DIAGNOSTIC CENTERS

End of the Year Report 2016-2017

California Department of Education
California Department of Education’s Diagnostic Centers provide high quality services to special education students, their families and school districts. Authorized by the California legislature in 1944 and established regionally, the three centers are located in Los Angeles, Fresno, and Fremont. Services are provided by expert interdisciplinary teams of diagnostic professionals, including educational specialists, speech and language specialists, psychologists, pediatricians and other specialists who address the unique educational needs of California’s most difficult to serve students.

Services include: comprehensive, state-of-the-art assessment and educational planning services to assist local school districts in determining the needs of their most complex students, technical assistance and consultation in program and instructional design, and professional development opportunities for teachers, administrators, special education staff, families and service agency personnel, including presentations at state, national and local conferences and workshops.

Referrals for assessment services must be made by the student’s school district, County Office of Education, or SELPA. Eligible students include those enrolled in special education who are not progressing, despite local school efforts; who present a complex learning and/or behavioral profile; and for whom the district requires additional diagnostic information to assist in defining the most appropriate educational goals and teaching strategies.

Requests for technical assistance, consultation services, and professional staff development must be made by local district special education administrators, SELPA directors, County Office of Education administrators, members of Regional Coordinating Councils, and local colleges and universities. Diagnostic Center services are provided at no charge.
“I really feel the Diagnostic Center is an asset, and I would recommend the experience to anyone. I learned so much about the struggles my son is dealing with and now we can focus on helping him succeed.”

~ Parent~
Central California

“The team was very knowledgeable and conducted themselves very professionally. They had keen insights regarding POLP and recommendations.”

~ School Staff~
Northern California

“The staff listened and was very knowledgeable. It was amazing to me how much they came to know my son in such a short time. I feel more hopeful for my son’s future.”

~ Parent~
Southern California

Districts who have directed available resources to serve a child, often have unanswered questions and request the assistance of the Diagnostic Centers. Questions most frequently asked are in the areas of significant behavior challenges, diagnosis, functioning levels, communication, socio-emotional status and accessing curriculum and instruction.

To address these questions, the Assessment Teams develop individual assessment plans to serve the child at the school site, at the Diagnostic Center, or in both school and Center settings.

Field-Based Assessments are generally conducted over a span of one-to-three days at the student’s school. School personnel and the family are involved in the assessment planning and process. The Assessment Team conducts the assessment, prepares a report of their findings and recommendations, and meets with the family and district personnel. Fifty eight percent, (58%), of Diagnostic Center assessments were provided in the field.

Center-Based Assessments are conducted at the Diagnostic Center over a span of two-to-five days. The Assessment Team conducts the assessment, prepares a report of their findings and recommendations, and meets with the family and district personnel. Five percent, (5%), of Diagnostic Center assessments were conducted at the Diagnostic Center.

Combined-Location Assessments are conducted at the school and Diagnostic Center sites over a period of three-to five-days. The Assessment Team conducts the assessment, prepares a report of their findings and recommendations, and meets with the family and district personnel. Thirty six point five percent, (36.5%), of Diagnostic Center assessments were Combined-Location Assessments.
Consultation services are provided to previously assessed students at the request of the local school district. These services range from telephone consultation to visits at the school site. During the 2016-17 academic year, 860 follow-up consultations were provided.

In addition, the Diagnostic Centers provided consultation services to identified groups of students. Based on district need, Assessment Teams worked directly with 1,239 students and addressed such issues as Literacy, Positive Behavior Supports, Transition, Assistive Technology, and Adapting Curriculum for Severely Disabled Students and Autism Spectrum Disorders.

During 2016-17 school year, 2,772 students were provided services. Figure 1 illustrates the assessment services provided.

### 2016-2017 Assessment Types

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Assessments</th>
<th>2,772</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classroom/Group Consultation</td>
<td>1,239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Assessment</td>
<td>673</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Consultation</td>
<td>860</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1
“Thank you for putting such good work into this report. Thanks as well for agreeing to conduct it.”

~ School Staff ~
Northern California

“I would highly recommend the services of the Diagnostic Center to any parent. The information we gained has not only helped our son at school but also at home.”

~ Parent~
Central California

“I am very appreciative of the services provided by the Diagnostic Center. Your assessments are very thorough and provide the District extra information in order to develop the most comprehensive plan for our student’s success.”

~ Administrator~
Southern California

Requests for assessment services continue to be in demand and indicate that the Diagnostic Centers are serving LEAs most challenging-to-serve students. Reasons for requesting assessment assistance vary district to district, region to region. Data is collected to identify referral trends and develop programs to better meet the current needs of LEAs.

By collecting and analyzing trend data, the Diagnostic Centers adjust their assessment delivery models and develop trainings and technical assistance packages for Local Educational Agencies. Furthermore, Special Projects are designed and implemented for local educational agencies based on local needs. Descriptions of Special Project activities are found beginning on page 11.

