YES ☐ NO Can the student stay in his/her seat alone? If not, who will assist the student?
Comments: _____
- ☐ YES ☐ NO Does the student need assistance on and off the bus? Please note: if yes, parent is responsible at home and an aide or teacher is responsible at school.
- ☐ YES ☐ NO Any special accommodations or equipment needed?
Comments: _____

Menifee Union School District Transportation Eligibility Checklist

Name: _____ Date of IEP: _____ Date of Birth: _____

The IEP Team will consider student needs including, but not limited to:

1. Medical Diagnosis and Health Needs:

Does the student have significant limitations in strength, vitality or alertness that prevent him/her from riding the regular bus?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Does the student have a medically fragile condition that prevents them from riding the regular school bus?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Does the student have special medical equipment that must be transported on a specialized school bus?

Yes ☐ No ☐

2. Physical Needs:

Does the student have a wheel chair requiring a special securement system on the school bus?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Does the student have a visual impairment that prevents him/her from riding the regular school bus?

Yes ☐ No ☐

3. Safety Needs:

Does the students' disability or level of functioning prevent them from being able to travel to school independently?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Does the students' disability or level of functioning prevent them from being able to travel to and wait independently at a regular school bus stop?

Yes ☐ No ☐

4. Behavioral Needs:

Does the student have a behavior plan that requires certain transportation services?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Is the student's behavior, after implementing a behavior plan, so severe that s/he cannot ride the regular school bus?

Yes ☐ No ☐

5. Program Location:

Is the student required to attend a program outside of the district of residence geographic boundary?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Does the student require special transportation in order to access services designated on the IEP e.g. occupational therapy, physical therapy, mental health related service, etc?

Yes ☐ No ☐

*Other needs may also be taken into consideration when the IEP team discusses a pupil's placement and transportation needs.

Appendix C

- ☐ Special Education
☐ 504
☐ No Child Left Behind

Poway Unified School District
Special Education
 13626 Twin Peaks Road, Poway CA 92064
TRANSPORTATION REQUEST

- ☐ Start _____
☐ Change _____
☐ Continue _____

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Student Name		Parents Name		Home Phone	Work Phone	Cell Phone
Address		Apartment Name and number		TRANSPORTATION REQUIRED YES ** HOME-SCHOOL-HOME <input type="checkbox"/> HOME-SCHOOL-SITTER <input type="checkbox"/> SITTER-SCHOOL-HOME <input type="checkbox"/> SITTER-SCHOOL-SITTER <input type="checkbox"/> HOME TO SCHOOL..... <input type="checkbox"/> SITTER TO SCHOOL..... <input type="checkbox"/> SCHOOL TO HOME..... <input type="checkbox"/> SCHOOL TO SITTER..... <input type="checkbox"/>		
City	Zip	SCHOOL HOURS From To				
Name of Special Program		Birthdate	Grade			
School		Address		School Phone Number		
YES	NO	FACTORS AFFECTING TRANSPORTATION CAN WALK TO/FROM A DESIGNATED BUS STOP <input type="checkbox"/> Gated Community/Apartment Complex may not be accessible.				
		EXPLANATIONS				
		Wheelchair dependent		Name of Sitter		
		Walker dependent		Address		
		Requires assistance loading/unloading		City		
		Safety Vest		Name of Responsible Party for Release		
		Special Aide/Nurse required				
		Must be met at Residence or School				
		Possible Problem with other children				
		Diabetic				
		Subject to Seizures				
		Requires Medication				
		Special Equipment				
		Oxygen				
		Trach/Gast Tube				
		Restraints				
		Suction machine				
		Other				
		Other				

REASON OR TRANSPORTATION

- ☐ Placement away from Home School ☐ Student Disability

Signature (Special Education/Health Services)

Date

PARENTAL RELEASE SIGNATURE

I AGREE TO HOLD HARMLESS AND INDEMNIFY THE POWAY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT, ITS EMPLOYEES, AND ITS AGENTS FROM ANY CLAIM OR DEMAND WHICH MAY BE MADE BY REASON OF MY AUTHORIZATION TO ALLOW MY CHILD TO WAIT FOR AND/OR LEAVE THE SCHOOL BUS AT A PREARRANGED LOCATION.

