



BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES

KELLER INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

5C. Report

Date: October 24, 2005

SUBJECT: SPECIAL EDUCATION LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT (LRE) AND 125% REPORT UPDATE

BOARD GOAL: All students will achieve educational excellence.

FISCAL NOTE: Budgeted Local and Federal Funds

Background Information:

- Special Education services are delivered on all twenty-eight campuses.
- At this time the district provides special education services to 2059 students.
- The district employs 127 special education teachers and 143 instructional aides.
- The district employs six school psychologists, twenty-four educational diagnosticians, six occupational therapists, two physical therapists, one homebound instructor, two music therapists, thirty-two speech therapists, eleven in-home trainers, one audiologist, two teachers of the visually impaired, one orientation and mobility specialist, one transition specialist, one adaptive PE specialist and two program coordinators.
- The district has been cited by Texas Education Agency (TEA) for placing students in restrictive environments at a rate that exceeds the state average (125% List).

Administrative Considerations:

- Special education is experiencing a growth rate of approximately 10% per year.
- The district conducted a study of the least restrictive environment (LRE) issues during the spring of the 2004-2005 school year.
- The study revealed that the district is not providing mainstream settings for 3, 4, and 5 year olds.
- The study also revealed that the number of students placed in the Resource setting for more than 21% of their instructional day contributes to the district being placed on the 125% Least Restrictive Environment list by TEA.
- The results of the study were shared with the principals and assistant principals on August 25, 2005. These results were updated utilizing the August 26, 2005 PEIMS data and shared with the principals on August 31, 2005.

- The LRE performance levels range from 0 to 3. Refer to attachment for each campus' LRE performance level.
- The principals were asked to look at their campus LRE profile to determine the need to take into consideration the least restrictive environment that a student can be placed in to receive special education services and to consider modifications to Admission, Review and Dismissal (ARD) decisions.
- The district established a committee of principals and central administrators to use the 2005-2006 school year to study effective practices and options for addressing the LRE issue for 3, 4, and 5 year olds.
- In order to effectively address the LRE issues for Keller ISD, discussions with stakeholders revealed the following areas to be addressed: training of general and special education teachers; utilizing special education teachers differently; monitor the placement of students in restrictive environments; rethink the special education referral system; continue the system of special education folder review; review the use of content mastery teachers and aides; review scheduling practices; establish quality standards for special education classes regarding class size, staffing, facility needs, curriculum and materials; encourage innovative and creative uses of staff that foster general education participation and collaboration with general education; and encourage a culture of differentiation of instruction.

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Respectfully submitted,

Genni LaPlante
Director of Special Education