The effectiveness of the services provided by the Diagnostic Centers is measured by surveying school staff and parents of students assessed. An initial survey is collected immediately following each assessment. A second survey is distributed and collected six months following the assessment. The LEA ratings of assessment surveys are completed by teachers, program specialists, DIS staff, and administrators. A total of 767 surveys were returned from school staff and 180 parent surveys were returned. Their responses indicated that:

- 97% of administrators reported positive outcomes for the students as a result of the assessment
- 96% of teachers and specialists reported that the assessment services were useful to the IEP Team
- 96% of parents reported that the Diagnostic Center responded to their concerns
- 97% of parents reported that the assessment provided them with new information

Referral Trends

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Figure 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason for Referral to Diagnostic Center</th>
<th>Percent of all Referrals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Strategies/Programming</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavior</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diagnosis</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact of Medical Conditions on Education</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autism</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict Resolution</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental Health</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Issues</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IEE: Independent Educational Evaluation</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### LEA Rating of Assessment Services Received
*Measured on a Scale of 1-5*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Received</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Useful to IEP Team</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Teacher/Specialist Satisfaction</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Administrator Satisfaction</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Parent Rating of Assessment Services Received
*Measured on a Scale of 1-5*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Received</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assessment Promoted Collaborative Planning Between Family and IEP Team</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Assisted You With Dealing More Effectively With Your Child</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Parent Satisfaction</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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“Your staff was very professional and worked very closely with the district and parent. The information was helpful and presented in an organized an easy to follow manner.”

~Administrator~
Northern California

“Thank you for presenting in such a clear manner the “true” functioning level of this student. It was extremely helpful to staff and parents in planning for his future.”

~Teacher Specialist~
Southern California

“Very thorough, thoughtful, and respectfully done. The team provided valuable resources and provided recommendations that we feel we can implement.”

~School Personnel~
Central California
Diagnostic Centers are recognized as leaders in professional development. Districts, SELPAs, County Offices of Education, and Regional Coordinating Councils continue to request training opportunities for their staff. The demand for Diagnostic Center training is high and continues to increase. During the 2016-17 school year, 525 presentations to 25,019 individuals were provided at local school sites, regional workshops, and state and national conferences.

In an attempt to serve all LEAs equitably, trainings are available in a variety of formats, including one-day workshops, special projects [in-depth assistance including demonstration teaching], web-based trainings, and via videoconferencing.

Trainings are developed by the Diagnostic Center staff in response to local and statewide needs. All three Diagnostic Centers disseminate a syllabus describing training opportunities available throughout the regions. The most frequently requested topics were those dealing with:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training Topics</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Autism Spectrum Disorders</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Strategies</td>
<td>31.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment Issues and Strategies</td>
<td>31.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Education Law and Issues</td>
<td>2.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraeducators</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language and Communication Issues</td>
<td>13.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culturally Responsive Assessment and Instruction</td>
<td>2.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavior/Mental Health Issues</td>
<td>31.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Students</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Students with Moderate-to-Severe Disabilities</td>
<td>10.13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to these formal presentations, school districts, SELPAs and County Offices of Education have requested assistance with their special education classes and service delivery models. Comprehensive Professional Development Projects were developed to provide in-depth content training and multiple levels of follow-up support including demonstration teaching and on-site consultation. Pages 11 to 24 describe those collaborative projects.
The effectiveness of the professional development services offered by the Diagnostic Centers is measured by collecting and analyzing Training Evaluation Surveys. Surveys are provided to all participants. Of the 525 formal presentations, 25,019 surveys were completed. Highlights from the ratings:

- The trainings received high overall ratings of 3.7

**Participants’ Rating of Training Received Services Received**  
*Measured on a Scale of 1-4*

![Graph showing survey results](image)

**Average Attendees Per Session**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attendees Per Session</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Other Certificated</td>
<td>42.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher: Special Education</td>
<td>20.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraeducators</td>
<td>21.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher: General Education</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrator: Special Education</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Specialist</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrator: General Education</td>
<td>0.78%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"The Diagnostic Center report gave excellent information and recommendations for the student. It was a pleasure working with you!"

~ Administrator ~ Central California

"Goals were written in accordance with the academic programming recommendations listed in the Diagnostic Center assessment report. The student has been very successful with these goals."

~ School Personnel ~ Southern California

"All staff have been responsive, helpful, and have provided very insightful and practical information and recommendations."

~ School Personnel ~ Northern California
"The team from the Diagnostic Center was very professional and the experience was positive for all involved. This referral was a follow up to two previous evaluations by Diagnostic Center staff."

~ Administrator~
Northern California

"This assessment was a great tool for us to use as a whole in putting together the best possible plan for our student. There were many useful resources suggested as well."

~ School Personnel~
Central California

"The assessment helped the team focus in on exactly what the student needed to succeed. It got us all on the same page."

~ Administrator~
Southern California

In addition to the formal development training, the Diagnostic Centers provide technical assistance to individual teachers, administrators, specialists and families. Technical assistance requests range from questions that are answered by telephone professional or the Internet (i.e., resources or referral information) to on-site demonstration teaching and the Ask a Specialist web based discussion forum; 338,889 Individuals were provided with technical assistance.

Technical assistance is provided statewide and nationally. Projects have included presentations and collaboration with school districts, County Offices of Education and SELPAs (reported on page 11-24), colleges and universities, and various education and service agencies and organizations (reported on pages 25 - 29), including the California Association of School Psychologists, American Speech and Language, Hearing Association, and California Autism Professional Technical Assistance and Information Network.

