



# STEERING COMMITTEE

## AGENDA

Wednesday October 26, 2016  
 10:00 – 2:30 PM  
 DoubleTree by Hilton  
 7450 Hazard Center Drive  
 San Diego, CA 92108

TOPIC	SPEAKER
<b>Welcome &amp; Introductions</b>	Group
<b>Federal and State News</b>	SELPA Leadership
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State Finance*</li> <li>• Legal Updates*</li> <li>• Legislative Updates*</li> <li>• Disproportionality</li> <li>• LAO DHH Recommendations*</li> <li>• NPA Compliance Information</li> </ul>	
<b>SELPA Updates</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CAPTAIN Information*</li> <li>• Low Incidence/Legal Risk Pool Request</li> <li>• Professional Learning Updates*</li> <li>• CA Assessment Update*</li> </ul>	Daina Mahaffey Ginese Quann Kevin Schaefer Janelle Mercado/ Crystal Keith
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compliance Determinations/PIR</li> <li>• CASEMIS-Preparing for December 1*</li> <li>• DINC process review*</li> <li>• 2017-18 Leadership Academy *</li> <li>• California Blueprint 2.0*</li> <li>• Symposium 2017</li> </ul>	Ginese Quann Kirstin Comstock Kirstin Comstock Ginese Quann Group Ginese Quann
<b>SELPA Best Practice Sharing</b>	Group
Breakout 1: Program Implementation: A Laser Focus on the Big Picture	Kevin Schaefer/ Moises Buhain
Breakout 2: Networking and Brainstorming for new LEA's-"Top 10 NEED TO KNOW as a new Director"	Ginese Quann/ Katelyn James

\*Denotes a handout included in the packet

During and after the Steering meeting, participants will have time to connect with colleagues and program specialists.



**SELPA ADMINISTRATORS OF CALIFORNIA**  
**FINANCE COMMITTEE**  
**October 2016**

1. **State News**

- State revenues in August were modestly above State projections by 140 million dollars. Personal income tax was above projections, but was offset by sales, use and corporation taxes that were below projections.
- California unemployment rates have remained stable at 5.5%, but still above the national average of 4.9%. Housing starts are down by over 6%, but housing prices are up by 1.7%.
- Polls are showing good support (54%) for Proposition 55 (extension of Proposition 30 income tax on high earners for 12 years), but less support (47%) for Proposition 51 (facilities bond).
- There is concern being expressed regarding both the revised LCAP template and the Evaluation Rubrics recently adopted by the State Board. These rubrics are to be the foundation for the state's accountability system. Parent groups are asking for greater accountability, while others are calling for better alignment between state and federal requirements.
- Letters of Intent for Classified School Employee Teacher Credentialing Program Funding were to be submitted to the CTC by September 30<sup>th</sup>. RFP responses are due by November 4<sup>th</sup>.

2. **Federal News**

There has been no real work on the Federal 2017-2018 Federal budget by Congress. A Continuing Appropriations bill was recently approved to keep the government operational through 12/9/2016.



Special Education  
September 22, 2016

# AALRR Alert



## Specialized Instruction and Services for a General Education Student Amounted to Eligibility for Special Education and Related Services

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School districts should be careful characterizing educational services and supports as “general education” interventions when they may actually constitute services, accommodations and modifications which are individualized to a child’s particular needs. A child’s progress utilizing such services and supports could indicate that he or she qualifies for special education and related services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (“IDEA”).

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit recently ruled in ***L.J. v. Pittsburg Unified Sch. Dist.***, No. 14-16139, 2016 WL 4547360 (9th Cir. Sept. 1, 2016) that a general education fifth grade student should have been found eligible for special education despite an adverse finding by the Pittsburg Unified School District (“District”). The supports and services the District provided L.J., which the District and lower court decisions characterized as general education interventions, were interpreted by the Ninth Circuit as *mischaracterized* special education services. It was therefore inappropriate for the District to assert that L.J.’s progress utilizing

such supports and interventions could serve as evidence that he did not qualify for special education eligibility.

### Analysis

L.J.’s clinical diagnoses included bipolar disorder, oppositional defiant disorder, and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. L.J. exhibited maladaptive behaviors and made multiple suicide attempts resulting in psychiatric hospitalizations. The District provided a host of services and supports allowing L.J. to progress academically and, to a measurable extent, behaviorally.

The Individualized Education Program (“IEP”) team found that L.J. was ineligible for special education because he made progress with supports and accommodations in the general education setting. At the due process hearing initiated by L.J.’s parent, the administrative law judge ruled in favor of the District. On appeal, the district court ruled that while he met eligibility criteria for multiple qualifying disabilities, L.J. did not require special education services since his performance and progress was satisfactory utilizing

only general education supports and interventions. Parent, in disagreement, then appealed to the federal appellate court.

The Ninth Circuit’s analysis fell squarely on the distinction between special education and related services versus general education supports and interventions. “Special education means specially designed instruction...to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability.” 34 C.F.R. § 300.39(a)(1).

The Ninth Circuit provided four examples of services or supports provided to L.J. for the time period at issue that equated to specially designed instruction rather than general education interventions:

-->“The Ninth Circuit has made clear it does not want to see students receiving services, supports and interventions which are, for all intents and purposes, ‘specially designed instruction’ without the auspices of the IDEA protections attached to an IEP.”

