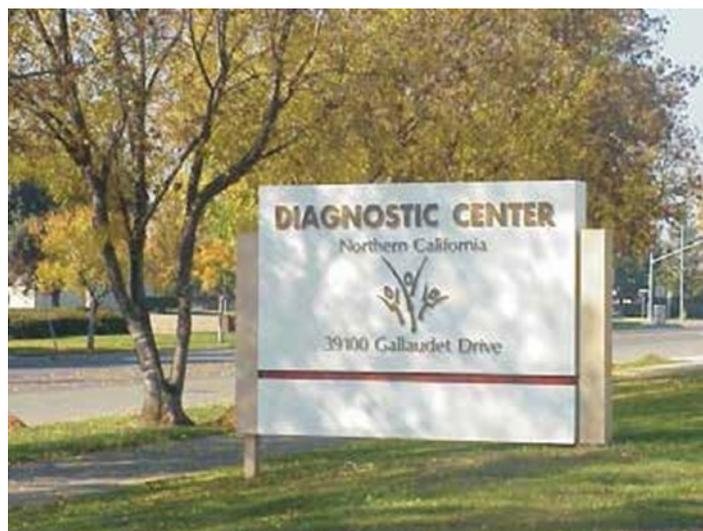




# DIAGNOSTIC CENTERS



*Robin Zane, Director  
Diagnostic Center, North*



*Melanie Johnson, Director  
Diagnostic Center, Central*



*Valerie Johnson, Director  
Diagnostic Center, South*

## Diagnostic Centers End of the Year Report 2018-2019

California Department of Education

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

Unique to the state of California, the Diagnostic Centers are the California Department of Education's primary provider of direct services and assistance to California school districts and their special education students.

We provide comprehensive assessments, research-based interventions, quality professional development, and a continuum of technical assistance.

We are committed to improving educational outcomes for special education students with complex needs and fostering collaboration among educators and families.

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 local, state, and national conferences and workshops.

Referrals for assessment services must be made by the student's school district, county office of education, or Special Education Local Plan Area (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.



# Assessment Services

**“I am grateful for the new information we received and the confirmation I received on tools I am using at home that I can now ask to be used at school. Thank you for the tact in which the evaluators approached our family given our complex family dynamics.**

**~Parent~**

**Central California**



**“Great work! I appreciate the investment in the detail for the student's benefit.”**

**~School Staff~**

**Northern California**



**“The Center was beyond helpful. They were instrumental in addressing my daughter's needs.”**

**~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 Diagnostic 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 - six percent (56%) 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. Eight percent (8%) 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 percent (36%) of Diagnostic Center assessments were Combined-Location Assessments.

# Assessment Services

“I wrote an email a bit ago that shows how grateful we are to have been assessed at the center. We have a much better understanding of how (our child) learns and now so does our extended family and school team. We are so so grateful for your services!!”

~Parent~  
Northern California

“The additional perspectives and cumulative assessments have helped to strengthen student diagnosis with a viable path toward positive outcomes for academia and functional subjects.”

~School Staff~  
Central California

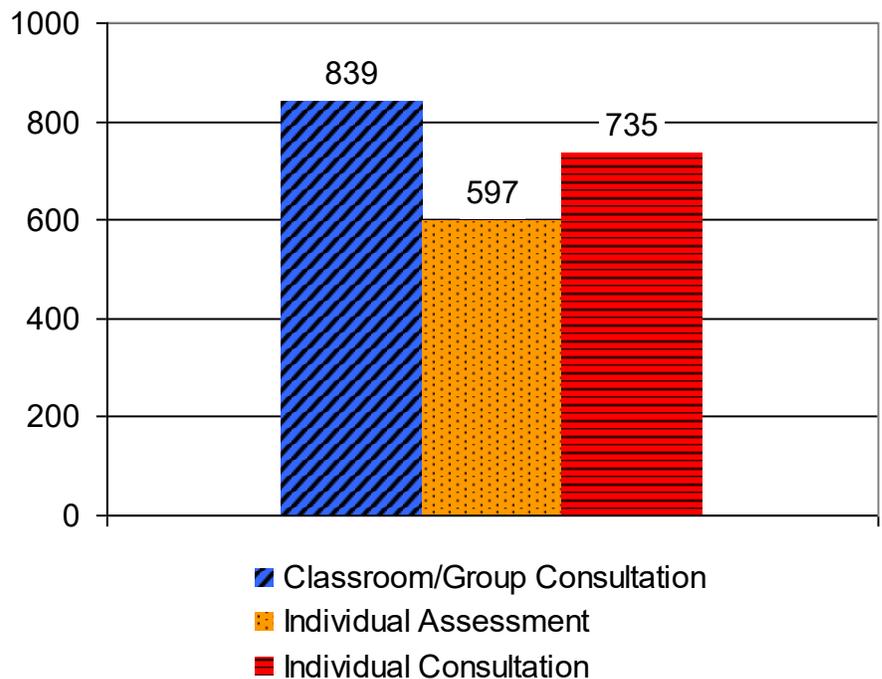
“I would highly recommend this to any parent struggling with their child’s academic progress and overall school experience. It was such a pleasant, eye-opening experience for our family.”

