

## Teacher SPED Task Force Questions and Concerns, Feb 6, 2024

Added 2/20/2024, 2pm:

### **SPED STAFFING CUTS**

APE: 3 APE teachers being displaced-concern that the remaining APE teachers will be overwhelmed.

BIS:

Hi,

The district just announced layoffs which will have a critical impact on safety and workload for a large portion of the special education department

They had agreed to hire 3-4 more Behavior Intervention Supervisors due to the significant increase in needs. Instead, they are laying off BIS members. An estimated 30% reduction. BIS is typically filled by a Board Certified Behavior Analyst who has a masters degree in behavior analysis and has passed a very hard examination on ethics, data collection and intervention types.

Their plan is for school psychologists and counselors to fill their role (and complete functional behavior assessments (FBA), supervision of behavior aides, direct services of training staff members in behavior intervention) who have little to no training in behavioral analysis and also have large workloads.

The average FBA takes 15+ hours of hands on time in addition to report writing to complete

Additionally part of FBAs is a behavior intervention plan which impacts both staff and student safety. A poorly written behavior plan results in student injury and staff injury. Delays in behavior assessment will prolong unsafe learning environments and working conditions.

\*Reductions everywhere: APE Teachers, VI, DHH, Related service providers are displaced.

\*Administrative level has 6 open spaces which are not going to be filled. TOSA positions will not be filled. Priority will be given to the body first.

AT

Additionally they are cutting the Assistive Technology team by 40% (going from 2 AT, and 3 speech AAC members to 1 AT and 2 AAC)

Currently the AAC teams have over 300 students they are responsible for and 20+ campuses each.

They are responsible for assessments, device set up and maintenance, training of site staff and parents, submitting paperwork for insurance and district purchasing of devices. The plan is to put those tasks on already overwhelmed SLPs.

They are reducing APE teachers, and vision impairment specialists as well.

This is going to have dramatic impacts on compliance with federal timelines and compliance for IEPs and student outcomes

Madison Elem

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**Class Size:**

-MS teacher at Grant concerned with talk of increase in SDC classes; per bargaining, that is not happening.

-SDC classes are too large-how do we get numbers lower? [The cap for SDC class enrollment is 18 students; however, SDC teachers should work towards placing their students in the least restrictive environment \(LRE\), even if it means transferring them to a different class. Additionally, many SDC classes have less than 12 students enrolled, and the class size may be further impacted by the individual needs of the students based on their level of support required](#)

-Is there a shortage of SPED teachers in the district? [There is a nationwide shortage of teachers.](#)

\*Example: MM teacher at Cabrillo, Bernice: MM class average was 12-14, MS class average was 10-12. Now MM classes are 14-18, and some MS class sizes are 14-18. (With aides and specialists, sometimes there are over 22 bodies in the room!)

**Lack of MM/ED programs at Avalon:**

-No MM or ED program/teachers at Avalon; students who qualified for SPED services with MM or ED are pushed into MS or RSP. [Avalon offers MM, MS, and RSP programs at their site. Due to its unique location, teachers are required to teach multiple models depending on the number of students enrolled. ED program is not offered at Avalon, but Student Support Services provide specific interventions to support student behavior needs on the site.](#)

**Lack of para-educators/instructional aides:**

-Poly RSP teachers have 1 aide to share; pulled to work with students in the Learning Center for test taking. [The teachers need to speak with the administration about this issue.](#)

-How are aides assigned at sites? Is there an allocation of MS/1 6hr, MM/1 3.8 hr, ED/1 for every 4 students? (Not counting outside agency aides and SCIAAs)

[The ratios are as follows:](#)

[MM/ Grades TK - 1: IAs \(4\); Grades 2- 12: IA \(2\)](#)

[MS/ Grades TK - 1 - IAs \(2\) at 18 students/ratios 6:1; Grades 2 - 12 IAs \(1\)](#)

[ED/ Grades 3 - 5 IAs \(2\) 5:1 ratio; Grades 6 - 12 IAs \(2\)](#)

[\\*Recommendation is to work with the special ed administrator and school administration to work out the schedule.](#)

**Lack of Communication:**

-MS teacher at Poly, Sarah Roselli, found out that a para-educator from 'Hey Tutor' was moved from Poly to another site by speaking with the para; notice was not given to the site or case

carrier (Before any IA is moved both the DH and site administrator are notified); Poly student elopes and has behavior issues that the para provided support for.

