

SELPA FINANCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Standing Committee of the Consortium

December 18, 2023
3:00 pm – 5:00 pm

SELPA Conference Room
3570 Rancho Road, Ste. 9; Redding, CA 96002

MINUTES

1. Call to Order at 3:02 pm

Christian Patz, SELPA Executive Director, called the meeting to order at 3:02 pm.

SELPA Finance Advisory Council members roll call:

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| ● David Flores, Shasta UHSD - Region1 | Present |
| ● Donell Evans, Anderson UHSD – Region 2 | Present |
| ● Robert Fellingner, Redding ESD – Region 3 | Present |
| ● Deborah Williams, Enterprise ESD – Region 4 | Present |
| ● Cathleen Serna, Columbia ESD – Region 5 | Present |
| ● Beth Roberts, Gateway USD – Region 6 | ABSENT |
| ● Teresea Spooner, Fall River JUSD – Region 7 | Present (via Zoom) |

Others present:

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| ● Christian Patz, SELPA | ● De’An Chambless, SCOE |
| ● James Glover, SELPA | ● Lindsey Gilstrap, SCOE |
| ● Nick Syrrist, SELPA | ● Rebecca Torgrimson, FRJUSD (via Zoom) |
| ● Hilary Schwartz, SELPA | |

2. Approval of the Agenda

ACTION: Robert Fellingner motioned to pull item 4c from the Consent items and approve the Agenda as otherwise presented. Cathleen Serna seconded the motion. The motion passed by majority vote 6-0-1, no opposition, no abstentions, Beth Roberts was absent.

3. Public Forum / Hearing of Person’s Wishing to Address the Finance Advisory Council

Discussion: None.

4. Consent Items – (These action items are of a routine nature or items for which no discussion is anticipated, and are acted upon by a single vote. Members may request that any item be removed and given individual consideration.)

4a. Approval of Minutes for October 16, 2023

4b. Low Incidence Equipment & Reimbursement Requests

- | | |
|---|------------|
| 4b1. LI Equip. Request #80 – Pacheco ESD – Junction ESD – OI Equipment | \$4,993.56 |
| 4b2. LI Equip. Request #81 – Ctnwd Crk Chrtr – Ctnwd Crk Chrtr – HH Equip | \$1,623.54 |
| 4b3. LI Equip. Request #82 – SELPA stock – VI Equipment | \$ 541.43 |

4b4. LI Equip. Request #83 – SELPA stock – VI Equipment	\$ 811.83
4b5. LI Equip. Request #84 – SELPA stock – VI Equipment	<u>\$ 338.50</u>
TOTAL:	\$8,308.86

4c. Independent Educational Evaluation Policy update

ACTION: Robert Fellingner motioned to approve items 4a and 4b of the Consent Items as presented. Donell Evans seconded the motion. The motion passed by majority vote 6-0-1, no opposition, no abstentions, Beth Roberts was absent.

Discussion: Mr. Fellingner inquired if item 4c, Independent Educational Evaluation Policy update, only included changes to the pricing. Dr. Patz confirmed a cost survey was conducted of neighboring SELPAs and revised the listed fees accordingly. Parents need to justify when going outside the area and if the cost is appropriate. Dr. Patz urged members to contact the SELPA for IEE concerns, as there is a cost-benefit to avoiding litigation. Ms. Chambless, SCOE Director of Business Services, suggested replacing “districts” with “LEAs”, in order to include charter schools as well.

(Beth Roberts present at 3:07 pm)

ACTION: Robert Fellingner motioned to replace “districts” with “LEAs” and approve the Independent Educational Evaluation Policy as otherwise presented. Cathleen Serna seconded the motion. The motion passed by majority vote 7-0-0, no opposition, no abstentions, no absentees.

5. SELPA Director’s Report

Discussion: Dr. Patz reported that the SELPA Directors are worried about state budget and COLA, as steps in column could negatively impact budgets and sharing with other districts. Dr. Patz remains concerned with Spectrum billing and vacant seats, and will speak with district fiscal personnel for those sending students. Invitations for a deep discussion regarding costs and solutions will be forthcoming. Seats are not filling due to the volatility of the program, and out-of-county placements canceled due to cost of transportation. Growing pains remain, while the program necessity also remains.

6. SELPA Fiscal Update – Discussion

6a. 2023-24 Budget vs. Actual YTD

Discussion: Dr. Patz provided members with a handout providing itinerant budget information. No further discussion.

6b. Operations Budget

Discussion: Dr. Patz stated he is building the budget for 2024-25 and has communicated with Ms. Chambless regarding the current \$700k set operating budget. He anticipates increases to reflect 1% COLA and a better alignment of funds for the Program Specialist, ERMHS incomes, and ERICS. The new budget will reflect proposed plans for the use of increased funds due to reduced subsidies, and if unspent would pass through as part of AB602 funds. Dr. Patz requested guidance regarding the Bridges subsidy reduction and the Fall River remote subsidy. No further discussion.