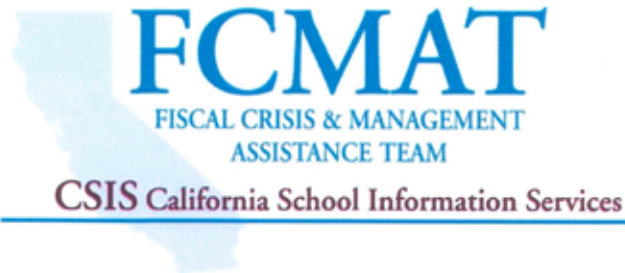
Parent Signature

Date

EMERGENCY POINTS OF CONTACT AND RESPONSIBLE PARTIES

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY, OR IF WE ARE UNABLE TO DELIVER YOUR CHILD TO YOU WE WILL ATTEMPT TO CONTACT THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE YOU DESIGNATE AS EMERGENCY POINTS OF CONTACT. IF WE ARE STILL UNABLE TO DELIVER YOUR CHILD, WE WILL DELIVER YOUR CHILD TO EITHER THE POWAY SHERIFFS DEPARTMENT OR SAN DIEGO POLICE DEPARTMENT FOR SAFE KEEPING.

Name	Relationship	Telephone	Name	Relationship	Telephone
TRANSPORTATION USE ONLY					
EDU LOG NO.		AM STOP NO.		PM STOP NO.	



**FISCAL CRISIS & MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE TEAM
STUDY AGREEMENT
December 21, 2016
AMENDED STUDY AGREEMENT
May 24, 2017**

The Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team (FCMAT), hereinafter referred to as the team, and the Cypress School District, hereinafter referred to as the district, mutually agree as follows:

1. BASIS OF AGREEMENT

The team provides a variety of services to local education agencies (LEAs). The district has requested that the team assign professionals to study specific aspects of the district's 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.

In keeping with the provisions of Assembly Bill 1200, the county superintendent will be notified of this agreement between the district and FCMAT and will receive a copy of the final report. The final report will also be published on the FCMAT website.

2. SCOPE OF THE WORK

A. Scope and Objectives of the Study

1. Review the district's implementation of student success team (SST), Response to Intervention (RtI), and Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) and make recommendations for improvement, if any.
2. Analyze special education teacher staffing ratios, class and caseload size using statutory requirements for mandated services and statewide guidelines and make recommendations for improvement, if any.
3. Review the staffing of both classroom and 1-to-1 special education paraeducators for efficiency and make recommendations for improvement, if any. Review the procedures for identifying the need for paraeducators, and the

processes for monitoring the assignment of paraeducators and determining the need for continued support from year to year.

4. Analyze staffing and caseloads for speech therapists and psychologists, and make recommendations for improvement, if any.
5. Determine whether the district overidentifies students for special education services compared to the statewide average, and make recommendations that will reduce overidentification, if needed.
6. Review the Special Education Department central office administrative and support staffing and make recommendations for improvement, if any.
7. Analyze whether the district provides a continuum of special education and related services for students from preschool through 22 years of age and make recommendations for improvement, if any.
8. Review the special education transportation delivery system for efficiency and effectiveness, and provide recommendations for potential cost savings measures, if any. The review will include but not be limited to the role of the IEP, routing, scheduling, operations and staffing.
9. Review the district's unrestricted general fund contribution to special education and make recommendations for greater efficiency, if any.

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 team's procedures and 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 Meeting - 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 – Approximately 10 days after the exit meeting, the team will issue an exit letter briefly memorializing the topics discussed in the exit meeting.
5. Draft Report - Electronic copies of a preliminary draft report will be delivered to the district's administration for review and comment.
6. Final Report - Electronic copies of the final report will be delivered to the district's administration and to the county superintendent following completion of the review. Printed copies are available from FCMAT upon request.

7. Follow-Up Support – If requested by the district within six to 12 months after completion of the study, FCMAT will return to the district at no cost to assess the district’s progress in implementing the recommendations included in the report. Progress in implementing the recommendations will be documented to the district in a FCMAT management letter. FCMAT will work with the district on a mutually convenient time to return for follow-up support that is no sooner than eight months and no later than 18 months after completion of the study.

3. PROJECT PERSONNEL

The study team will be supervised by Michael H. Fine, Chief Administrative Officer, Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team, Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office. The study team may also include:

<i>A. To be determined</i>	<i>FCMAT Staff</i>
<i>B. To be determined</i>	<i>FCMAT Consultant</i>
<i>C. To be determined</i>	<i>FCMAT Consultant</i>
<i>D. To be determined</i>	<i>FCMAT Consultant</i>
<i>E. To be determined</i>	<i>FCMAT Consultant</i>

4. PROJECT COSTS

The cost for studies requested pursuant to Education Code (EC) 42127.8(d)(1) shall be as follows:

- A. \$650 per day for each staff member while on site, conducting fieldwork at other locations, presenting reports and participating in meetings. The cost of independent FCMAT consultants will be billed at their actual daily rate for all work performed.
- B. All out-of-pocket expenses, including travel, meals and lodging.
- C. 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 the district’s acceptance of the final report.

