

Motion to Address the APS Plan for Discontinuing Small Group Instruction in Science and Social Studies Classes in Middle and High Schools

ATF Fed Rep Council Discussion Item - April 4, 2023

Sponsors: Alethea Patterson-Jahn, Truman Middle School, Rachel Ramirez, Valley High School, Angela Reynolds, VP E&RSE, and Toni Seidler, Garfield STEM Middle School

Whereas, APS has directed that small group instruction for science and social studies in middle and high schools will be discontinued and that all SE students will be served in GE inclusion settings; and

Whereas, Several APS middle schools are already creating master schedules for the 23-23 SY that do not include small group instruction for science and social studies; and

Whereas, The APS/ATF Negotiated Agreement, Article 11.F.1. states: "As the Albuquerque Public Schools (APS) and the Albuquerque Teachers Federation (ATF) seek to continue providing quality services, many innovative models of service delivery have emerged. Any model for service delivery needs to accommodate all services as indicated on an individual student's IEP"; and

Whereas, In a well-prepared and thought out IEP, students who need direct services should get the amount of support necessary to meet their individual goals and making sweeping changes in the delivery model of service does not take into account the authority of the IEP Team decisions; and

Whereas, The decisions of IEP teams regarding SE services for students are being systematically usurped for the sake of administrative convenience, which is a direct violation of the individualization of student plans and least restrictive environment provisions of IDEA, and the APS/ATF Negotiated Agreement; and

Whereas, The APS/ATF Negotiated Agreement, Article 11.F.1.a. states: "The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that a school provide a continuum of service delivery options to meet the varied individual needs of students who are eligible to receive special education services"; and

Whereas, Eliminating small group instruction for science and social studies denies student the access to a continuum of services and is a direct violation of the APS/ATF Negotiated Agreement; and

Whereas, The APS/ATF Negotiated Agreement, Article 11.G.1.a. states: "The IDEA guarantees that students with disabilities will have "a free appropriate public education (FAPE) that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs"; and

Whereas, Eliminating small group instruction for science and social studies may constitute a denial of FAPE and is a direct violation of the APS/ATF Negotiated Agreement; and

Whereas, We believe that this change in the delivery of services model could be perceived as predetermination of services for these students, and therefore against the Federal IDEA and NM PED regulations; and

Whereas, This plan was created with no input from the district or individual school Instructional Councils, the official, democratically established forums for collaboration and shared decision making among practitioner and administrative stakeholders; and

Whereas, We believe this plan is a clear violation of our teachers use of independent, professional, and evidence-based judgment and puts them in the unethical position of explaining the new service model to parents, when they don't even believe in or agree with the changes; and

Whereas, We believe that the plan opens APS up to lawsuits which would take much needed money and resources away from our students.

Therefore, be it firmly resolved, That the ATF Fed Rep Council directs our ATF union leadership to formally oppose the implementation of this plan through all options open to them, including good faith bargaining with APS and formal grievance procedures.