~Parent~  
Southern California

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. Figure 1 illustrates the assessment services provided. During the 2018–19 school year, 2,171 students were provided services, which included 735 follow-up individual consultations and 597 individual assessments.

In addition, the Diagnostic Centers provided classroom/group consultation services to 839 students. Based on district need, Assessment Teams addressed such issues as literacy, positive behavior supports, transition, assistive technology, and adapting curriculum for students with severe disabilities and autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

Figure 1. 2018-2019 Assessment Types



# Referral Trends

**“We are extremely grateful for the guidance and expertise you provided. The overall experience was much more valuable and helpful than expected. Top Notch professional! Thank you so much!**

**~School Staff ~  
Northern California**

**“Your entire staff is excellent and all were very accommodating to our daughter. If parents do not know the needs of their child, the Diagnostic Center is a great alternative to learn more.”**

**~Parent~  
Central California**

**“The methodology suggested by the Diagnostic Center is being used effective daily. The student's behavior has improved as staff are more aware of triggers and how to respond.**

**~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, and region to region. Data is collected to identify referral trends and develop programs to better meet the current needs of LEAs.

**Table 1. Percent of Referrals to Diagnostic Center, by Reason**

<b>Reason for Referral to Diagnostic Center</b>	<b>Percentage of all Referrals</b>
Instructional Strategies/Programming	56.11%
Diagnosis	33.17%
Behavior	26.30%
Communication	30.32%
Autism	26.30%
Mental Health	15.41%
Independent Educational Evaluation (IEE)	14.24%
Impact of Medical Conditions on Education	12.56%
Conflict Resolution	9.72%
Secondary Issues	7.87%

By collecting and analyzing trend data, the Diagnostic Centers adjust their assessment delivery models and develop trainings and technical assistance packages for LEAs. Furthermore, special projects are designed and implemented for LEAs based on local needs. Descriptions of special project activities are found beginning on page 12.

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 546 surveys were returned from school staff and 131 parent surveys were returned. Their responses indicated that:

# Referral Trends

“The conference provided parents and district with a clear diagnostic picture and useful and doable recommendations to assist our student.”

~School Personnel~  
Central California

“The findings were presented in a clear manner and information was well organized. Strategies were recommended that would help the student improve in his understanding of academic lessons.”

~Teacher Specialist~  
Southern California

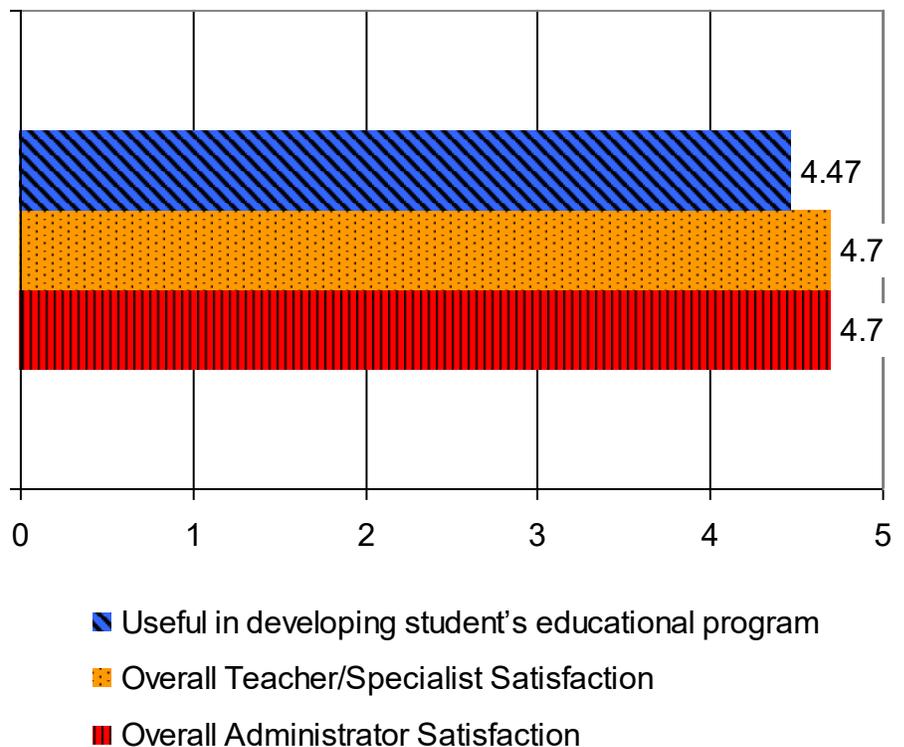
“This was a wonderful experience for school staff. And it seemed that parents also valued the process and information. Diagnostic Center staff were very helpful and professional. It was highly valuable to our staff that they were recognized for what they were already doing to support the student.”

~Administrator~  
Northern California

- **94.53%** of administrators reported positive outcomes for the students as a result of the assessment
- **93.60%** of teachers and specialists reported that the assessment services were useful to the IEP Team
- **95.38%** of parents reported that the Diagnostic Center responded to their concerns
- **95.38%** of parents reported that the assessment provided them with new information

In Figure 2, LEAs rated the assessment services received on a scale of one (lowest) to five (highest). The category “Useful in developing student’s educational program” received an overall rating of 4.47. For the category “Overall Teacher/Specialist Satisfaction,” the overall rating was 4.70. For the third category, “Overall Administrator Satisfaction,” the overall rating was 4.70.