2016-2017 Technical and Resource Assistance

- 309 demonstration teaching sessions were provided to 3,302 school personnel
- 14,857 individuals were provided direct resource and consultation assistance
- Internet and On-line trainings provided to 338,889 individuals
- Total Participants: 357,048
Many SELPAs, districts, and county offices of education request Diagnostic Center projects involving their special education programs and service delivery models that require a more intensive level of assistance. The 2016-17 projects provided in-depth content training and multiple levels of support, including 1,239 sessions of demonstration teaching and on-site consultation services to 3,302 educators, as well as multiple opportunities for formal professional development training. Each project required strong district administrative leadership and teacher support. A description of the projects begins on the following page.

Client Effectiveness Surveys were also distributed to teachers, administrators, designated service providers and paraprofessionals who engaged in Diagnostic Center Projects.

Of the 133 surveys returned, ratings were as follows: scale of 1 (low) to 4 (high).

**Client Effectiveness Surveys Received**
*Measured on a Scale of 1-4*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average Rating</th>
<th>Survey Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>The areas of concern, identified as the focus of the project, were addressed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>Practical strategies and/or interventions were provided.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>I have increased my knowledge regarding types and methods of strategies to use with students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>The information provided will result in improved student outcomes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Comprehensive Professional Development Projects

**DIAGNOSTIC CENTER, NORTHERN CALIFORNIA**

**San Mateo Union High School District**
**Salinas Unified High School District**
Requested and was provided professional development and hands on coaching and technical assistance about best practices in Transition Assessment and program development. Project outcomes included the development and implementation of student ITPs and a transition guidance document with best practice resources. A sustainability plan that included the local administrative team was also developed to ensure that this highly trained cadre of educators will be able to sustain best practice transition assessment and program guidelines as well as have the opportunity to mentor/train other district/county educators who serve secondary students.

**Castro Valley Unified School District**
**Kipp Bay Area Charter School (Santa Clara County)**
Requested assistance in redesigning their programs for students with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Staff was provided professional learning opportunities and hands on coaching and technical assistance to learn about evidence-based practices for individuals with an ASD and how to implement these with fidelity. Assessments were also conducted for individual students. In addition, both Leadership Teams participated in a strategic planning process to sustain and scale up their project’s scope and focus.

**Mt. Diablo Unified School District**
**Monterey Peninsula Unified School District**
Requested and received extensive technical assistance for their selected monolingual Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs) to gain competency and earn certification in the area of best practices in the assessment and intervention of students who are Dual Language Learners. Professional learning opportunities, coaching/mentoring, problem solving, support and resource assistance were provided. A sustainability plan that included the local administrative team was developed to ensure that this highly trained cadre of SLPs will be able to sustain best practice assessment and intervention guidelines and have the opportunity to mentor/train other district/county/SELPa Speech-Language Pathologists.
Comprehensive Professional Development Projects

Sonoma County SELPA  
Mendocino County SELPA
Support and guidance in the areas of assessment and intervention of Dual Language Learners were provided to these SELPA’s job alike groups of Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs). Building capacity of these SLPs and developing guidelines were also provided to support increasing their capacity to mentor/train other district/county SLPs.

Monterey County SELPA
Requested assistance to address their disproportionality of African American Students made eligible for special education and to learn about the Diagnostic Center, Northern California’s protocol for assessing African American students for consideration of eligibility in special education. *The Best Practice Guidelines for the Assessment of African American Students* (The MATRIX) is a system designed to guide school professionals in assessing the cognitive and language and communication strengths and weaknesses (if any) of African American students. The intent of this guideline is to help speech-language pathologists comply with the Larry P. mandate when assessing African American students for eligibility for special education as SLI. The speech-language pathologists participated in professional learning opportunities and hands on coaching and technical assistance to learn how to use this Best Practice Guidelines pilot. Also covered was Pattern of Strengths and Weaknesses (PSW). In addition, a sustainability plan that included the local administrative team was developed to ensure that this highly trained cadre of school SLPs will be able to sustain best practice assessment and intervention guidelines and have the opportunity to mentor/train other district/county colleagues.

Santa Clara County SELPA
Requested assistance to develop increased knowledge and expertise of this Santa Clara County SELPA’s school psychologists in the area of determining of Specific Learning Disability using a Pattern of Strengths and Weaknesses (PSW) model. Also, a sustainability plan that included the local administrative team was developed to ensure that this highly trained cadre of school psychologists will be able to sustain best practice assessment and intervention guidelines and have the opportunity to mentor/train other district/county colleagues. An intended long-term outcome is to develop a SELPA-wide protocol for PSW developed by this cohort of school psychologists.
CAPTAIN Website Hosted by the Diagnostic Center Northern California:  
www.captain.ca.gov, serves CAPTAIN (California Autism Professional Technical Assistance and Information Network), the statewide resource for California educators and families. CAPTAIN is an interagency organization committed to disseminating evidence-based information and resources for families and educators who work with students with an ASD and is in response to the Superintendent of Public Instruction Autism Advisory Committee and the California Legislative Blue Ribbon Commission on ASD recommendations.