-MS teacher at Poly was not informed that the DHH service provider was out on leave; there is a student that has not received DHH services for a year. She learned of the DHH absence after sending an email to her. The person taking over DHH services informed the Poly teacher that they had been out on leave for a year...no communication was received. The service provider responsible for DHH has coverage for her caseload. Our office will investigate further and ensure that coverage has been or will be provided.

-SUCSESS-Dennis Swenningson no longer the supervisor-not communicated to SUCSESS staff.(Erica Sarabia taking over). Mr. Swenningson no longer supervises the SUCSESS program since the spring of 2023. BIS staff and SUCSESS teachers should have been informed. The current point of contact for the SUCSESS program is Program Administrator, Erica Sarabia. Mrs. Sarabia, please send an email to SUCSESS teachers and BIS staff.

Commented [1]: @ericasarabia@lbschools.net  
Assigned to ericasarabia@lbschools.net

-6 Behavior Supervisors being layed off-not communicated to staff. Personnel matters are considered confidential and cannot be discussed.

#### **SPED District contact list: Who can attend an IEP meeting to fulfill parent request?**

-Elaine Paquing, RSP at Longfellow had a parent request for district SPED Leadership to attend IEP since parent is not happy with current administration. Response from district SPED contact person for Longfellow: "We only attend IEPs if an attorney is involved". Is this the procedure now, parents need to have an attorney before district SPED leadership supports with an IEP? The district administrator (LEA) is usually the site administrator, typically the Principal. If parents are not satisfied with the site principal, they are not entitled to request another administrator to be present. The Division of Special Education has a limited number of staff, and they can provide staffing meetings to support the staff, but only before the IEP meeting if the site administrators ask for assistance. Special education cannot attend IEP meetings for this purpose.

#### **Sunday Reading groups clarification needed:**

-Elaine Paquing, RSP at Longfellow asked: While RSP teachers are not case carriers for students in Sunday, are Sunday reading groups allowed to be added to existing RSP intervention groups, not to exceed a total of 28 students, the RSP caseload?

#### **Co-Teaching Concerns:**

##### **I. Co-Teachers at Avalon and Poly did not receive laptops.**

-Laura White, Avalon: Co-Teachers need laptops. Erica Sarabia was looking into who are considered Co-Teachers.

-Denise Hurst, Poly RSP: 9 Co-Teachers did not receive laptops. Email from Denise: Good Morning,

There has been a lack of communication regarding the pick up of computers. Mrs. Barbara Palafox sent updated communication to affected staff who did not receive the initial

communication. In the next few weeks, a new date for pick-up will be communicated. We appreciate your patience.

I found out in January 10 that there was a pick on the 9th.(the flyer)

Then on January 18, Katherine Gallagher went to pick up a laptop around noon and she was told that the pick up had been pushed back. [Mrs. Barbara Palafox communicated via email to DHs to share with staff.](#)

I emailed Barbara Palafox about updated pick up dates and she shared (that) emails went to department chairs.

The email that was sent to our department chairs(we have two), one of the emails was incorrect. Apparently Our Admin over sped emailed the district on Friday and apparently our Department chair called someone one Friday.

## II. Co-Teaching Scheduling concerns

-[Sarah Roselli, Poly](#): RSP Co-Teachers no longer have a CCS section with their caseload; this year, MM teachers have the CCS sections for RSP. [\(This is based on master scheduling. The DH should discuss this with site administration\)](#)

-[Sarah R, Poly](#): Master Scheduling for SPED needs help/SPED Admin needs help, Jenny Salazar formerly from Lakewood. (This year's schedule does not promote the success of students or teachers.) [\(We will communicate this to OCIPD as this is a site master scheduling issue\)](#)

-[Christina Vieyra](#), Naples RSP half-day, CCT Lowell half-day, K-2 CCT is full day support, 3rd grade is half-day support, and next year 4th will be half-day support. Is this the structure of CCT going forward? [CCT is only pre-K-2, except for three pilot sites \(K-3\). The 3 -12 model is an inclusive program model and is not synonymous with the preK-2 CCT program.](#)

## Safety Plan being added to the IEP

-Voluntary attendance noted in the Run Down newsletter. If it will be part of the IEP, shouldn't it be a paid training? Mandatory? so all of SPED is on the same page? [Unfortunately, we cannot add additional mandatory trainings for teachers](#)

**School Psychologist Caseload Concerns:** The recommendation for Psychologist caseloads is 50:1. LBUSD caseloads are currently averaging 2,000:1.