**Figure 2. LEA Rating of Assessment Services Received**



# Referral Trends

**“The process was great from start to finish! The assessment and conference was very thorough and professional.”**

**~Administrator~  
Central California**

**“Many positive changes have been made to the students educational program as a result of the assessment. His IEP goals have been modified and/or added to more appropriately target the students cognitive levels. In addition several of the recommended strategies have been implemented, helping improve comprehension/learning with fewer behavioral outbursts.”**

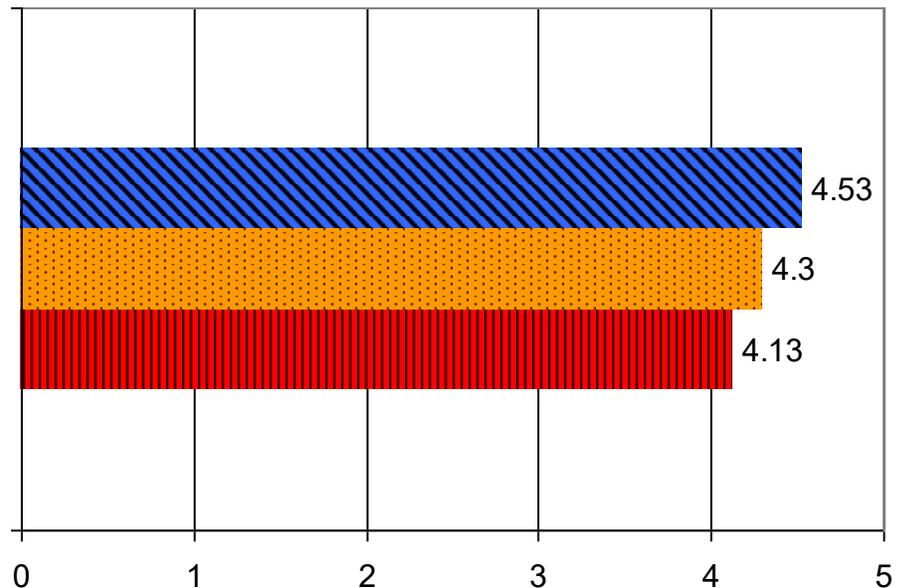
**~Program Specialist~  
Southern California**

**“Love the input and recommendations.”**

**~School Staff~  
Northern California**

In Figure 3, Parent Rating of Assessment Services Received, LEAs rated the assessment services received on a scale of one (lowest) to five (highest). The category “Assessment Promoted Collaborative Planning Between Family and IEP Team” received an overall rating of 4.13. For the category “Information Assisted You With Dealing More Effectively With Your Child,” the overall rating was 4.30. For the third category, “Overall Parent Satisfaction,” the overall rating was 4.53.

**Figure 3. Parent Rating of Assessment Services Received**



- Assessment Promoted Collaborative Planning Between Family and IEP Team
- Information Assisted You With Dealing More Effectively With Your Child
- Overall Parent Satisfaction

# Professional Development

**“The assessment was very comprehensive. Selective Mutism is a very complex diagnosis with many layers so it was useful to hear from so many professionals on how to support our student and the importance of a team approach.”**

**~Administrator~  
Central California**

**“The team presented facts without bias, and they let us make our own decisions on where to go from here.”**

**~School Personnel~  
Central California**

**“The practical applications were very helpful and approachable enough that our teachers felt ready to implement right away.”**

**~School Personnel~  
Southern 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 2018-19 school year, 533 presentations were provided to 19,969 individuals 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, multi-day workshops, special projects [in-depth assistance including demonstration teaching], web-based trainings, and videoconferences.

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. Table 2 lists the requested topics by percentage for the 2018-19 school year.

**Table 2: Requested Training Topics**

<b>Training Topics</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Behavior/Mental Health Issues	26.22%
Instructional Strategies	31.10%
Autism Spectrum Disorders	7.67%
Assessment Issues and Strategies	16.04%
Language and Communication Issues	8.65%
Teaching Students with Moderate-to-Severe Disabilities	2.65%
Paraeducators	5.30%
Culturally Responsive Assessment and Instruction	0.00%
Special Education Law and Issues	0.70%
Secondary Students	1.12%

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 12–23 describe those collaborative projects.