Ask A Specialist Website Hosted by the Diagnostic Center Northern California:  
www.askaspecialist.com, provides individuals with resource and technical assistance and offers visitors the opportunity to ask questions of special education experts in the areas of Autism Spectrum Disorders, Behavior, Assistive Technology/AAC, Attention Deficit Disorder (AD/HD), Mental Health Issues, School-Related Medical Issues, Transition/Secondary Issues and Culturally Responsive Assessment.

Diagnostic Center, Northern California Website:  
www.dcn-cde.ca.gov, provides on-line/web-based trainings and resources such as the opportunity to learn about Best Practices in the Assessment of African American Students, Transition, Autism, AAC, Alternative Assessment/PSW, etc.
Central Unified School District Literacy Project stemmed from contacts by Harvest Elementary School and focused on Multi-Tier Systems of Support for literacy instruction. Screening data from the previous year’s project and considerations of additional assessments were utilized in assisting staff to determine instruction and intervention enhancements for struggling students. The project involved all staff during several in-services, and student progress monitoring data was reviewed during Professional Learning Communities (PLC) meetings. School wide consideration of reading instruction and intervention was the focus of a Harvest Elementary parent night, and consultations with school administration were made available to provide resources, support and feedback regarding both instruction and intervention in phonics, vocabulary and reading comprehension.

Central Unified School District requested a project that focused on building their Assistive Technology team by expanding their capacity in the area of AT/AAC assessments and program interventions. A series of formal and informal trainings was provided for education staff and families, with on-site support. Technical assistance was provided to facilitate the development of a county “Assistive Technology and Program Design Team.” Collaborative efforts were focused on developing guidelines for assessment and appropriate recommendations.

Central Unified School District requested a project that focused on evidence based practices, implementation and strategies in the area of Assistive Technology to increase communication opportunities, improve communication skills and increase access to learning for students within special education. A series of formal and informal trainings were provided for education staff, speech language pathologists, psychologists, administrators, and teachers of students with orthopedic impairment.

Coalinga-Huron Joint Unified School District requested a multi-year project to enhance evidence-based programming for special education classes with a focus on the following instructional and environmental components:

- Increasing the implementation and fidelity of evidence-based practices (EBPs) in target classrooms
- Designing activity scheduling to promote high levels of student engagement and progress throughout the day
- Designing consistent and meaningful rules, rituals and routines that are integrated into the teaching schedule and program environments to promote student success and minimize opportunities for disruptive behaviors
- Creating effective and systematic data collection techniques to monitor daily functioning, drive
Comprehensive Professional Development Projects

DIAGNOSTIC CENTER, CENTRAL CALIFORNIA

- Incorporating effective behavior management systems to be utilized by all staff and which is embedded into programs. The project provided consultation, collaboration, demonstration/model teaching and coaching to three selected school sites.

Fresno Unified School District requested a project designed to support social skill development, utilizing typical developing peers into the social learning of children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and consisted of consultation, collaboration, coaching and specific trainings to:

- Expand understanding and acceptance
- Facilitate interactions in structured activities
- Monitor “carry-over” in the natural settings
- Assess impact on social goals
- Prompting and Reinforcement
- Aided Language Stimulation for students who utilized augmentative communication systems
- Transdisciplinary training for teachers (special education and general education), speech language pathologists, school psychologists, occupational therapists, para-professionals and parents

Fresno Unified School District requested an Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Certification Project for two separate cadres. This project included two cadres of speech-language pathologists, para educators and special education service providers who attended a series of 7 full-day rigorous trainings in the area of Augmentative Alternative Communication, with additional coursework and assignments. In-class support and technical assistance was provided with regard to interventions, assessments and report writing. Participants who attended all of the classes and completed assignments at a satisfactory level were given a certificate of successful coursework completion.
Comprehensive Professional Development Projects

Fresno Unified School District AAC Cohort project was developed to support individuals who had completed the Augmentative Alternative Communication series trainings. These quarterly meetings were developed to provide trainings, support, consultation, coaching, and technical assistance to implement the use of augmentative alternative communication within the educational setting to ensure fidelity of implementation with a forum for collegial communication and support. Emphasis was given to development of an AT team, administrator support, and the development of a process for assessment and implementation.

Fresno Unified School District requested a project with a focus of increasing the use of Augmentative and Alternative Communication/Assistive Technology (access and opportunities) for students with moderate to severe disabilities at Addicott Elementary School from preschool through 7th grade. Initial training was held for the staff: administrator, teachers, para educators, speech language pathologists, psychologists, nurses, occupational therapists, and teachers for students with visual impairments. Utilizing a transdisciplinary team approach, specific trainings in the area of Assistive Technology and Augmentative Communication, classroom design, building communication opportunities, consultation, and alternative access were developed. Specific evidence-based practices and strategies were emphasized to support communication, functional activities, play/recreation/leisure activities, typical development, behavior, daily living and opportunities for engagement.

Fresno Unified School District Data Collection Project provided training and classroom-based support to teachers and other staff who work with students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). On-site collaboration and consultation supported the use of data analysis and implementation of evidence-based practices to assist students.

