

**North Orange County Special Education Local Plan Area
Superintendent Cabinet
Minutes of Meeting November 21, 2025**

Location/Time: North Orange County SELPA Office / 9:30 a.m.

In Attendance:

Dr. Steve McLaughlin, Superintendent, Fullerton Joint Union High School District, and Chairperson of the NOC SELPA Superintendent Cabinet
Dr. Julianne Lee, Superintendent, Buena Park School District
Dr. Chad Hammitt, Designee for Superintendent Dr. Robert Pletka, Fullerton School District
Dr. Mario Carlos, Superintendent, La Habra City School District
Ms. Rhonda Overby, Superintendent, Lowell Joint School District
Dr. Stefan Bean, Orange County Superintendent of Schools
Mr. David Giordano, Associate Superintendent, Administrative Services Division, Orange County Department of Education
Dr. Robin Gilligan, Executive Director, North Orange County SELPA
Ms. Anjanette Pelletier, North Orange County SELPA Funding Model Consultant
Ms. Patricia Banuelos, Executive Director of Fiscal Services, Orange County Department of Education

I. Call to Order:

North Orange County (NOC) Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) Superintendent Cabinet Chairperson Dr. Steve McLaughlin called to order the NOC SELPA Superintendent Cabinet Meeting at 9:35 a.m. It was noted that Dr. Stefan Bean is participating virtually in a non-voting capacity, for informational purposes only. Dr. Mario Carlos arrived after the call to order.

II. Approval of the NOC SELPA Superintendent Cabinet Meeting Agenda for November 21, 2025.

The NOC SELPA Superintendent Cabinet Meeting Agenda for November 21, 2025 was presented.

A motion to approve the NOC SELPA Superintendent Cabinet Meeting Agenda for November 21, 2025 was initiated by Dr. Julianne Lee. Ms. Rhonda Overby seconded the motion.

Vote: 4 Yes, 0 No, 1 Absent, 1 Non-vote

Motion carried. Dr. Mario Carlos arrived after the approval of this item.

III. Open Session:

Dr. McLaughlin called for any communication from the public. No communication from the public was provided.

IV. Action Item(s):

1.0 NOC SELPA Superintendent Cabinet Minutes of Meeting August 22, 2025

The NOC SELPA Superintendent Cabinet Minutes of Meeting August 22, 2025 were presented for approval.

A motion to approve the NOC SELPA Superintendent Cabinet Minutes of Meeting August 22, 2025 was initiated by Ms. Rhonda Overby. Dr. Stefan Bean seconded the motion.

Vote: 5 Yes, 0 No, 1 Non-vote

Motion carried.

V. Discussion/Information Item(s):

2.0 Study Session: NOC SELPA AB602 Revenue Categories and Adjustment Considerations

NOC SELPA Executive Director Dr. Robin Gilligan briefly reviewed the NOC SELPA Funding Model approved revisions, effective July 1, 2026. Dr. Gilligan then introduced NOC SELPA funding model consultant Ms. Anjanette Pelletier of School Services of California (SSC), who shared [a presentation](#) on the NOC SELPA AB 602 revenue categories and recommendations for future changes. The categories reviewed included Low Incidence, Program Specialist/Regionalized Services, and Out-of-Home Care funding.

In reviewing the information on slide 6, which details the impact of the new AB 602 distribution model that was approved at the August 22, 2025 NOC SELPA Superintendent Cabinet Meeting, Dr. McLaughlin requested clarification on the payment schedule to reimburse member LEAs for the cost difference of delaying the start date of the newly agreed-upon funding model. Additionally, Dr. McLaughlin inquired how it will be documented for LEA fiscal members to access. Orange County Department of Education Associate Superintendent of Administrative Services Mr. David Giordano indicated the (4) annual distribution payments totaling \$1,560,420 will be deposited into new reserve accounts for each NOC SELPA member LEA after July 1, 2026. This will occur on an annual basis for four years and will be reflected on the Reserve Balance Funding Worksheet. The Reserve Balances will be presented at both Director/Business Official Council meetings and the Superintendent Cabinet meetings.

Low Incidence (LI) funding was reviewed. It was noted that these funds are currently allocated to member districts based on current year average daily attendance (ADA). A distribution model based on LI pupil counts across the NOC SELPA was shared, and a recommendation was made to allocate the funding based on where students are enrolled. This new LI model is consistent with how CDE distributes LI funding to SELPAs. However, if approved, it would remove LI funding going to Regionalized Administration and Connections. This would result in a significant increase in the amount of funding, per pupil, going to the NOC SELPA member districts. Dr. Gilligan indicated that the LI funding, set aside for SELPA Regionalized Administration, is used to purchase materials/equipment for NOC SELPA staff to use during lessons and ensure student access to learning. It is recommended to revise the LI funds to be distributed to LEAs serving LI students based on pupil count rather than ADA, and continue to provide LI funds to the SELPA Regionalized Administration for staff supplies/equipment.

