

Educational Strategic Planning LLC

Vallejo Unified School District

Proposal to conduct Special Education Review

William P Gillaspie, Ed.D.

September 11, 2017

To be presented to Vallejo USD Board of Education September 20, 2017

Background:

At the request of the Vallejo Unified School District (VUSD) Dr. Gillaspie has been requested to review the status of special education delivery system.

This is the perfect starting place for VUSD as the Newly Appointed Superintendent and with the vacancy of the special education director position to develop an administrative organization plan, assure fiscal accountability and strengthen the special educational delivery model between board and superintendent, staff and community. It is an imperative to determine the status of the district's fiscal special education condition, and review budget development and monitoring process, determine appropriate educational options for students below academic grade level prior to placement into special education.

The reality is that fiscally the District cannot continue to do special education business as usual, but finding alternative ways to continue to meet student needs in a more cost efficient manner as the challenge which must be met.

The state's new Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) is making services more readily available to the children who need them by allocating additional funds to the schools who are English Language Learners and/or children who grew up in poverty. Through the leadership of the CBO the board, superintendent, parents, and all shareholders should be involved with LCAP in developing learning objectives and implementing evidence-based academic and behavioral instructional strategies and interventions for acceleration of all below grade level learners. The budget should reflect these priorities and provide financial resources and at the same time, not deficit spend, and maintain required reserves for economic uncertainty.

VUSD needs a coherent system of education for all children. Within a coherent system, students who struggle to compute or read receive specialized help as soon as they need it within general education. These children's difficulties are identified in preschool or even before. Research has shown for years that, with appropriate support, children with early signs of learning problems can catch up with their peers by the time they enter kindergarten. Within a coherent system, transition kindergarten, kindergarten, and elementary school teachers should have at their fingertips evidence-based academic and behavioral instructional strategies and interventions for targeting specific needs. The child who continues to struggle receives more intense levels of support.

Central to a coherent system is the development of a culture of collaboration and coordination between VUSD and the numerous educational and family service agencies that influence how children are educated. The success of all organizations is based on effective and efficient fiscal **resources and a balanced budget that reflects transparency, solvency and integrity.**

The Vallejo City Unified School District is a medium-sized TK-12 school district serving approximately 14,000 students. We are comprised of 13 elementary schools, 3 K-8 schools (including 1 K-8 dependent charter school,) 3 middle schools serving grades 6-8, 2 comprehensive high schools, a continuation school, a community day school, and a unique school which provides support to families who choose an independent study/home study option. In addition, the District has an extensive child development and preschool program and an adult school which serves 4,000 adults.

School-based programs and support services provide a full range of special education services including a Deaf and Hard of Hearing program which attracts students from surrounding communities and a noted program for adults with developmental disabilities. Programs and services also include Gifted and Talented programs, support for English Language Learners, and interventions for low-performing students.

High school offerings include site-based Advanced Placement, Regional Occupational Programs (ROP), and Work Study. Beginning with the incoming 9th-grade class (Graduating Class of 2009), the course of study expectations for all students have been aligned with the UC/CSU A-G requirements so that all students have a range of post-graduation options whether they be a career, technical training or college.

The proposed scope of work

1. Review the district's implementation of Student Success Team (SST), Response to Intervention (RtI), and Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) and provide recommendations as needed.
2. Determine whether the district is over identifying students for special education services compared to statewide average, and make recommendations that will reduce over identification, if needed.
3. Analyze special education teacher staffing ratios and class caseload sizes using the statutory requirements for mandated services and statewide guidelines specially review Special Day Class, caseload size using the statutory requirements for mandated services and statewide guidelines.
4. Review the efficiency of staffing allocation of special education paraeducators throughout the school district. Review the procedures for identifying the need for paraeducators, the process for monitoring the resources for allocating paraeducators and determining the ongoing need for continued support from year to year. (Include classroom and 1:1 paraeducators)
5. Assist the district in developing a 1-3 year action plan, based on the findings and recommendations of the special education report. The action plan should be developed with input from district stakeholders. The Action Plan will include, but not be limited, to the following:
 - Reflect, goals (recommendations from the report)
 - Tasks to be completed to meet the goals
 - Identify who is responsible for implementation
 - Status of outcomes
 - Progress made on implementation of meeting goals and completion of tasks
 - Evidence of accomplishment
 - Timelines to accomplish tasks

The Action Plan will serve as a road map for the district in developing special education systems, policies, procedures that assure a legal, fiscally compliance, and programmatic sound special education delivery system. It will serve as an accountably document to measure progress being made in development of best practice special education delivery system.

The action plan should be led by the director of special education and consist of stakeholders of the district such as but not limited, to the following; special education teachers, classified, support staff, site administrators, general education staff, program specialists, parent representative, etc.