Kern County Consortium Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) requested a project involving trainings, in-class observations, consultation, technical assistance and group/individual assessments in the area of autism spectrum disorders. A cadre of general education teachers, special education teachers and paraprofessionals participated in a rigorous series of trainings presented by Diagnostic Center Central staff and Kern County Office SELPA staff. This project resulted in a SELPA Certificate of Completion in Autism Spectrum Disorders, Evidence-Based Practices.
Comprehensive Professional Development Projects

Kern CAPTAIN Cadre (Bakersfield City School District, Kern High School District, Kern County Consortium Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA), and Kern County Office of Education): This project was an outcome and extension of the CAPTAIN Cadre initiative. CAPTAIN is a cross agency network developed to support the understanding and use of evidence based practices (EBPs) for individuals affected by Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) across the State of California. The focus of this project was to continue to provide a system of support for CAPTAIN Cadre members from the Kern County region to develop and provide trainings, support, consultation, coaching, and technical assistance to implement EBPs to educators in their districts and to ensure fidelity of implementation with a forum for collegial communication and support.

Madera County Office of Education/SELPA Assistive Technology/AAC Cohort project was developed to support individuals who have completed the Assistive Technology and/or Augmentative Alternative Communication series trainings. These quarterly meetings were developed to provide trainings, support, consultation, coaching, and technical assistance to implement the use of assistive technology within the educational setting to ensure fidelity of implementation with a forum for collegial communication and support. Emphasis was given to development of an AT team, administrator support, and the development of a process for assessment and implementation.

Madera County Office of Education-Gould Educational Center requested a project that focused on ways to increase Augmentative and Alternative Communication/Assistive Technology (access and opportunities) for students with moderate to severe disabilities at Gould Educational Center in Madera County for preschool through adult programs. Initial training was held for the staff: administrator, teachers, para educators, speech language pathologists, psychologists, nurses, occupational therapists, and teacher for students with visual impairments. Utilizing a transdisciplinary team approach, specific trainings in the area of Assistive Technology and Augmentative Communication, classroom design, building communication opportunities, consultation, and alternative access were developed. Specific evidence-based practices and strategies were emphasized to support communication, functional activities, play/recreation/leisure activities, typical development, behavior, daily living and opportunities for engagement.
Comprehensive Professional Development Projects

Madera County Office of Education requested a short-term project for a special day classroom of the Madera County Office of Education. This project stemmed from a workshop entitled “Maximizing Student Engagement; Minimizing Disruptive Behavior.” It focused on increasing the effectiveness of instruction for students with limited communication skills and other difficulties impacting behavior. The teacher requested DCCC assistance and a project was established. Considerations within the project included:

- Enhancements to environmental structures that directed or supported desired student behaviors and minimized off task behaviors
- Communication supports to enhance language development and facilitate interactions during activities
- Evidence based practices to provide directions, prompting and reinforcement
- Consideration of augmentative communication systems and/or replacement behaviors when communication is deemed the function of interruptive behaviors

Paso Robles Joint Unified School District requested a year-long Co-Teaching project. It began with a full day in-service including both general and special educators, support staff and administrators for two junior highs and Paso Robles High School. Co-teaching partners and support staff learned the varied models of co-teaching as well as evidence-based practices in beginning the school year, enhancing instruction and increasing differentiation via partnerships and collaboration. Additional in-service, observations and ongoing consultation provided avenues to insight and support throughout the year. Teaching partners and schools were offered tools with which to consider the effectiveness of current practice and to assist in future planning.

Porterville Unified School District requested a multi-year project to enhance evidence-based programming for students with ASD in elementary and middle school special education classes with a focus on the following instructional and environmental components:

- Increasing the implementation and fidelity of evidence-based practices (EBPs) in target classrooms to include: Visual Supports, PMII, Discrete Trial, Reinforcement Procedures, and priming
- Designing activity scheduling to promote high levels of student engagement and progress throughout the day
Comprehensive Professional Development Projects

DIAGNOSTIC CENTER, CENTRAL CALIFORNIA

- Designing consistent and meaningful rules, rituals and routines that are integrated into the teaching schedule and program environments to promote student success and minimize opportunities for disruptive behaviors
- Creating effective and systematic data collection techniques to monitor daily functioning, drive program planning, and evaluate student progress that is efficient, easy to maintain, and useful for staff and families
- Incorporating effective behavior management systems to be utilized by all staff and which is embedded into programs
- Empower frontline staff (teachers and paras) to participate in their own goal-directed programming decisions through collaborative planning and to ensure that practical and meaningful recommendations are provided by the DCC representatives as part of this project.
- Classroom set-up and re-organization

The project provided consultation, collaboration, demonstration/model teaching and coaching to one selected school site during the 16-17 school year.

Rosedale Unified School District participated in a project designed to promote the use of evidence-based assistive technology strategies for preschool students with special needs. Utilizing a transdisciplinary team approach, specific trainings in the area of Assistive Technology and Augmentative Communication, classroom design, consultation, collaboration and coaching were developed. Specific training was provided to support student outcomes as related to development of common core and quarterly progress reports. Specific evidence-based practices and strategies were emphasized to support: communication, functional activities, play/recreation/leisure activities, typical development, behavior, daily living and opportunities for engagement.

San Luis Obispo SELPA participated in a project that included a cadre of speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists, psychologists and special education teachers and administrators who attended a series of 7 full-day rigorous trainings, with additional coursework and assignments. In-class support and technical assistance was provided with regard to interventions, assessments and report writing. Participants who attended all of the classes and completed assignments at a satisfactory level were given a certificate of successful coursework completion.