# Training Evaluation

**“The assessment provided the IEP team with direction and next steps for our student.”**

*~Administrator~  
Central California*

**“The Diagnostic Center was very useful for helping us design this student's educational program.”**

*~School Personnel~  
Southern California*

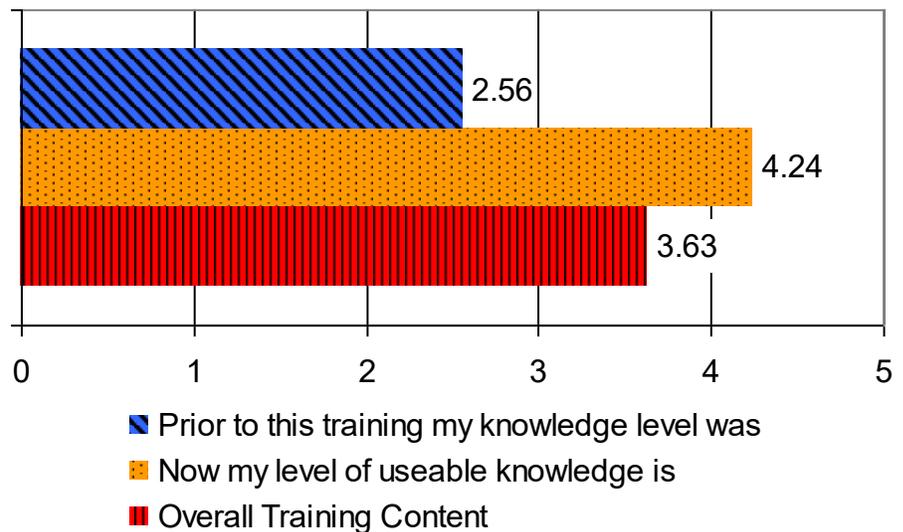
**“This was a wonderful experience working with the team from the Diagnostic Center. They brought such a thoughtful insight and data to our team meetings and I know that the (student's) mother felt she had been heard and her concern addressed. We all benefited from their experience, professionalism, and good humor.”**

*~School Personnel~  
Northern California*

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. For the 533 formal presentations, 10,575 surveys were completed. Participant ratings were measured on scale of 1 (lowest) to 4 (highest).

- When participants were asked to rate “Prior to this training my knowledge level was,” the average rating was 2.56.
- When asked to determine “now my level of useable knowledge is,” the average participant score was 4.24.
- The overall training content received high overall ratings of 3.63.

**Figure 4: Participants’ Rating of Training Received**



**Table 3: Percentage of Attendees by Role**

Participants	Percentage
Paraeducators	17.60%
Teacher: Special Education	21.86%
School/Clinical Psychologist	22.42%
Speech-Language Pathologist	7.27%
Other	12.52%
Teacher: General Education	6.58%
Other Certificated	5.59%
Administrator: Special Education	2.21%
Program Specialist	1.84%
Administrator: General Education	1.90%
Family	0.21%

# Technical Assistance

**“This was a great experience that felt supportive throughout. it really helped our team problem-solve.”**

***~Administrator~  
Northern California***

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**“The student has been able to maintain placement at his school of residence. His grades have also improved.”**

***~Administrator~  
Southern California***

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**“This assessment gave me, as an educator, a broader understanding of why my student does certain things. It helped me plan and utilize strategies that are useful for the entire classroom. Thank you.”**

***~School Personnel~  
Central 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 or the internet (i.e., resources or referral information), to on-site demonstration teaching and the Ask a Specialist web-based discussion forum.

Technical assistance is provided statewide and nationally. Projects have included presentations and collaboration with school districts, county offices of education and SELPAs (reported on pages 12– 23), colleges and universities, and various education and service agencies and organizations (reported on pages 24–29), including the California Association of School Psychologists, American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, and California Autism Professional Technical Assistance and Information Network.

## **2018-2019 Technical and Resource Assistance**

- ❖ 256 demonstration teaching sessions were provided to 3,008 school personnel
- ❖ 3,568 individuals were provided direct resource and consultation assistance
- ❖ 200,006 individuals received online training
- ❖ 206,582 total participants

# Comprehensive Professional Development Projects

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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 2018 - 19 projects provided in-depth content training and multiple levels of support, including 256 sessions of demonstration teaching and on-site consultation services to 3,008 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.

For the 239 surveys returned, ratings were on a scale of 1 (low) to 4 (high).

## Client Effectiveness Surveys Received

Average Rating	Survey Questions
3.76	The areas of concern, identified as the focus of the project, were addressed.
3.72	Practical strategies and/or interventions were provided.
3.70	I have increased my knowledge regarding types and methods of strategies to use with students.
3.72	The information provided will result in improved student outcomes.

# Comprehensive Professional Development Projects



## DIAGNOSTIC CENTER, NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

### **AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER-USING IMPLEMENTATION SCIENCE TO DEVELOP EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS WITH ASD:**

*Pajaro Valley Unified School District/SELPA (Monterey County)*  
*Alameda Unified School District (Alameda County)*

These school districts/SELPA requested assistance in redesigning their programs for students with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Staff were provided professional development and hands on coaching and technical assistance to learn evidence-based practices (EBPs) for individuals with an ASD. Assessments were also conducted for individual students. Focus on these projects was to increase successful inclusive education opportunities for students with ASD. In addition, the Pajaro Valley USD and Alameda USD Leadership teams participated in developing transformational leadership skills to ensure sustainability, scaling up of the technical assistance project goals and alignment with their LCAP.

### **PSW (PATTERN OF STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES) COURSE FOR SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS**

*Mission Valley SELPA (New Haven USD; Newark USD; Fremont USD)*

Selected Mission Valley SELPA LEA school psychologists learned an integrated method for determining patterns of strengths and weaknesses (PSW) using the Cross Battery Assessment System (XBASS) to determine the presence or absence of a Specific Learning Disability (SLD). The outcome for Mission Valley SELPA LEAs was to build capacity to determine SLD using a PSW methodology with consistency among the districts within the SELPA. At the end of the project, the Directors of Special Education and the trained school psychologists were gathered to collaboratively develop a sustainability and scaling up plan 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.

