



Speech and Language Services Review

Issue One

Over a series of meetings, a group of superintendents, CBOs and special education directors reviewed all of the current regional classrooms and services to determine if the current structure continues to meet district needs. The SELPA was asked for recommendations and asked that the district superintendents consider alternatives to the current speech program to identify any potential instructional improvements, fiscal benefits or increased efficiencies. This proposal is structured to align with previous decision-making processes related to the OT, PT, Behaviorist, Inclusion Classrooms, and the Pollock Pines Speech Program. Pursuant to the SELPA Local Plan and policies, transition to a different speech model would need to be initiated by individual district(s) accepting Program Transfer request(s) from the current program operator (EDCOE).

Current Landscape

While speech and language services have been provided by EDCOE since the 1980s, the majority of COEs and/or SELPAs have moved away from providing speech and language services as a stand-alone service/program. Mirroring the model implemented in other counties is in no way the goal of SELPA Staff recommendation but rather to consider alternatives to the current program model. Decisions by similarly-situated agencies are simply data points. El Dorado County superintendents should independently consider and evaluate the benefits of the current model compared to alternative configurations.

Program Data

The historical state and El Dorado County SELPA speech and language service data demonstrate that elementary students account for a higher percentage of students receiving this service when compared to high school students. EDUHSD is the largest district in the SELPA but accounts for a much smaller proportion of students receiving SLS.

Speech Service County			
	16-17	17-18	18-19
COE Program Students with 415 Service	168	197	211
District Students with 415 Service	1268	1296	1287
Total Students with 415 Service	1437	1493	1498

District	16-17	17-18	18-19
Black Oak Mine Unified	65	79	84
Buckeye Union Elementary	332	320	311
Camino Union Elementary	42	38	41
El Dorado County Office of Education	2	9	8
El Dorado Union High	95	108	136
Gold Oak Union Elementary	43	46	48
Gold Trail Union Elementary	34	45	48
Indian Diggings Elementary	0	2	1



Latrobe Elementary	17	18	15
Mother Lode Union Elementary	126	113	91
Pioneer Union Elementary	26	26	20
Placerville Union Elementary	116	121	119
Pollock Pines Elementary	91	76	69
Rescue Union Elementary	274	294	293
Silver Fork Elementary	1	1	2
District Services Total	1269	1296	1287
Regional Programs	168	197	211
Total	1437	1493	1498

EDCOE employs or contracts for a total of 29.2 FTE: 21.3 FTE serving district students at district sites, 4.7 FTE providing infant and preschool services and 3.2 FTE providing services to students in county operated regional programs.

Allocated Support Costs (Based on allocation factors)						
Program	Instruction	Administration	Pupil Support Services	Maintenance and Operations	Total	Speech, Language & Hearing Specialists
Infant Program	448,690	-	-	-	448,690	235,857
Preschool Assessment Team	104,203	-	-	-	104,203	55,496
Preschool	846,185	104,886	130,418	58,886	1,140,375	233,082
Low Incidence & Adaptive PE	671,102	59,510	-	-	730,612	-
Moderate / Severe	1,692,575	352,249	208,668	128,668	2,382,160	150,205
LEAD	527,326	100,135	78,251	36,727	742,439	23,453
Autism	934,296	190,556	104,334	39,666	1,268,852	133,190
Transition & Workability	602,495	131,666	78,251	69,782	882,194	22,198
Community School RSP	235,583	16,365	-	-	251,948	22,198
District Services	2,548,002	158,709	-	-	2,706,711	2,368,050
Total	8,610,457	1,114,076	599,922	333,729	10,658,184	3,243,729



Options for consideration

1. Maintain the current structure and agreements for speech and language services.
2. Districts directly employ or contract to provide speech and language services for students in district programs. In order to determine if this alternative is a viable option, each district must necessarily analyze the data to identify any instructional improvements that might be achieved through integration with district services and programs and potential fiscal benefits from increased efficiencies.
3. Some districts may consider creating cooperative agreements to share cost and coordination of services. In addition to the considerations listed in bullet #2, districts should consider how the distance between districts could impact these agreements.

Issue Two

The Allocation Plan does not address how a district would be funded if a speech unit is transferred from the county office to a district. The transfer of a program from the county office to a district has not occurred in the history of the El Dorado County SELPA.

Background

The original 1997 task force noted that regional programs (including those operated by EDUHSD) are typically accessed equally by all K-12 districts. It was recognized that speech services funded “off the top” were an unequal distribution of services that should be addressed in the future. To date, the issue has not been revisited.

New Formula in 1998-99

Starting in 1998-99, special education funding came to the SELPA as a block grant, requiring the SELPA Superintendents to develop an allocation plan for the funds.

Funding is unique to each SELPA and is based on a snapshot in time. The formula is based on units operated in 1997-98. Appendix A shows the EDCOE SELPA units operated in 1997-98.

First Superintendent Task Force/Allocation Plan 1997

Speech services were included in the formula for regional program funding. The decision was to fund county office programs (SDC and Speech) “off the top” – using 1997-98 funding as the base. 46.50 “Units” operated by COE were determined to be the base (Unit = teacher/class with -0-, 1 or 2 aides). NPS funding received by the SELPA (based on 1997-98 costs) was put into a “pool” for shared reimbursements. The balance became a district per ADA formula that was equalized over time. Two other “Units” were determined to be regional programs. Pollock Pines was the only district operating speech, so that “Unit” was designated a regional program. EDUHSD was operating an SH SDC that was designated a regional program. Over time, additional classes have been added (growth units) and the Allocation Plan provides for a specific dollar amount of funding to accompany a growth unit.

Discussion of District Program Funding Options

The Allocation Plan provides for county offices and districts to receive unit funding as follows:

NSH Class with no aide COE	\$89,995
NSH Class with no aide District	\$80,116

These are historical rates based on statewide averages in 1997-98 with COLAs applied each year.



Options for consideration

1. Districts receive directly the district unit rate (80,116)/FTE and this amount is deducted from COE regional program funding.
2. Districts receive directly the COE unit rate (89,995)/FTE and this amount is deducted from COE regional program funding.
3. Deduct the agreed-upon unit rate from the COE regional program funding and add that amount to the District funding, which is distributed on an ADA/enrollment basis.

There are significant challenges with each of these options. Options 1 and 2 may not provide sufficient funding for districts. Additionally, Option 3 would continue an inequitable distribution of funding because of the varied sizes and SLS usage of districts in the county.

Recommendation

1. Over the next school year, individual districts should analyze the data provided, apply their own salary schedules and program assumptions, and evaluate the feasibility of any alternative that may benefit the district. This analysis and discussion should include district staff and stakeholders.
2. To honor the Superintendents' Councils' collaborative approach to decision-making, no district should initiate the program transfer process until SELPA Superintendents have finished the discussions and decisions regarding the regional program funding model.
3. By March 2020, the SELPA Superintendents should discuss and develop a process to allocate funding within the context of the revised Allocation Plan. This will allow any district choosing to initiate the program transfer process to complete it pursuant to SELPA policies and Ed Code by July 1, 2021.