San Luis Obispo SELPA Cohort project was developed to support individuals who have completed the Assistive Technology and/or Augmentative Alternative Communication series trainings. These quarterly meetings were developed to provide trainings, support, consultation, coaching, and technical assistance to implement the use of assistive technology within the educational setting to
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ensure fidelity of implementation with a forum for collegial communication and support. Additionally, one meeting was held specifically with administrators to provide the important structure and support to assistive technology implementation.

**San Joaquin County SELPA** project included a cadre of speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists, psychologists and special education teachers and administrators who attended a series of 7 full-day rigorous trainings in the area of Assistive Technology, with additional coursework and assignments. In-class support and technical assistance was provided with regard to interventions, assessments and report writing. Participants who attended all of the classes and completed assignments at a satisfactory level were given a certificate of successful coursework completion.

**San Joaquin County SELPA Cohort** project was developed to support individuals who have completed the Assistive Technology and/or Augmentative Alternative Communication series trainings. These quarterly meetings were developed to provide trainings, support, consultation, coaching, and technical assistance to implement the use of assistive technology within the educational setting to ensure fidelity of implementation with a forum for collegial communication and support. Additionally, one meeting was held specifically with administrators to provide the important structure and support to assistive technology implementation.

**Visalia Unified School District** requested a project to focus on building social skills in individuals with autism spectrum disorders and other related disabilities. This multi-year project included technical assistance, consultation, collaboration, coaching, observations, and demonstration teaching in the context of existing social skills groups at four school sites. School psychologists and speech language pathologists partnered and participated in this project. The support and collaborative efforts focused on the use of evidence-based practices for social skills training, goal setting, and data collection for students in elementary and middle school.

The Diagnostic Center provided a one-week AAC Summer Academy (Assistive Augmentative Communication) that was attended by 15 students who use electronic communication devices. A strong support group of volunteers consisting of 16 non-disabled peers and 15 language facilitators were instrumental in the success of the Academy. Our volunteers traveled from throughout DCC’s region and included educators from Fresno County, San Joaquin County, as well as Madera County. The project focused on improving the quality, variety and frequency of communicative intents of students ranging from preschool through secondary levels. The students engaged in a variety of academic, social, and problem-solving activities including puzzles and games. Thematic instruction was utilized, and the theme focused on “Camping.” Parents and educators were invited to participate, observe, ask questions, and receive guidance.
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The Diagnostic Center collaborated with University of the Pacific to provide a one-week AAC Summer Academy (Assistive Augmentative Communication) that was attended by 8 students who use electronic communication devices. A strong support group of volunteers consisting of 11 non-disabled peers and 12 language facilitators were instrumental in the success of the Academy. Our volunteers traveled from throughout DCCC’s region and included educators from Tuolumne County, San Joaquin County, and Modesto. Graduate level students in the field of Speech Language Pathology worked in conjunction with the DCCC to further their knowledge of Augmentative and Alternative Communication. The project focused on improving the quality, variety and frequency of communicative intents of students ranging from preschool through secondary levels. The students engaged in a variety of academic, social, and problem-solving activities including puzzles and games. Thematic instruction was utilized, and the theme focused on “Camping.” The project involved direct student instruction, modeling of AAC device programming, consultation, technical assistance and individual student assessment reports. Teachers and parents were invited to participate and observe. Short informal trainings were held for educators at the end of each day to debrief, garner input, and plan the next day’s events. The culminating activity involved a visit to a park for “mock” camping events. Individual assessments/progress reports were generated for each special education student attending and provided to both the parents and districts.

Autism Forum: The Diagnostic Center, Central initiated and developed the Autism Forum to promote networking and sharing among local area educators and families within a construct of staff development and enhanced parent/district collaborations. The Autism Forum met twice during the 2016-17 school year, each for a half a day. The keynote topics were Bibliotherapy and Transition Issues Related to Adolescents with ASD. Each forum included a presentation of “Hot Topics” and “In the News” through a collaboration of Diagnostic Center Staff.

DIAGNOSTIC CENTER, SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

ABC Unified School District
Combining efforts of ABC District and the Diagnostic Center of Southern California, this year-long project focused on implementing Evidence Based Practices into Transition activities for high school students. This project offered residual benefit going forward to the stakeholders as the activities/lessons were crafted to support sustainability to the districts’ practice and instruction for Transition.
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Chino Valley Unified School District
This project was a joint effort between the school district and Diagnostic Center of Southern California. This undertaking provided students and teachers with evidence based practices and activities designed to support student efforts in making choices for life after high school and adult living. The key objective was to motivate students to make realistic and informed decisions for the post-secondary arena.

El Segundo Unified School District
The emphasis of this pilot project was to support high school students in their ability to plan for life after high school. Focus was placed on motivating students to make realistic and informed choices for high school planning, work experience and achieving post-secondary goals. All activities/lessons and reference materials presented were aligned to Indicator 13.

Fontana Unified School District
The focus of this collaboration was to offer teachers a myriad of classroom activities and experiences that support evidence based practices for transition. All the activities were aligned with Indicator 13 requirements as well as CASEMIS services for Transition.