# Comprehensive Professional Development Projects



## DIAGNOSTIC CENTER, NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

### **STUDENT LED IEPS - TRANSITION**

#### *Fremont Union High School District*

Fremont Union High School District requested assistance with developing the initial stages of their goal to develop Student Led IEPs. All staff in the district were provided with an overview of the importance of student led IEPs and the correlation with improving self-advocacy skills for students with disabilities and their district mission and vision. A select group of special education teachers from Cupertino High School participated in the project. The select group was provided with coaching sessions. The outcome of the technical assistance project included the development of a resource folder for all district staff regarding student led IEPs, a student led IEP continuum, ideas for implementation and scale up and practice with developing and implementing student led IEPs at the high school level.

### **AAC CERTIFICATION COURSE FOR SLPS**

#### *San Mateo County SELPA*

#### *Mendocino County SELPA*

These SELPAs all received extensive training for their selected Speech-Language Pathologists to gain competency and earn certification in the area of Alternative and Augmentative Communication (AAC) assessment and service delivery. Participants learned the basics of providing AAC services in schools, including assessment and implementation. The course was comprised of 6 full days of coursework that covered AAC methods and strategies that maximize functional communication, and included a review of current research and evidence-based practices. The field of AAC was explored, from low-tech systems to high-tech devices, so that participants became familiar with a variety of AAC strategies and tools. All participants were required to participate in weekly learning activities, write a comprehensive AAC Assessment report, and complete an AAC Implementation Plan. Each participant received hands-on coaching by the instructor at the school site. The participants took a final exam and a Certificate of Completion was awarded upon successful completion of all AAC Assessment and Services Course work and requirements, and 36 hours of Continuing Education were earned that could be used toward the SLPs' maintenance of their ASHA CCCs and their state of CA license for speech-language pathology.

# Comprehensive Professional Development Projects



## DIAGNOSTIC CENTER, NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

### **INCLUSIVE EDUCATION FOR STUDENTS WITH MODERATE TO SEVERE DISABILITIES**

#### *Marin County Special Education Programs/Marin County SELPA*

Marin County Special Education Program/Marin County SELPA requested assistance in redesigning their programs for students with moderate to severe disabilities to increase opportunities for meaningful participation in the general education classroom (LRE) and receive differentiated instruction and increase student independence. The focus of the hands on coaching and technical assistance was in the areas of: Common Core State Standards based curriculum, developing and implementing engaging meaningful and functional activities that lead to independence, and positive behavior interventions and supports. Teaching staff were also provided with professional development opportunities in the form of trainings by the Diagnostic Center Staff to learn evidence-based practices for individuals with an ASD and moderate to severe disabilities. Assessments were also conducted for individual students. In addition, the Marin County Special Education Program leadership team participated in developing leadership skills and increased knowledge in Implementation Science to ensure sustainability, scaling up of the technical assistance project goals and alignment with their LCAP.

### **ONLINE RESOURCES**

- **The Diagnostic Center Northern California hosts the website for** the statewide initiative for ASD known as **CAPTAIN** (California Autism Professional Technical Assistance and Information Network) [www.captain.ca.gov](http://www.captain.ca.gov) , which is an interagency organization committed to disseminating evidence-based information and resources for families and educators who work with students with an ASD.
- **The Diagnostic Center Northern California website, Ask A Specialist,** [www.askaspecialist.com](http://www.askaspecialist.com) , provides individuals with resource and technical assistance and offers website visitors the opportunity to ask questions of the DCN special education experts in the areas of Autism Spectrum Disorders, Behavior, AAC, Inclusive Education, Mental Health Issues, School-Related Medical Issues, Transition/Secondary Issues.
- **The Diagnostic Center Northern California website** [www.dcn-cde.ca.gov](http://www.dcn-cde.ca.gov) provides on-line trainings and resources to provide parents and educators the opportunity to learn about ADHD, Assistive Technology, Mental Health, and Transition.

# Comprehensive Professional Development Projects



## DIAGNOSTIC CENTER, CENTRAL CALIFORNIA

### **ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY CERTIFICATE PROGRAM**

*Kern County SELPA*

*San Luis Obispo SELPA*

The focus of this project was to develop Assistive Technology (AT) teams to assist school districts with assessing specific student needs related to AT. The project was designed to promote the use of evidence-based assessment procedures in assistive technology. During this project, individuals were required to complete two Assistive Technology Assessments, and other assignments related to Assistive Technology Assessments using the Student, Environment, Tools and Task (SETT) model and other assessment modules such as the Wisconsin Assistive Technology Initiative (WATI). Attendance on all seven full-day sessions and satisfactory completion of projects and assignments were required to receive the certificate.

### **AUGMENTATIVE ALTERNATIVE COMMUNICATION COHORTS**

*Fresno Unified School District*

This project was developed to support individuals who have 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.

