



SANTA MONICA - MALIBU UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

## **DELAC Special Meeting**

Via Zoom

January 27th, 2022

5:30 p.m.

DELAC Members present: Laura Hernández, president DELAC; Alicia Mignano, secretary DELAC; Stefanie Serrato, Roosevelt; Nancy Orozco, Muir; Lolis Barranco, LMS

Parents present: Verónica Ramírez, Adriana Bravo, Yadira Vázquez, Diana Maruri, María Guzmán, Maritza, Alexandra, CG

SMMUSD Staff present: Carmen Durand, Family Engagement and EL Programs Coordinator; Deanna Sinfield, SMMUSD Director of Special Education; Maria León-Vázquez, SMMUSD Board member; Vanina Zalazar, SMMUSD Lead Interpreter; Hilda Salas, SAMOHI Special Education Coordinator; Nalley Gutiérrez, BCL; Florinda Vila, BCL

Community member present: Dr. Berenice Onofre

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Welcome

Laura Hernández – Welcome everyone, thank you for being here this afternoon.

Vanina Zalazar – Explains interpretation feature, please select your language of preference.

Laura Hernandez – Reviews the norms, bylaws and today’s agenda: [DELAC Agenda - January 27th, 2022](#)

Deanna Sinfield will present – See PPT presentation ([English Learners and Special Education](#))

Alicia Mignano reviews the list of present members

Edison – Guicela Alvarado, absent; Alicia Mignano, present; Veronica Ramírez, present

Franklin – Dorina Gangi, absent

Grant – Yheisi Alfaro, absent

JAMS – Cristina Jiménez, absent

Muir – Nancy Orozco, present

LMS – Maria Barranco, present

Malibu E – Edgar Meinhardt, absent

Malibu MS – Has no ELAC

Malibu HS – Delia Escobar, absent

McKinley – Imelda Rueda, absent

SAMOHI – Absent

Roosevelt – Stefanie Serrato, present

Will Rogers – Virginia Roque, absent

Community member - Berenice Onofre, present

Deanna Sinfield, Director of Special Education, will present about English learners and Special Education. Hilda Salas, Samohi's Special Education Coordinator, is also present. (See presentation: [English learners and special education](#))

Deanna Sienfield – More than 19% of Special Education students that are English learners have been reclassified. She explains how is the process to identify an English learner at enrollment and how the Initial ELPAC is administered to determine the new student's English level, she talks about the scores to determine levels 1, 2 and 3.

There are three levels of English proficiency (please see pages 9 and 10), she explains each: Emergent, extended, connected.

Takes from 5 to 7 years for a student to become fluent in English.

A disability is distinguished from a linguistic difference (pages 11 and 12), there is a delay when a kid speaks more than one language. An English learner has moments of silence because he or she is learning. Sometimes the student takes longer to grasp things. Questions to ask to distinguish an English learner (pages 13, 14). Students identified as English learners (pages 15, 16). There are two things that happen with English learners: Deanna explains what designated and integrated learning is as well as other concepts for English learners to learn English continually and little by little (pages 17, 18, 19, 20).

Deanna Sinfield reviews and explains the following:

- Who provides the designated and integrated ELD?
- What is ELD about?
- IEP development

It is not appropriate to set special education goals for the child with classes in which he or she has a disability.

Deanna talks about the IEP development (page 22).

The alternative reclassification for students with an IEP is reviewed (pages 23, 24, 25, 26).

During an IEP meeting different topics related to the IEP are discussed, such as the reclassification, its steps and the goals to follow (pages 28, 29, 30). During the IEP, the team of teachers, administrators and the psychologist review the student's progress.

Then the different evaluations are administered to the special education student for the different grades. Deanna explains this topic. Then they are compared to their classmates' language skills at the same level and similar disabilities/conditions, etc. (pages 31, 32).

There is also an evaluation done by the teacher (see pages 33, 34) and other considerations (pages 35, 36).