West Covina Unified School District
West Covina USD and Diagnostic Center of Southern California worked collaboratively in this year-long project that brought students in touch with their ability to plan for their future. Using a variety of lessons, reference materials and activities, teachers were able to expand their efforts and practices to motivate students and to make informed choices for the future.

Escondido
This project served the students in four classrooms at Orange Glen Elementary School in Escondido, CA. The focus of the project was providing support for moderate/severe students, specifically in the areas of developmentally appropriate curriculum and instruction, behavior supports, and instructional best practices. Demonstration teaching and coaching for the classroom instructional staff was provided by an education specialist and a speech/language pathologist.

Oak Park Unified School District
The Oak Park project focused on implementation of best practices for environmental management for students with emotional behavioral disorders. Teachers attended trainings and then classroom observations and consultations took place to support use of the identified best practices.

Simi Valley Unified School District
This was Simi Valley's second year of project consultation and collaboration. This year's project focused on developing teacher competency in developing solid treatment plans for addressing student emotional and behavioral needs. Teachers attended trainings and then classroom observations and consultations took place to support use of treatment planning principles.
Ventura County Office of Education/Phoenix Airport Academy
The Ventura COE project focused on developing therapeutic programming and environmental management that would best serve students identified with emotional behavioral disorders. Teachers attended trainings and then classroom observations and consultations took place to support environmental management, helping to bridge the gap between theoretical understanding and actual classroom practice.

Whittier Area Cooperative Special Education Program (WACSEP)
The WACSEP project focused on best practices in the use of Cognitive Behavioral Interventions to be used in classroom contexts with students identified with emotional behavioral disorders. Teachers attended trainings and then classroom observations and consultations took place to support the use of CBIs in the classroom setting.

Tustin Unified School District
The Tustin USD project focused primarily on their high school populations. The task was to help differentiate diagnostic presentations between students and then help match their diagnoses with best practices. For example, students determined to have ASD were matched to the EBPs for Autism, and students identified with emotional behavioral disorders were matched with suitable treatment plans.

Fullerton Joint Unified High School District
The Fullerton project focused on identifying student functional deficits that result for their emotional behavioral disorders. After determining those functional areas of need, these were matched with either behavioral reinforcement to build skills, direct instruction, or support for processing areas. Teachers attended trainings and then classroom observations and consultations took place to identify needs and match to supports, strategies and interventions.

Norwalk-La Mirada Unified School District
The Norwalk-La Mirada USD project focused primarily on analysis of the behavioral topography of students identified with emotional-behavioral disorders. Mental health Treatment options were subsequently identified to manage behavioral outcomes and to improve student readiness for learning.

Chula Vista Elementary School District
The Chula Vista Elementary School District project developed programming specifically for students from preschool and early elementary grades who showed signs of emotional behavioral disorders. Teachers were trained in treatment plan techniques and how to discern which would be best for
students generally and specifically. The project also developed understanding and best practice in coordination of care between professionals both at school and in the community to assure improved student outcomes.

The Diagnostic Center specialist provided in-depth training in the area of augmentative-alternative communication assessment for speech-language pathologists and other assessment team members (school psychologists, occupational therapists) who conduct school-based assessments and serve children with complex communication needs in their school districts. Participants were selected from a pool of applicants representing multiple districts in Southern California. The project emphasized integrating theory with practice, conceptualizing the impact of cognitive, perceptual, and motor deficits on communication and AAC recommendations, and provided direct experience with a sample of augmentative devices. Participants engaged in 15 hours of self-study, 22 hours of face-to-face training, and the completion of an AAC assessment and report. Specific feedback regarding the participants’ assessment and report was provided to each participant.

Lake Elsinore Unified School District
The Consultation/Project was a joint effort undertaken between the Lake Elsinore Unified School District and the Diagnostic Center of Southern California. This project provided support to special education teachers, service providers, and district administrative staff and focused on curricular programming and instructional strategies and supports. This project included classroom observations of three special day classes at Elsinore High School, interviews with teachers, and demonstration teaching.

“POSITIVE ENVIRONMENTS NETWORK OF TRAINERS”
DCS completed its 15 year of directing and supporting the Positive Environments, Network of Trainers (PENT). Diagnostic Center, Southern California continued to respond to email and phone requests for consultation on behavior support, discipline and related topics through the Positive Environments, Network of Trainers (PENT) list serve. The PENT website www.pent.ca.gov continues to be updated with new resources for training materials to support staff and students in effective response to problem behavior and development of individual, class wide and school wide behavior support.

The PENT Cadre, 312 SELPA Director nominated trainers and consultants on behavior met in the annual PENT Forums. The forums focused on supporting the social and emotional functioning of students. Cadre increased their understanding of universal screening, individualized interventions for students with social and emotional needs, progress monitoring for Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions, and components to support quality service delivery. Cadre participated in regional implementation teams and developed action plans to guide their efforts throughout the year.
The Diagnostic Centers continue to collaborate with colleges and universities. Diagnostic Center staff served on advisory committees, provided clinical and demonstration teaching opportunities for teacher, school psychologist, and speech-language specialist candidates, provided formal presentations in teacher preparation and clinical programs, served on Level Two Credential Committees, and provided technical assistance and resource assistance to both general and special education departments of the colleges and universities listed below.