### **AUGMENTATIVE AND ALTERNATIVE COMMUNICATION (AAC) CERTIFICATION PROJECT**

*Central Unified School District*

This project included a cadre of speech-language pathologists and special education service providers who attended a series of seven 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



## DIAGNOSTIC CENTER, CENTRAL CALIFORNIA

### **ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY COHORTS**

*San Joaquin County SELPA*

*San Luis Obispo SELPA*

*Kern County Superintendent of Schools*

A cohort project was developed to support individuals who have completed the Assistive Technology Certificate Program. 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.

### **COALINGA-HURON SCHOOL DISTRICT**

At the request of the Coalinga-Huron School District, the Diagnostic Center Central developed a collaborative project with the intent to strengthen Coalinga-Huron Unified School District's targeted programs for students with moderate to severe needs. Building capacity within programs and with the special education staff was a key focus. Incorporated into this project was professional learning opportunities (behavior, evidence-based practices, standards based instruction), coaching/mentoring, multi-disciplinary problem-solving, modeling, support and resource assistance.

### **DINUBA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT (PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS)**

Dinuba Unified School District requested a project with a focus on building evidence-based programming for special education preschool students. Trainings, coaching, and technical assistance were provided to school site teams (teachers, psychologists, speech-language pathologists, and paraprofessionals). Instructional and environmental components encompassed within this project included increasing the implementation and fidelity of evidence-based practices (EBPs), student engagement, data collection techniques, behavior management systems, program planning and evaluation.

# Comprehensive Professional Development Projects



## DIAGNOSTIC CENTER, CENTRAL CALIFORNIA

### **DYSLEXIA FORUM**

The Diagnostic Center Central initiated and developed the Dyslexia Forum as an avenue to disseminate current research and evidence-based practices regarding assessment and instruction for students diagnosed with Dyslexia. Three forums were held during the 2018-19 year and both were well attended by educators, parents, and advocates. Both forums included presentations from Diagnostic Center Central’s staff as well as guest speakers.

### **FRESNO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**

#### *Rata High School*

Rata High School requested a project to address to the following: “How can Assistive Technology be used to increase communicative opportunities, improve communication skills and increase access to learning?” This project was provided for the benefit of students with moderate to severe disabilities attending Rata High School. The participants included teachers, para-educators, Speech Language Pathologists, administrators and other Designated Instructional Staff as appropriate and included trainings, consultation and coaching.

### **PANAMA BUENA VISTA UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Diagnostic Center Central joined forces in a proactive collaborative effort to satisfy the tremendous need within the Panama Buena Vista Union School District for highly qualified, highly trained paraprofessionals who serve students with autism spectrum disorder. The project was designed to offer direct instruction through a series of trainings leading to a certificate of competency for paraprofessionals. The components of the year-long, intensive certification program for paraprofessionals included the following: training sessions in various evidence-based practices, observation and coaching sessions for each participant, outside reading assignments, and monthly portfolio assignments.

# Comprehensive Professional Development Projects



## DIAGNOSTIC CENTER, CENTRAL CALIFORNIA

### **LUCIA MAR UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**

This project consisted of specific trainings, consultation, coaching, and collaboration to address the following question: What information can the Diagnostic Center Central provide to support student progress within the classroom and school setting (*i.e., daily living skills, recreation/leisure, feeding, communication, academics/learning environments, or assistive technology*). Trainings were developed based on observations in classrooms and interviews with classroom staff. The focus of this project was specifically related to evidence-based practices and strategies.

### **THE DIAGNOSTIC CENTER, CENTRAL CALIFORNIA, PROVIDED THREE ONE-WEEK AAC SUMMER ACADEMIES AS FOLLOWS:**

- 1) *Diagnostic Center, Central California***
- 2) *In collaboration with University of the Pacific Speech Language Department***
- 3) *In collaboration with San Luis Obispo SELPA***

Each academy was attended by 9-14 students who use electronic communication devices. A strong support group of volunteers consisting of non-disabled peers and language facilitators were instrumental in the success of the Academies. 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 crafts, puzzles and games as well as a culminating activity based on the theme. Parents and educators were invited to participate, observe, ask questions, and receive guidance. The project involved direct student instruction, modeling of AAC device programming, consultation, technical assistance and individual student assessment.

# Comprehensive Professional Development Projects



## DIAGNOSTIC CENTER, SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

### **NEWHALL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

This project focused on training, and support to district school psychologists on best practices on behavior assessment, development of quality behavior intervention plans, and matching behavior assessment data to evidence-based behavior intervention supports. Outcomes were developed FBAs, BIPS/BSP using DCS/PENT developed rubrics (Essential 10).

### **POMONA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**

This project focused on training, and support to district school psychologists and ERICs clinicians on best practices on functional behavior assessment (FBA), development of quality behavior intervention plans, and matching behavior assessment data to evidence-based behavior intervention supports. Outcomes were developed FBAs, BIPS/BSP using DCS/PENT developed rubrics (Essential 10).

### **SANTA-MARIA BONITA SCHOOL DISTRICT**

The project with the Santa Maria-Bonita School District focused on inclusive education outcomes for students at Liberty Elementary. Through training and coaching of best practices in co-teaching, co-planning, and differentiation, the school was able to increase the amount of time in general education for over 90% of students with special needs. Due to the success of the project, the school district requested project into the 2019 / 2020 school year.