If the student has a cognitive quotient that has been impacted, that has to be taken into consideration.

Input from the parents – Comments and input from the parents are taken into consideration (pages 37, 38).

Laura Hernández – Who administers the ELPAC tests to the kids?

Deanna Sinfield - There is a group of people who administer these exams early in the school year one-on-one, they can be retired teachers and agree with the student's teacher on how appropriate it is to do them.

Laura Hernandez - My children have already been reclassified, they are in JAMS now. Sometimes teachers don't know and don't have answers about the reclassification process.

Deanna Sinfield – By working with teachers in this process of reclassification we understand more and more... sometimes students reclassify through 5th grade, but sometimes earlier. It takes 5 to 7 years to understand another language.

Diana Maruri –How are children with learning issues assessed?

Deanna Sinfield – Their English development is measured and the questions are different, there are alternative exams for students who have more significant needs.

Carmen Durand– That alternate test has not yet come out as it is a matter for the state not the district.

Diana Maruri – My son has cerebral palsy and he obviously has a delay, you have to implement a policy for these children, but you can find methods of classifying these children, my child has been in school for 6 years and has not been reclassified.

Deanna Sinfield – Once they get to a certain point, we need to discuss with the team, they need to show growth, we talk about this during the triannual IEP.

Hilda Salas – How old is your child in the special education program? He has not taken the alternative exam?

Diana Maruri – My son has been in the special education program for six years.

Deanna Sinfield – We've had the alternative exam for years.

Diana Maruri – ELPAC is still being developed

Carmen Durand – ELPAC is one of the ways it is used to measure the English level, it is evaluated to reclassify development when a student has a serious disability.

Diana Maruri – My son has been in the program for a long time and he has a disability.

Carmen Durand– Your case is specific Ms. Diana, but we can talk, you and I, on another occasion to learn more about your child's situation.

Diana Maruri – Of course, yes, thank you.

Carmen Durand– I was a speech therapist, we have to talk about your case with Deanna Sinfield to know more about the case and see what can be done about the reclassification of your child since we need to know more details of the case.

Alicia Mignano – 49:00 EL and Special Education students, I know that they take the ELPAC, they have an initial ELPAC and a summative, do they offer this exam every year, their general teacher or a substitute teacher?

Deanna Sinfield: It is a group of retired teachers who only do ELPAC testing.

Alicia Mignano: One of the problems I see with the ELPAC is when I talk to my son's teacher... it's like we have two systems, the district with its letters and the teachers don't have those results, so when I have meetings with the teachers during the parent/teacher conferences, the teacher asks me if the district has informed me about my child's test results.... So how does this work for an EL and Special Education student? Is it in real time or within 6 months?

Deanna Sinfield: I know teachers can see their students' result/score, it's in real time, and as a principal, I could see all of the students' scores. I would have access to this data.

Carmen Durand: There is a system called *Toms* where all the results are uploaded and teachers have access, just like district staff, a teacher can see only their class.

Alicia Mignano – IEPs are very long documents, is there a section for ELD?

Deanna Sinfield: Yes, it can be under the special factors section for EL students, integrated, designated and there is also a part for ELPAC scores, it's all there.

Yes, in the document there is space, it is in the state evaluations, summative ELPAC and alternative ELPAC, there are integrated and designated supports and other adaptations as well, everything is written there.

Alicia Mignano: English learners have alternative tests; can you talk a little more about this?

Deanna Sinfield: We have bilingual school psychologists and bilingual speech pathologists and other adults who can speak the language, there are a lot of tests we use to read if it is a language or a disability and there are also many observations of reading skills, parental input, we ask parents a lot of questions... we do a multiple measure to be sure.

Hilda Salas – Last year school psychologists attended a training to learn the difference between learning disability and a language disorder and language acquisition.

Berenice Onofre: We know that teachers are very busy and we are aware of the diversity of needs in the classrooms, who oversees what teachers do in the classroom with EL with disabilities since there are so many needs of different students?