Based on the elements noted in section 2A, the total not-to-exceed cost of the study will be \$35,800.

- D. Any change to the scope will affect the estimate of total cost.

Payments for FCMAT’s services are payable to Kern County Superintendent of Schools - Administrative Agent located on 1300 17th Street, City Centre, Bakersfield, CA 93301.

5. **RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DISTRICT**

- A. The district will provide office and conference room space during on-site reviews.
- B. The district will provide the following if requested:
 - 1. Policies, regulations and prior reports that address the study scope.
 - 2. Current or proposed organizational charts.
 - 3. Current and two prior years' audit reports.
 - 4. Any documents requested on a supplemental list. Documents requested on the supplemental list should be provided to FCMAT only in electronic format; if only hard copies are available, they should be scanned by the district and sent to FCMAT in electronic format.
 - 5. Documents should be provided in advance of fieldwork; any delay in the receipt of the requested documents may affect the start date and/or completion date of the project. Upon approval of the signed study agreement, access will be provided to FCMAT's online SharePoint document repository, where the district will upload all requested documents.
- C. The district's administration will review a preliminary draft copy of the report resulting from 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 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 different phases of the study and will be established upon the receipt of a signed study agreement:

Orientation:	to be determined
Staff Interviews:	to be determined
Exit Meeting:	to be determined
Draft Report Submitted:	to be determined
Final Report Submitted:	to be determined
Board Presentation:	to be determined, if requested
Follow-Up Support:	if requested

7. COMMENCEMENT, TERMINATION AND COMPLETION OF WORK

FCMAT will begin work as soon as it has assembled an available and appropriate study team consisting of FCMAT staff and independent consultants, taking into consideration other jobs FCMAT has previously undertaken and assignments from the state. The team will work expeditiously to complete its work and deliver its report, subject to the cooperation of the district and any other parties from which, in the team's judgment, it must obtain information. Once the team has completed its fieldwork, it will proceed to prepare a preliminary draft report and a final report. Prior to completion of fieldwork, the district may terminate its request for service and will be responsible for all costs incurred by FCMAT to the date of termination under Section 4 (Project Costs). If the district does not provide written notice of termination prior to completion of fieldwork, the team will complete its work and deliver its report and the district will be responsible for the full costs. The district understands and agrees that FCMAT is a state agency and all FCMAT reports are published on the FCMAT website and made available to interested parties in state government. In the absence of extraordinary circumstances, FCMAT will not withhold preparation, publication and distribution of a report once fieldwork has been completed, and the district shall not request that it do so.

8. INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR

FCMAT is an independent contractor and is not an employee or engaged in any manner with the district. The manner in which FCMAT's services are rendered shall be within its sole control and discretion. FCMAT representatives are not authorized to speak for, represent, or obligate the district in any manner without prior express written authorization from an officer of the district.

9. INSURANCE

During the term of this agreement, FCMAT shall maintain liability insurance of not less than \$1 million unless otherwise agreed upon in writing by the district, automobile liability insurance in the amount required under California state law, and workers compensation as required under California state law. FCMAT shall provide certificates of insurance, with Cypress School District named as additional insured, indicating applicable insurance coverages upon request.

10. HOLD HARMLESS

FCMAT shall hold the district, its board, officers, agents and employees harmless from all suits, claims and liabilities resulting from negligent acts or omissions of its board, officers, agents and employees undertaken under this agreement. Conversely, the district shall hold FCMAT, its board, officers, agents and employees harmless from all suits, claims and liabilities resulting from negligent acts or omissions of its board, officers, agents and employees undertaken under this agreement.

11. CONTACT PERSON

Name: Anne Silavs, Superintendent
Telephone: (714) 220-6910
Fax: (714) 220-6909
E-mail: asilavs@cypsd.org

SIGNED BY ANNE SILAVS
Anne Silavs, Superintendent
Cypress School District

January 20, 2017

Date




December 21, 2016

Date

Michael H. Fine,
Chief Administrative Officer
Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team

AMENDED STUDY AGREEMENT


Anne Silavs, Superintendent
Cypress School District

5/24/17

Date



May 24, 2017

Date

Michael H. Fine,
Chief Administrative Officer
Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team