**Lay offs:** Special Education Teachers report being at their "breaking Point" and the added caseloads and workloads are too much. The concern is the layoffs of specialized staff (ex: BCBA Behavior Analysts) Who will take up this workload? We've been told it will be school psychs and counselors. Not all schools have the same access to these positions and as we've been told, Psychs are currently well above their caseloads.

[Thank you for sharing this concern. We are dedicated to ensuring that the workload and caseload averages for our staff are fair and equitable.](#)

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**SLP concerns, Wednesday Jan 17, 2024**

## Workload vs. Caseload

-need a cap for caseload, not an average.

- with increasing SPED numbers, SL services increase
- SLPs need to make up missed sessions
- caseload is currently determined by Amy, using a Workload calculator program.
- There are different levels within SLP caseload. If a student receives SL only in a general education only school (like a private school), the SLP becomes the case carrier and is responsible for the student's IEP and everything connected to that.

### **Adjunct Duty for SLPs**

- SLPs are responsible for AM supervision at the middle school level, 2 times a week.

### **Allocation of Funds**

- medical billing for SL services goes to the general pool for health(stated at the bottom of the IEP)
- funds from SL services are funding nurse and librarian salaries
  - can funds be used to purchase curriculum and needed materials? [Check in with Amy Culligan](#)

#### **Culligan**

- example: SLPs are using their own money laminating keyboard overlays for student use
- example: SLPs are purchasing their own supplemental materials that students need,
  - With various needs that are different for many students, and also varies at different Grade levels.

### **Speech and Language Concerns- Meeting notes from 2/15/24**

\*Goal: Would like to implement a "work load" calculator-(example is the ASHA calculator)

\*7 SLPs sampled using the calculator and the average caseload across the group was 56 students. The average number of hours worked was 40. SLPs who used this calculator report that they were not able to get all of their work done in that amount of time.

\*According to the LBUSD essential functions job analysis, 80% of their work day should be used to conduct direct student related work, based on a 7 hour work day. 10% of which should be directed towards meetings and testing.

\*Current scheduling struggles revolve around scheduling mandates. Example, IEPs are to be held during teacher prep times. Doing so impedes on direct therapy time for students. SLPs do not get subs and are expected to make up any missed time. One SLP reported holding 120 IEP meetings in one school year with 5 SSTs calculating to be over 200 hours in meetings. Another SLP reported having 23 re-evaluation IEPs in one school year. Assessments require a lot of additional time.

\***Case Load concerns:** Pre-k/TK caseload cap is 40. SLPs on elementary campuses also have pre-K/TK students and their caseloads are well above 40. ASHA does not recommend the policy of having caseload caps, but instead recommends using a workload calculator.

\*Discussion took place regarding staffing and direct services: If the ultimate goal for our students is to decrease/exit their service times, then the SLPs need to be able to provide the therapy.

\*Two members of the group currently serve Pre-k-grade 8 sites; they are the sole SLP for these schools with caseloads of over 70 students. SLPs are rushing from place to place and working through transitions which has caused silly mistakes with big consequences. Ex: Creating an AP with missing information and inputting mistakes into the service line of IEPs (7 x per week instead of 7 x per month). It's reported that Buffum has a part time SLP with 40 students on her caseload- this is a full caseload, but she works only part time hours.

\***Paradigm:** Discussion took place regarding documentation of missed service hours through Paradigm. Currently many SLPs are not documenting service hours through this system because it takes too long to complete. The group felt that if they were documenting the missed hours, they could end up putting the district at risk for having to provide compensatory time.

\***Personnel Concerns:** It's reported that AAC SLP positions will be cut from 3-2

**AAC Devices:** Students are still waiting for devices. What is up with this?

\*Working on having a suppository of devices.