Program Specialist/Regionalized Services (PS/RS) funding was reviewed next. These funds are allocated to member districts and Regionalized Administration based on previously agreed-upon fixed amounts by the Superintendent Cabinet. Consultant Pelletier indicated that the fixed amounts are not anchored to how funding is generated and distributed by CDE. The current allocation model was reviewed, and a recommendation was made to simplify this model by shifting PS/RS funding to align with how this funding is generated and distributed by CDE. Dr. McLaughlin recommended that a simplified breakdown with visuals (e.g., tables and charts) of Resource 6500 (which includes PS/RS funding) be shared at the January 2026 Superintendent Cabinet meeting, along with guidance on sample proposals. Consultant Pelletier also shared that it is fine to leave the PS/RS distribution as is if that is the decision made by the Superintendent Cabinet. More information will be shared at the January 2026 Superintendent Cabinet meeting.

Consultant Pelletier then reviewed the historical background of Out of Home Care (OOHC) funding, noting that the funding had been frozen at 2016-2017 rates until the model was updated in 2021-2022. OOHC funds are generated by district foster youth counts, youth group homes, short-term residential treatment programs (STRTPs), and community treatment facilities (CTFs) within the NOC SELPA geographic area. Currently, OOHC is a SELPA pool of funding for districts to submit individual claims. An inequitable trend in this model was noted, as districts that submit claims receive 80% of the reserve funds after claims are paid, and the remaining 20% of the reserve funds are distributed to districts that did not submit claims. It was recommended that funds be distributed to districts based on foster youth counts rather than through a claim-based distribution model. Consultant Pelletier also noted that the funding generated by youth group homes, STRTPs, and CTFs, totaling \$324, 701.00, is not generated by any student enrolled in member districts, and is intended to go to the SELPA administrative budget. The impact of the current model over the last several years was highlighted on slide 30, and Dr. McLaughlin asked what a funding pool would look like based on the foster youth count from the last 3 years. It was requested that this information, along with proposals, be brought to the January 2026 NOC SELPA Superintendent Cabinet meeting, at which time the Superintendent Cabinet would consider the proposals and timeframe to

implement any change to the model.

The Regionalized Administration budget needs were reviewed. Dr. Gilligan and Orange Mr. Giordano shared that the regionalized administrative budget is now at capacity and is not sustainable at its current level to fund yearly increases for COLA, salaries and benefits, and overall increases due to inflation. Dr. Gilligan affirmed the NOC SELPA's commitment to align expenditures with economic forecasts that may impact educational funding levels. It was decided that this topic will be revisited at future meetings and brought for approval no later than the May 2026 NOC SELPA Superintendent Cabinet meeting.

Dr. McLaughlin asked the members to share their feedback. Orange County Superintendent of Schools Dr. Stefan Bean voiced his commitment to and support of a plan that works best for the NOC SELPA member districts.

At the conclusion of the presentation, the feedback for future NOC SELPA Superintendent Cabinet meetings was summarized as follows:

1. The January 2026 agenda will include action items regarding PS/RS and Low Incidence funding
2. OOHC funding will be a discussion item on the January 2026 agenda, when more information will be available, with final action to be taken at the March 2026 meeting
3. The Regionalized Administration budget will be discussed at the March 2026 meeting, with final action to be taken at the May 2026 meeting

3.0 Study Session: NOC SELPA Administrative Unit (AU) Cost Considerations

The historical background on costs for the NOC SELPA Administrative Unit (AU) was shared by Mr. Giordano, and it was noted that this proposal would go into effect for the 2026-2027 school year.

The amount of funding from property taxes, grants, reserves, and itinerant staff billing that flows through the SELPA was shared, for a total of \$80 million that is being actively managed by the AU. Given this information, two proposals for adding fiscal staff to support the NOC SELPA were reviewed. The first proposal reflected the costs for a full-time project accountant, and the second proposal reflected the costs for a part-time project accountant. Both proposals include an increase to the Indirect Cost Rate (ICR) from 7.5% to the allowable ICR rate of the AU, which is currently at 9.3%. Dr. McLaughlin commended the thoughtfulness of considering a part-time project accountant. There was conversation regarding where this staff member (either 100% or 50% FTE) would be housed, and Mr. Giordano indicated they would be based at the main Orange County Department of Education office in Costa Mesa under the supervision of the Accounting Manager. Executive Director of Fiscal Services Ms. Patricia Banuelos shared a document outlining the role and responsibilities of the project accountant to the NOC SELPA for the members to review. Dr. Bean also mentioned a third option that

would involve another NOC SELPA district taking on the role of AU. Dr. McLaughlin suggested that this topic be discussed in January, with no changes being made to the AU until the other fiscal items under consideration are addressed.

4.0 Legislation Update: AB 560 Article and Bill Language

A School Services of California article on AB 560 regarding resource specialist caseloads was shared, and Dr. Gilligan noted that she is currently walking through staffing ratios and numbers with the NOC SELPA Directors and Business Officials Council.

5.0 NOC SELPA Member Report or LEA Information Sharing

No additional feedback or updates were shared.

VI. Suggested Items for Next Agenda

No feedback for future agendas was shared beyond what was discussed under agenda items 2.0 and 3.0.

VII. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the November 21, 2025 NOC SELPA Superintendent Cabinet meeting was initiated by Ms. Rhonda Overby. Dr. Julianne Lee seconded the motion.

Vote: 6 Yes, 0 No

Motion carried, and the meeting was adjourned at 11:35 a.m.