Who are we?

- Jessica Silberling and Emiko Chapman, Coordinators, Student Services  
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- Cindy Uruburu and Elif Cagin, Program Specialists  
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- Dr. Valerie Browers and Dr. Elizabeth Arellano, Psychological Services/Response to Intervention (RtI)  
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- Dr. Karen Komosa-Hawkins, Educationally Related Mental Health Services (ERMHS)  
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- Carol Schenasi, Non Public School (NPS) Case Manager  
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- Kathy Barry, R.N., Health Services Administrator  
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- Codean Reed, Sunrise Early Childhood Centers Coordinator  
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- Betsy Abad and Gigi Raine Administrative Assistants  
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"Tell me I forget. Teach me I remember. Involve me and I learn."  
Benjamin Franklin

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MEET OUR DEPARTMENT

Jessica Silberling and Emiko Chapman, Coordinators of Special Education:

Under the direction of the Assistant Superintendent of Education Services, the Coordinators of Special Education are responsible for the leadership, administration, and supervision of each school site’s special education program. Additionally, they oversee the daily operations of the Student Services Office to ensure the district is meeting all students’ unique needs and that services to these students are delivered in the least restrictive environment.

Cindy Uruburu and Elif Cagin, Program Specialists:

As PVPUSD Program Specialists, Cindy Uruburu and Elif Cagin act as a liaison for PVPUSD attending IEP meetings when school teams or parents require extra support. They provide support to school special education teams in developing programs to meet students’ unique learning needs and ensure the accurate implementation of Individual Education Plans. They provide guidance to parents with questions about the IEP process.

Carol Schenasi, Non Public School (“NPS”) Case Manager:

As PVPUSD’s NPS Case Manager, Carol Schenasi is responsible for coordinating, monitoring and communicating with all NPS Staff, Parents, District Coordinators and Specialists, ERMHS staff, and Los Angeles County Office of Education Staff to ensure that the needs of all district NPS students are met collaboratively.

Betsy Abad and Gigi Raine, Administrative Assistants:

Betsy and Gigi assist with all aspects of the day to day operations of the Student Services Department.

Dr. Karen Komosa-Hawkins, Educationally Related Mental Health Services (ERMHS):

As PVPUSD’s mental health psychologist, Karen Komosa-Hawkins, Ph.D., a licensed educational psychologist, coordinates, oversees, and monitors services for students and families who qualify for intensive educationally related mental health services (ERMHS). Furthermore, Dr. Hawkins provides consultation to school psychologists district-wide regarding the assessment of and the response to mental health needs of students. Dr. Hawkins also collaborates with district-contracted mental health providers within the local community.

Dr. Valerie Browers and Dr. Elizabeth Arellano, Psychological Services/Response to Intervention (Rti):

Dr. Valerie Browers and Dr. Elizabeth Arellano are school psychologists as well as the PVPUSD Response to Intervention (Rti) and Positive Behavior Support (PBS) coordinators. As school psychologists they provide services to support the social and emotional well-being of all students and work with families to find ways to best support their children both academically and emotionally. They also participate with the special education teams to determine individualized education plans for students with special needs. As the Rti and PBS specialists they work with all schools in the district to support their efforts to prevent student academic and social emotional problems. They help coordinate screenings, provide training in data analysis, and participate in problem solving efforts to continually find the most effective interventions for students. They also coordinate with the Educational Services department to help blend a continuum of services to support students across general and special education environments.

Kathy Barry R.N., Health Services Administrator:

The purpose of Health Services is to strengthen the educational process by improving the physical and mental health of students. It is a comprehensive program that promotes and maintains optimum health for all students in order to maximize their availability to learn. Health Services works together with families, faculty and the community for children’s wellness and safety. The School Nurse provides individualized quality health care for students, emphasizes health education at all levels and utilizes community and school resources to promote a healthy lifestyle for students. Some of the core services of a school nurse are: conducting health screenings, assessing and evaluating students, monitoring immunizations, acting as a resource for faculty, parents and students, monitoring health problems for early diagnosis and treatments, evaluating and monitoring communicable diseases and acting as an advocate for children.

Codean Reed, Sunrise Early Childhood Centers Coordinator:

Sunrise is committed to early intervention as the most appropriate model for reducing learning problems and promoting a successful educational future for the youngest members of the PVPUSD community.

Intervention is individually tailored to meet each child’s unique needs. There are many options available including preschool classes with a strong language base, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, adapted physical education, physical therapy and intensive behavior intervention. All of these services are delivered in the least restrictive environment. The number of days and hours per week is individualized but can range from one day per week to five days per week.