



PRESS RELEASE, OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

Special Education Taskforce

December 29, 2014

Taskforce Completes Four Sessions

The Special Education Taskforce has completed four sessions between September and December 2014. The purpose of the first four sessions was to build background knowledge among Taskforce members and set a common understanding of the key components of an exemplary special education program. During each two-hour session, members analyzed aspects of the current special education program in Rialto Unified, reviewed student achievement data, discussed state and federal requirements and learned about exemplary programs in the state and nation. At the completion of each session, members developed a set of Talking Points that provided a brief summary of the tasks accomplished. These Talking Points were posted to the Rialto Unified website immediately so that parents, teachers, staff and the public could follow the developments of the Taskforce.

Examples of Taskforce Talking Points:

- *The Taskforce began to identify strengths and weaknesses in the Rialto Special Education program.*
- *The Special Education revitalization timeline for Rialto is three years.*
- *Members learned about the brief history of special education (1975 official start).*
- *The individualized education program (IEP) process was analyzed placing students in the center as the hub of the wheel and all related services radiate outward as the spokes.*
- *All special education students are general education students first.*
- *Attention and support should focus on the students not the disability.*
- *Special education is a service not a place.*
- *The Rialto Sp. Ed. Annual Performance Plan indicates a need for greater integration of students with special needs in their Least Restrictive Environment (LRE).*
- *Creating a new special education program will require all parents, students, teachers and staff involved to shift from a fixed mindset to a growth mindset about the abilities and potential of students with special needs.*

The Taskforce will meet six more times between January and May 2015 to define an instructional service delivery model that will ensure all students with special needs have access to grade level standards and receive the highest level of service and support to meet the challenging demands of college and career. The Taskforce will culminate with a Special Education Strategic Plan that will identify service priorities in the following areas: Student Identification, Educational Program Delivery, Support Systems, Communication, and Efficacy.

“It has been a valuable experience for members to really analyze the special education program in Rialto and engage in collaborative discussions about areas for continued improvement.” stated Ed. D’Souza, Associate Superintendent.

For a schedule of events related to the Special Education Taskforce, please contact the Special Education office at 909- 820-7700 ext. 2372 or visit the Special Education Taskforce webpage at www.rialto.k12.ca.us, click on “Special Education” in the “Short Cuts” section on the right margin of the home page. To reach the [Taskforce webpage](#), click on the “Special Education Taskforce” button at the top right hand side of the webpage.