7. Ad Hoc Committee Meeting 11-7-23 - Update / Discussion

7a. Extraordinary & Legal Cost Pools

Discussion: Dr. Patz informed members the Ad Hoc committee agreed the current legal subsidy could be absorbed into the extraordinary cost subsidy pool.

7b. Preschool Responsibility Policy

Discussion: The Ad Hoc committee stated the largest challenge is providing services for PreK students attending preschools outside their district of residence. Dr. Patz asked members if the SELPA should create a program for these students, as TK will expand to all 4-year-olds so the services would overlap. Rebecca Torgrimson, Fall River JUSD SpEd Director, stated their district has 22 new preschools in their program when previously they had less than 7. Services needed are mostly speech referrals. Fall River JUSD had to hire .5 speech person and they are now “drowning” in service needs, emphasizing their district uses ALL funds received.

8. Local Plan and Service Plan and Allocation Plan / Subsidies – Update / Discussion

8a. Local Plan – Governance & Administration

Discussion: Dr. Patz reminded members of the previously shared Gov section, and referred again to the redline version in table format. Feedback received in October has been incorporated into the new table provided. Members liked the table format. No further discussion.

9. Subsidies – Policies – Discussion / ACTION

9a. Regional Resource Committee Policy (NPS, Countywide)

Discussion: Dr. Patz reminded members that he is proposing a 25% subsidy for the first and second year, then no subsidy going forward. Members were informed that the Program Advisory Committee (PAC) requested it be kept 25% in perpetuity. Discussion included options to eliminate “weaning” down to zero, and support for a fixed dollar amount for a set timeframe. Ms. Evans and Ms. Roberts support 25% percent for 2 years, but not in perpetuity as the current policy provides.

ACTION: Donell Evans motioned to approve the Regional Resource Committee policy revised to a 25% subsidy for two years. Beth Roberts seconded the motion. The motion passed by majority vote 6-0-1-0, no opposition, Deborah Williams abstained, no absentees.

9b. Out of Home Policy

Discussion: Dr. Patz provided a proposed draft of an Out of Home Policy and recommends changing from the current 75% subsidy after LCFF consideration to a step-down subsidy over 3 years. The PAC prefers to keep the 75% in perpetuity as is (RTC stays as is) and eliminate LCFF consideration. Dr. Patz indicated the SELPA may need to revisit in the future if the SELPA receives less OOH funds.

ACTION: Robert Fellingner motioned to approve the Out of out-of-home policy revised to a 75% subsidy with no LCFF consideration. Beth Roberts seconded the motion. The motion passed by majority vote 7-0-0, no opposition, no abstentions, no absentees.

9c. Extraordinary Costs Pool

Discussion: Dr. Patz informed members that the PAC voiced concerns with transportation and related services and will revise language to list common related services (e.g. - speech, OT). Unique services fall under extraordinary costs. The subsidy replenishes to \$250k annually. Discussion included how the policy would allow specific student matters to be discussed in a FAC closed session added to the end of a regular meeting. The requesting FAC member must abstain and the SELPA Director reserves the tie-breaker vote. Legal costs can be presented to help offset dispute resolution costs IF the FAC agrees the district showed due diligence.

ACTION: Robert Fellingner motioned to approve the Extraordinary Costs Pool as presented. Cathleen Serna seconded the motion. The motion passed by majority vote 7-0-0, no opposition, no abstentions, no absentees.

9d. Low Incidence Equipment Policy

Discussion: Dr. Patz informed members the revised policy allows districts to directly purchase equipment valued under \$1k. The SELPA would continue to purchase equipment over \$1k. The PAC supports the change. No more \$50k set aside. Funds would be passed through to districts as SELPA still has reserves. Ms. Roberts requested item #3 be revised to clarify that *“Low Incidence requests are reviewed, approved or denied by the SELPA Director and brought to the FAC for transparency.”* Members agreed and Dr. Patz will add the requested language - will change or pull for Board consideration.

ACTION: Beth Roberts motioned to approve the Low Incidence Equipment Policy with item #3 revised to specify *“Low Incidence requests are reviewed, and approved or denied by the SELPA Director, and brought to the FAC for transparency”*. David Flores seconded the motion. The motion passed by majority vote 7-0-0, no opposition, no abstentions, no absentees.