6. Organization study of special education department, to improve communication internally and externally, from central office to school site.
7. Review administrative staffing structure and make recommendations to improve efficiency, if necessary.
8. Review role of principal in special education delivery system and how to develop consistency between school sites and central office.
9. Review special education procedures and policies to assure current and consistent district wide.
10. Review role and responsibilities of Program Specialists and make recommendations to align with education code.
11. Review role of special education teachers in regards to case management of referrals, timelines, process and procedures to assure appropriate timeline and services are being provided to students with exceptional needs.
12. *In addition, curriculum, professional development and training provided, use of non public school placements, and use of transportation services will be reviewed.*

Services and products to be provided

- 1) Orientation Meeting – Dr. Gillaspie will conduct an orientation session at the VUSD School District Central Office to brief the Superintendent, cabinet, and supervisory personnel on the procedures of the study and on the purpose and schedule of the technical assistance. At the sole discretion of the superintendent, he will select who is to participate in the meeting.
- 2) On-site Review – Dr. Gillaspie will conduct an on-site review at the VUSD District office as outlined in the scope of study. Scheduling will be done with the interim director of special education.
- 3) Progress Report – Dr. Gillaspie will hold an exit meeting at the conclusion of each on-site review to inform the Superintendent and administrative representatives of significant findings and recommendations to that point.
- 4) Draft Report – Copy of a preliminary draft report will be delivered to the District Superintendent for review and comment.
- 5) Final Report –December 2017: Copy of the final study report will be delivered to the Superintendent following completion of the review.

Follow-Up Support: Six months after the completion of the study (December 2017) Dr. William Gillaspie will return to the District, **if requested**, to confirm the District's progress in implementing the recommendations included in the report (review the status of implementation of the action plan), at the daily rate \$1,000 and travel reimbursement. Status of the recommendations will be documented to the District in a Management Letter.

Timeline and cost of study:

A Contract between the District Superintendent/Board and Dr. William Gillaspie which will include the following:

Due to the distance for travel and time involved, the district agrees to pay for actual costs of hotel, rental car, and mileage.

Actual receipts will be submitted to the district for reimbursement within 30 days of charge. Meals costs will be accordingly to district reimbursement policy.

Contract will not exceed \$19,000

Days of onsite review TBD by agreement.

The district and Dr. Gillaspie will agree mutually on dates for onsite review. The district (Director of Special Education) with input from Dr. Gillaspie will arrange interviews, assist in data collection and directly assist in the development of the schedule.

October and /or November 2017 dates for onsite review to interview staff and collect data will be determined. Dr. Gillaspie will continue to collect and analyze data and report write when off site.

A written executive summary will be submitted to the district superintendent within 15 working days prior to the December 2017 Board of Trustee Meeting. Once the superintendent has had opportunity to review the draft for accuracy, the report will be finalized.

At the discretion of the superintendent, the consultant can provide a presentation to the board, of the executive summary at the December 2017 Board meeting.

Dr. Gillaspie will submit an Invoice for billing purposes. Reimbursement of travel consisting of lodging, rental car will be submitted within 30 days of charge.

Actual days worked will reflect travel, on site field work, and billable hours in the office preparing documents, analyzing data, and communication with the district for completion of reports submitted to the superintendent.

The final billing a written Final Report addressed to the District Superintendent, covering study objectives agreed upon, within this contract. Final Invoice will cover services rendered and travel expenses that will reflect dates between September 2017 and December 2017.

Dr. William Gillaspie
Independent Consultant
Educational Strategic Planning LLC

Educational Strategic Planning LLC is owned and operated by William P. Gillaspie, Ed.D. It is designed to provide technical assistance and support to school districts throughout California in Organizational Leadership, field Operations, Special Education, Fiscal Management, Governance and Professional Development.

With over thirty years of experience in public education, Dr. Gillaspie has vast expertise in educational leadership in California as a County Superintendent, Assistant County Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services, Director of Special Education, teacher and School Psychologist, and **Deputy Administrative Officer for Fiscal Crisis Management Assistance Team (FCMAT) from 2002 to 2016.** Presently consulting in school districts throughout California through his company, Educational Strategic Planning, LLC

Dr. Gillaspie's Areas of Expertise/Special Skills:

Field Operations; Fiscal Management, Community Relations/ Governance, Organizational Leadership, Professional Development; Special Education

Background/Degrees/Credentials: Dr. Gillaspie has more than 30 years' experience in public education. He holds Bachelor's and Master's Degrees in Psychology with life time valid credentials in Pupil Personnel Services from California State University, Humboldt, and a Doctorate of Education in Organizational Leadership from the University of San Francisco.

Credentials:

- * Life time valid Pupil Personnel Services with emphasis in counseling and school psychology
- * Life time valid California Standard Secondary Teaching Credential in Psychology
- * Life time valid California Administrative Credential
- * Life time valid credentials in California Community Colleges with emphasis in teaching psychology and physical education.

His past experience includes high school teacher, County Superintendent and Assistant County Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services, Director of Special Education and School Psychologist positions. Served as and **Deputy Administrative Officer for the Fiscal Crisis & Management Assistance Team, serving California school systems** from 2002 to 2016.

Has conducted more than 100 comprehensive management assistance studies throughout California schools including, but not limited to; County Office of Education's, school districts K-8 and K - 12 Unified, charter schools and SELPAs.

Dr. Gillaspie is a key note speaker nationally and throughout California on the subject of education.

Has taught classes at California Community Colleges, State Universities, and Universities in California.

Mailing address is the following:

William Gillaspie
109 Edinburgh Court
Roseville Ca 95661

My contact information is the following:

Cell Phone: 661-204-0579
Email Address: williamp.gillaspie@gmail.com

Signature:

Date:

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William Gillaspie Ed.D.

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Approved by Vallejo Unified School District _____ -