- Alliant International University, San Francisco & San Diego Campuses
- California State University, Channel Islands
- California State University, East Bay
- California State University, San Francisco
- California State University, Sacramento
- California State University, San Diego
- California State University, San Jose
- California State University, Fresno
- Fresno Pacific University
- Stanford University School of Medicine
- University of California, Berkeley
- University of California, Davis
- University of California, Los Angeles
- University of North Carolina, Charlotte
- University of the Pacific
- University of Southern California

In addition to college and university involvement, Diagnostic Center staff provided consultation and technical assistance to various education and service agencies and organizations. The staff have served on Departmental Advisory Committees and work groups, interagency task forces, and consulted on various state projects. A sampling of Diagnostic Center participation includes the following:

- ACSA – Every Child Counts Symposium
- Adapted Physical Education Guidelines Committee
- Advisory Commission on Special Education
- Alameda County Public Health Department-Developmental Disabilities Council
- American Foundation for the Blind
Interagency Collaboration (cont.)

- American Speech Language hearing Association (ASHA) S.T.E.P. (Student to Empowered Professional Mentoring Program)
- ASHA Convention Committee
- ASHA Council for Clinical Certification
- ASHA Minority Student Leadership Program
- ASHA Special Interest Group 12 (AT/AAC)
- Association of California School Administrators
- Association of California School Administrators ACSA – Autism Goals and Objectives Task Force
- Association of Educational Therapists
- Autism Society of America (ASA)
- Augmentative and Alternative Communication and Assistive Technology Network
- Blind Babies Foundation, California School for the Blind
- Buddy Systems Therapeutic Horseback Riding
- CAHPERD
- California Association of African-American Superintendents and Administrators
- California Association of Resource Specialists – Local Chapter CARS+
- California Association of School Psychologists (CASP)
- California Autism Professional Training and Information Network (CAPTAIN)
- California Children Services
- California Department of Developmental Services (DDS)
- California Department of Education CalSTAT
- California Interagency Autism Planning Group
- California Department of Education Disabilities Advisory Committee (CDE-DAC)
- California Department of Education: Dyslexia Workgroup
Interagency Collaboration (cont.)

- California Department of Education State Performance Plan Technical Assistance Project (SPP-TAP)
- California Department of Education: Student Mental Health Policy Workgroup
- California School Employees Association (California Paraeducators’ Conference)
- California Speech Language and Hearing Association (CSHA)
- California Speech Language and Hearing Association (CSHA) – Night at the Ballgame
- California State Employees Association (CSEA)
- California State University Fresno – School Psychologist Advisory Committee
- California Transition Alliance
- California State University Fresno – Speech Language Pathology
- California State – Special Education Advisory Committee
- Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (CEDD) USC/UCLA
- Central Valley Regional Center (CVRC)
- Central Valley Regional CAPTAIN Cadre
- Central Valley Community Autism Partnership – Autism Forum
- Central Valley Family Resource Centers
- Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (CEDD) UC Davis MIND Institute; USC; UCLA
- Central California Chapter – Autism Society of America
- Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (CEDD) MIND Institute
- Central Valley Family Resource Centers
- Central Valley Children’s Services Network
- Children and Adults with AD/HD (CHAAD)
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- Children’s Hospital, Central California- Assistive Technology and Augmentative/Alternative Communication
- Closing the Gap
- Clovis Unified SELPA Community Advisory Committee
- CSUEB-Concord Educational Therapy Program
- Exceptional Children’s Unlimited- Transition SOAR
- Exceptional Parents Unlimited-Adult Transition Advisory Committee
- Family Resource Centers Network of California (e.g., Parents Helping Parents)
- Fresno County Office of Education: Migrant Education
- Fresno Early Childhood Coalition
- Fresno State Alumni Association
- Improving Special Education Services (ISES) Committee
- Kern Assistive Technology Center
- Kern CAPTAIN Cadre
- National Association of Speech, Hearing, and Audiologists
- National Association of School Psychologists (NASP)
- National Certification of Educational Diagnosticians
- National College Association of Teacher Education Accreditation
- National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center
- OSEP
- Partners in Sustainable Learning
- Positive Environments, Network of Trainers (PENT)
- Regional Centers of California
- Regional Coordinating Councils
Interagency Collaboration (cont.)

- Resources for Independence, Central Valley (Formerly Center for Independent Living-Fresno)
- San Joaquin SELPA Community Advisory Committee
- San Joaquin SELPA CAPTAIN Cadre
- San Mateo County Speech-Language Hearing Association (SMCSLHA)
- Santa Clara County Office of Education
- Santa Clara Speech-Language Hearing Association
- SELPA Behavior Committee
- Silent Sleigh
- Southern California Autism Training Collaborative
- Southern California K-12 Assistive Technology Network
- Special Education Administrators of County Offices (SEACO) - Aligning the Foundations/Standards in the Core Areas – Preschool Work Group
- Special Education Local Plan Area State Association (SELPA)
- State Council on Adapted Physical Education
- Tri-County Regional Center
- Tulare County Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)
- Tulare County Office of Education-Impact Program
- WestED Center for Prevention and Early Intervention