### **ESCONDIDO UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT**

This consultation/project was a joint effort undertaken between the Escondido Union School District and the Diagnostic Center, Southern California. This project provided support to special education teachers and district administrative staff and focused on developmentally appropriate curricular planning and supports for students with moderate to severe disabilities. This project included classroom observations of two special day classes at Rock Springs Elementary School, interviews with teachers, demonstration teaching, and direct interaction with students. Additionally, a training was provided to district staff.

# Comprehensive Professional Development Projects



## DIAGNOSTIC CENTER, SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

### **FONTANA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**

This consultation/project was a joint effort undertaken between the Fontana Unified School District and the Diagnostic Center, Southern California. This project provided support to special education teachers and district administrative staff. The consultation focused on developmentally appropriate curricular programming and supports. This project included classroom observations of three special day classes at Primrose Elementary School, interviews with teachers, demonstration teaching, and direct interaction with students.

### **SIMI VALLEY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**

This consultation/project was a joint effort undertaken between the Simi Valley Unified School District and the Diagnostic Center, Southern California. This project provided support to special education teachers and district administrative staff. The consultation focused on supporting high school students with autism, differentiation of instruction using evidence-based practices.

### **ANAHEIM UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT**

This project focused on providing mental health best practices that might improve chances of students classified “at risk” of graduating high school. Supports and strategies included environmental modifications, instructional components that were meaningful to students, and Cognitive Behavioral Techniques that support student intrinsic motivation, and which help students cope better with the challenges of emotional behavioral struggles. Educators participated in trainings and received individualized consultations. This is the first year of a multi-year project. Data on graduation rates will follow in subsequent years after there is time for broad implementation.

### **SAN DIEGO COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION**

The students in this project were all “at risk” high school youth who had either been incarcerated for serious crimes or who were expelled from a public school within San Diego County. All students were either eligible for Special Education in the area of an emotional disturbance, or were experiencing serious emotional concerns that interfered with learning. The purpose of the project was to help improve educational delivery. The focus was on differentiating instruction, identifying processing weaknesses associated with emotional disorders and providing adequate supports for learning and processing. Educators participated in trainings and received individualized consultations.

# Comprehensive Professional Development Projects



## DIAGNOSTIC CENTER, SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

### **DOWNEY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**

This is the first year of a multi-year project focusing on broad delivery of a variety of best practices for students identified for special education with an emotional disturbance. A key component to this year's project was to train educators, including teachers of the general education students, in the best practices across tiers, to help prevent over-identification, as well as to enhance emotional availability of students at all tiers of need.

### **EAST COUNTY SELPA**

This is the first year of a multi-year project seeking to improve educators' use of proactive supports and strategies for students with emotional-behavioral need. One key focus was to reduce the referral rate for office discipline procedures, and to improve communication between the general education and special education instructional staff. In addition, the SELPA staff were encouraged to develop multi-disciplinary teams that can assemble at regular times to case-plan preventatively. The project included trainings, classroom observations and individualized consultations of Special Education teachers.

### **LOS NIETOS SCHOOL DISTRICT**

This was a short term follow-up project to the project developed in previous years with Los Nietos. This special project provided training and consultation focusing on matching the state's curricular standards with the social-emotional learning needs of students identified for Special Education in the area of an emotional disturbance.

### **NORWALK UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**

This is the third year in a multi-year project for improving best practices for educators who work with students identified for special education due to an emotional disturbance. This year's project included trainings, classroom observations, classroom demonstration, and guided practice with the district's educational staff. The project focused on developing systems of data collection for determining student need across various teachers and grade levels. An electronic data collection system was established during the course of the year, and is currently used as the basis for group case analysis and planning, which has improved educational outcomes and reduced office referrals, and eliminated suspensions and expulsions.

# Comprehensive Professional Development Projects



## DIAGNOSTIC CENTER, SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

### **SIMI VALLEY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**

This year's project was part of a multi-year project aimed at improving a comprehensive therapeutic educational delivery model for students identified for special education in the area of an emotional disturbance. The model includes classroom-wide cognitive behavioral interventions, relaxation techniques, learning supports and strategies, as well as parent training. As a result of this multi-year project, the district reported matriculating 40 students from nonpublic placements back onto the general public school campuses where this comprehensive model is employed. The project focused heavily on tailored, in-class social emotional learning activities, embedded into the curricular day.

### **FONTANA 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 evidenced 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 –informed decisions for the post-secondary arena.

### **UPLAND UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**

The 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 lesson, reference materials and activities, teachers were able to expand their efforts and practices to motivate students and to make informed choices for the future.

### **RIALTO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**

The Transition Project provided in-depth training, lessons and activities designed to support students in transition preparation. Teachers and support staff were exposed to materials, resources and activities which facilitated this instruction process. The Diagnostic Center consultant worked directly with teachers, as well as independently with students, to increase self-awareness, self-determination and self-advocacy skills necessary to make realistic and informed choices for high school planning, work experience and the successful transition into adult living and employment. The project included onsite follow-up, facilitated dialogues regarding lesson outcomes, direct teaching strategies and feedback for ongoing transition training.