Deanna Sinfield: The principal is in charge of all the teachers; the coordinators and myself work to help the principals... Each child is so different that we have to adapt to the specific needs of the child, the goal is to address the linguistic needs along with the needs of the child.

Dr. Berenice Onofre – I know that two new immigrant students in SAMOHI are having problems with math and they need help.

Dr. Berenice Onofre – In an IEP at the high school level, who is the teacher attending?

Hilda Salas: Typically, there are two teachers during an IEP meeting, the general education teacher and the Special Education teacher, and you can contact me regarding the two students having problems with math.

Deanna Sinfield: I want to say something, I don't want to pathologize learning a language, it is a gift to know more than one language and we should not pathologize that. These students/bilingual people can switch from one language to another with incredible ease, we are separating the language from the disability, this is a very complex process and we are not address the reclassification in all the meetings.

Carmen Durand: Frequently, we are in such hurry to reclassify the students which causes students to fail later in the academic studies, 5 or 7 years are needed to speak fluently, it is very complex when it comes to speaking another language.

Alicia Mignano – I love Deanna's comment about not to pathologize the learning of a language.

Deanna Sinfield – We don't have many students in special education that are English learners.

Deanna Sinfield: We have many resources for English learners, if we use them well, everyone benefits. I want to share this: when I was in Franklin, English learners used to make an announcement in their native language every week via intercom; it was a lot of fun and this idea started during an ELAC meeting, and after a while we had an interpreter translating the message from the English learners. These kids felt like rock stars, parents would come to film their children. We had 30 languages in that school, and I assigned one of the English learners with the

task of making the announcement and parents had to help them with the message. This made them very proud, they celebrated all day. All these things that we do to celebrate languages and diversity make us a better community.

Laura Hernández – Hopefully this can be done in other schools, I think that a kid that is an English learner and/or in special education should not be ashamed nor hide, then feel guilty, they are kids learning another language. They should have a big celebration when the kids reclassify, it's a big effort and that deserves an acknowledgement.

Deanna Sinfield – We have hired three bilingual coordinators, Hilda Salas and Joseph Garcia speak Spanish; Erin Zeevi speaks Hebrew. We have three languages in our office that can help us and have been trained in the reclassification process, and we have reclassified many students. We have so many different levels of needs among students, the better the programs we offer, the more parents will want to move. We need to have different service programs for different student needs. We are working hard to help the community, and also to be sensitive to the needs of families, it's a lot of work.

Laura Hernández – Can special education parents who don't receive your emails see your information in something like Peach Jar?

Deanna Sinfield – There is a lot of information on our SMMUSD website. There are all the high school classes, our programs, meetings and more information.

Hilda Salas – There is a lot of information on the high school website, it is also indicated which coordinators are responsible for each school and also what type of level of support your child is offered, or the needs.

Laura Hernandez – Go to the SMMUSD website and then special education?

Hilda Salas – Yes, and then see the coordinators for each different school. For example, I am the coordinator for Santa Monica HS and the Obama Center; Erin Zeevi is the coordinator for the elementary schools, Joseph Garcia is the coordinator for the high schools and Malibu High; and Victoria Hearst for the pre-schools and private schools.

Laura Hernandez – I've met some parents who don't know anything about their coordinator and don't know who to go with. There is a lack of communication with these parents about this information, is there a way to let them know about this?

Hilda Salas – Of course, on the website in the Special Education section you can see which coordinators cover which school.

#### Public Comments

Laura Hernández – Two minutes please.

Carmen Durand – I have started a few social media accounts on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. I will post information/messages for the parents about the school related matters only.

Laura Hernández:

Next meeting: February 7th, 2022

Topic: District wide needs assessment

Carmen Durand – You can also ask the bilingual community liaisons about the social media accounts.

Alicia Mignano – Thank you for being here with us. Good night.

Closing 7:11pm

*\*Minutes transcribed, edited and formatted by Florinda Vila*