9e. Remote District Subsidy

Discussion: Dr. Patz stated the \$83,500.00 remote subsidy for Fall River JUSD is approximately 25% for transportation and approximately \$30k general funds, as Fall River is unable to utilize SCOE bus services, or any other service available to local districts. The policy now defines “remote” as 50 miles from the Shasta County Office of Education located on Magnolia Avenue in Redding. Dr. Patz requested guidance to continue, reduce, or wean the subsidy amount, as it was previously taken from federal dollars and is now part of ERMHS. Ms. Torgrimson reminded members that the SELPA previously paid \$105k to Hill Country for providing ERMHS services to Fall River JUSD which has been cut, so Fall River must now pay for that service.

Dr. Patz informed members the PAC recommends keeping the remote subsidy as is with no cuts, as it allows time for Fall River to adjust their budgets in a step down as they directly receive their own ERMHS funds now. The Board agreed last year to step down the subsidy as it comes from the \$280k SELPA federal funds. Edits can be made when the full budget is presented in January.

Ms. Evans stated the geography of Fall River warrants a continued general and transportation subsidy. Ms. Torgrimson reminded members their district has no access to SCOE Bridges or EXCEL programs and must provide all programs themselves. Dr. Patz confirmed Fall River could apply for extraordinary cost subsidy if specific costs are burdensome, especially as there are no providers in their area. Ms. Spooner emphasized the need for SELPA’s support as with all other districts. Dr. Patz confirmed the SELPA has increased staff support and visitations to Fall River.

Dr. Patz continued with confirmation that inflation is considered in the \$83k and that the Governing Board planned last year to step down the SELPA ERMHS remote subsidy contribution. PAC wants to keep the same. If no further guidance is received, Dr. Patz will propose a step down of \$15k from ERMHS, and leave all else the same, although the Board may still elect to change for 24-25. Dr. Patz will report out that FAC seems to support a general remote subsidy, but is still considering the ERMHS portion and referred to the next section when asked how SELPA would use retained funds.

10. Potential SELPA Services

Discussion: Dr. Patz continued his slide presentation and reiterated option A being the need for services to students attending preschool outside their DOR's boundaries. SELPA could contract a speech pathologist and Paraeducator for approximately \$360k in SELPA costs to be divided among uses as a fee for svc model. Costs estimated are \$9k per preK student at \$200 per hour. If districts commit to 30 students, the SELPA will post the position by April 8. Estimated costs are proposed at maximum costs. Slots could be filled by students on a comprehensive site. SELPA could train paras and speech pathologists. Fall River would be included using 2 paras.

(David Flores excused at 4:20 pm)

Discussion continued with Dr. Patz proposing option B, being a SELPA in-house SEIS / Data service for LEAs. As the state has made data reporting much more complicated and SELPA has found a need for a service. SELPA would offer an increased level of efficiency having dedicated SELPA staff review data and correct errors on a daily basis. Estimated costs are proposed by LEA ADA and participation rates. Dr. Patz provided a proposed breakdown of costs versus ADA. The SELPA would provide on-site visits and training, plus monitor Service Tracker to ensure accurate billing and logged hours align with services determined for students. SELPA data services would be an opt-in program only and would require district commitments by April 8th.

11. SELPA Vehicles – Discussion

Discussion: SELPA currently has 8 vehicles, with the majority used by the itinerants. 4-5 of the vehicles need replacement, with issues concerning costs and parking. SCOE recommends leasing new vehicles. There are 6 itinerant teachers and 1 Brailist who use the vehicles. Ms. Serna stated her district only reimburses for mileage. Ms. Evans has 40 various vehicles, plus offers mileage reimbursement for others. Mr. Fellingner and Ms. Roberts confirmed their school psychologists are mileage-based. Ms. Spooner stated Fall River provides an annual stipend divided and paid monthly for personal vehicles, use grants for departments, and mileage reimbursement for their teachers. Ms. Serna uses Workflow through UBEO (previously Ray Morgan Company) for tracking. Dr. Patz emphasized a preference for a stipend, as it incentivizes efficiency, and suggested mileage plus a stipend for Black Butte, Castle Rock, etc. Ms. Chambless stated the unions may be required to negotiate the stipend. Ms. Evans added that many drivers don't want to carry the increased insurance required for the stipend.

12. ERMHS Memo

Discussion: Dr. Patz provided a draft Agreement between LEAs and SCOE / SELPA regarding district federal funds staying with the SELPA. The state is still sending Grant Award Notifications (GANs) to LEAs and charter schools for federal ERMHS funds. The proposed form will allow the SELPA to provide one GAN template and expenditure report for 2023-24 funds.

ACTION: Donell Evans motioned to approve the ERMHS Memo as presented. Deborah Williams seconded the motion. The motion passed by majority vote 6-0-1, no opposition, no abstentions, David Flores was absent.

13. Future Agenda Items

- Full budget

14. Next meeting: January 22, 2024, 3:00 pm – 5:00 pm, SELPA Conference Room

15. Adjourn Meeting adjourned at 4:47 pm.