# Comprehensive Professional Development Projects



## DIAGNOSTIC CENTER, SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

### **AUGMENTATIVE-ALTERNATIVE COMMUNICATION**

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 self-study, face-to-face training and coaching, and the completion of an AAC assessment and report. Specific feedback regarding the participants' assessment and report was provided to each participant.

### **POSITIVE ENVIRONMENTS NETWORK OF TRAINERS**

The Diagnostic Center, Southern California completed its 17 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](http://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, approximately 300 SELPA Director nominated trainers and consultants on behavior met in the annual PENT Forums. Forum participants received information on strategies to support implementation and gained knowledge regarding overcoming barriers to implementation. Dr. Austin Johnson, University of California, Riverside, provided the keynote address and specialized focus sessions.

# Interagency Collaboration

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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 University, San Francisco & San Diego Campuses
- California State University, Channel Islands
- California State University, East Bay
- California State University, Fresno
- California State University, San Diego
- California State University, San Francisco
- California State University, San Jose
- Chabot College, Hayward
- College of Psychology at John F. Kennedy University
- Fresno Pacific University
- Stanford University School of Medicine
- University of California, Berkeley
- University of California, Davis
- University of California, Riverside
- University of California, San Francisco Medical School
- University of North Carolina, Charlotte
- University of Southern California
- University of the Pacific
- University of Washington

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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 workgroups, interagency task forces, and consulted on various state projects. A sampling of Diagnostic Center participation includes the following organizations.

- ACSA ASD Goals Workgroup
- 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
- American Speech Language Hearing Association (ASHA) S.T.E.P. (Student to Empowered Professional Mentoring Program)
- 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
- Association of California School Administrators
- Association of California School Administrators (ACSA) - Every Child Counts Symposium
- Association of California School Administrators ACSA-Autism Goals and Objectives Task Force
- Association of Educational Therapists
- Augmentative and Alternative Communication and Assistive Technology Network
- Autism Society of America (ASA)
- Blind Babies Foundation, California School for the Blind
- Buddy Systems Therapeutic Horseback Riding
- CAHPERD

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- 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 Department of Education Disabilities Advisory Committee (CDE-DAC)
- California Department of Education-Dyslexia Workgroup
- California Department of Education: Student Mental Health Policy Workgroup
- California Interagency Autism Planning Group
- California Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities - CA-LEND
- California School Employees Association (California Paraeducators' Conference)
- California Speech Language and Hearing Association (CSHA)
- California Speech Language and Hearing Association (CSHA) Legislative Committee
- California Speech, Language and Hearing Association (CSHA) Diversity Committee
- California Speech, Language and Hearing Association (CSHA) Position Paper on ASD
- California State Employees Association (CSEA)
- California State University Fresno-School Psychologist Advisory Committee
- California State University Fresno-Special Education Advisory Committee
- California Transition Alliance
- Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (CEDD) MIND Institute

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- Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (CEDD), University of California, Los Angeles
- Central California Chapter-Autism Society of America
- Central Valley Community Autism Partnership-Autism Forum
- Central Valley Family Resource Centers
- Central Valley Regional CAPTAIN Cadre
- Central Valley Regional Center (CVRC)
- Children and Adults with AD/HD (CHAAD)
- 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
- Diagnostic Center Central California Dyslexia Forum
- Early Childhood Learning Solutions Community
- Exceptional Children's Unlimited-Transition SOAR
- Families for Effective Autism Treatment (FEAT)
- Family Resource Centers Network of California (e.g. Parents Helping Parents)
- Fresno County Office of Education: Migrant Education
- Fresno Early Childhood Coalition
- Fresno Interagency Focus on Unity
- Fresno Interagency Focus on Unity in Education
- Fresno Pacific University Counseling and Faculty Advisory Committee
- Improving Special Education Services (ISES) Committee
- Interagency Autism Planning Group (various state and local agencies, including DDS/Regional Centers, Department of Public Health, SELPA's, University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities - UCEDDs - at UCD and USC, MIND Institute)
- Kern CAPTAIN Cadre
- Learn the Signs Act Early (LTSAE) - Centers for Disease Control

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- Linda Hodgdon's Visual Strategies and Implementation Study
- National Association of Speech, Hearing, and Audiologists
- National College Association of Teacher Education Accreditation
- National Community Practice-Transition
- National Professional Development Center on ASD
- National Professional Development Center on ASD (NPDC)
- National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center
- OSEP
- Partners in Sustainable Learning
- Positive Environments, Network of Trainers (PENT)
- Regional Centers of California
- Regional Coordinating Councils
- Resources for Independence, Central Valley (Formerly Center for Independent Living-Fresno)
- San Joaquin SELPA CAPTAIN Cadre
- San Joaquin SELPA Community Advisory Committee
- San Joaquin Valley Neurodevelopmental Disorder Collaborative
- San Mateo County Speech-Language Hearing Association (SMCSLHA)
- Santa Clara Speech-Language Hearing Association
- Santa Clara Speech-Language Hearing Association (SCCSHA)
- Selma Unified School District: Community Advisory Committee
- SELPA Behavior Committee
- 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

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- Tri-County Regional Center
- Tulare County Office of Education-Impact Program
- Tulare County Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)
- WestEd Center for Prevention and Early Intervention

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California Department of Education  
Special Services and Support Branch  
State Special Schools and Services Division