1. L.J. received special assistance from a one-on-one behavioral paraeducator aide (this service was provided pursuant to a settlement agreement between the parents and the District).

2. L.J. received mental health services that were *specially designed for him*. He received two educationally-related mental health services (“ERMHS”) assessments, plan development, group and individual rehabilitation, group and individual therapy, family therapy, collateral family group and intensive home-based services.

3. L.J. received extensive clinical interventions by a behavior specialist. For example, the behavior specialist designed behavior support plans (“BSP”) which included adapting the method and delivery of his instruction. The behavior specialist also “designed a nine-hour training session for L.J.’s paraeducator” and closely supervised the paraeducator to ensure compliance with the new BSP.

4. L.J. received a host of accommodations, some of which were interpreted by the Court as not available to all general education students, including “persistent teacher oversight, additional time to complete classwork or tests, shortened assignments, discretion to leave the classroom at will, or the option to complete classwork or tests in other rooms or with one-on-one support.”

The Court opined that because these supports and services were not available to the general education student body at large, were tailored to L.J.’s unique needs resulting from his disabilities, or were adaptations to the regular education instruction meant to ensure L.J.’s access to the curriculum, they constituted “specially designed instruction” - the very crux of the legal definition of “special education.” Accordingly, it was inappropriate for the IEP team to conclude that L.J. did not qualify for, and did not need, special education because he was progressing appropriately with what the Court deemed to be *mischaracterized* general education interventions.

Despite L.J.’s academic progress, the Court found L.J. continued to struggle with behavior and social emotional issues. He threatened and attempted to kill himself on three occasions resulting in psychiatric hospitalizations, frequently acted out, and relied on medications to attend school. The District argued that the hospitalizations and suicide attempts were not relevant to IEP team discussions since they occurred outside the school setting. Not persuaded by such assertions, the Court countered, “That he attempted suicide outside the school environment is immaterial. His emotional disturbance adversely affected his attendance and his teachers all reported that L.J.’s classroom absences, due to psychiatric hospitalizations, hurt his academic performance.”

## What this means for school districts

The Ninth Circuit has made clear it does not want to see students receiving services, supports and interventions which are, for all intents and purposes, “specially designed instruction” without the auspices of the IDEA protections attached to an IEP.

When ascertaining whether a support or service has a general education or special education function for a child, ask the following questions: are these services/supports *specially-designed* for the student, or otherwise *uniquely tailored to a student’s needs* in such a way that would not normally occur in the general education setting? If the answer is “yes”, then these services are most likely specially designed instruction which must be recorded, delivered and monitored through an IEP. Dismissing a child’s potential eligibility for special education by mischaracterizing the nature of his or her individually tailored services and supports as strictly general education accommodations and interventions will likely run afoul of the IDEA’s requirement to properly identify, assess and serve all eligible special education students.

# CLIENT NEWS BRIEF

## United States Supreme Court to Consider How Much Educational Benefit IDEA Requires

The United States Supreme Court has decided to take up an issue that has long divided federal courts: How much educational benefit must Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) provide to special needs students?

On September 29, the high court granted review of *Endrew F. v. Douglas County School District RE-1* (No. 15-827), a case decided by the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals in Denver on August 25, 2015. In that case, the court affirmed a lower court holding that the district did not deny the plaintiff a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) because the IEP it drafted for him offered “some educational benefit.” The plaintiff argued that the law requires IEPs to provide a “meaningful educational benefit,” a standard that has been articulated by other federal circuits.

The high court’s decision could have a major impact on the way schools draft IEPs for special needs students and on the level – and cost – of services that must be provided in order to ensure students have been provided a FAPE.

For more than a decade, the courts generally applied the standard articulated in another Supreme Court case, *Board of Education of the Hendrick Hudson School District v. Rowley* (1982) 458 U.S. 176. In that case, the high court held that federal law required IEPs to provide “some educational benefit” to students, adding that states are required to provide a “basic floor of opportunity” to disabled students, not a “potential-maximizing education.” But some federal circuits have interpreted amendments to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act to mean that a higher standard – that IEPs should provide a “meaningful educational benefit” – should apply, leading to a split in authority among federal circuit courts.

In 2009, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals made clear that it would adhere to the *Rowley* standard in *J.L. v. Mercer Island School District* (9th Cir. 2010) 592 F.3d 938, calling it the “proper standard to determine whether a disabled child has received a free appropriate public education.” In a footnote, the court explained that its reading of the *Rowley* decision led the judges to the conclusion that the phrases “educational benefit,” “some educational benefit” and “meaningful educational benefit” all applied to the same standard, adding that school districts must confer at least some educational benefit on disabled students in order to make such access meaningful.

Lozano Smith will be watching this case closely and will report on any additional developments and the Supreme Court’s decision as soon as they happen.

For more information on the *Endrew F.* decision, educational benefit standards or special education law in general, please contact the authors of this Client News Brief or an attorney at one of our [10 offices](#) located statewide. You can also visit our [website](#), follow us on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#) or download our [Client News Brief App](#).

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## Legislative Wrap-up

### **SB 884 – Mental health-related reporting and monitoring**

- As introduced, the bill would have required: procedural safeguards to have been provided any time a Prior Written Notice was given; SELPAs to establish new policies and procedures; types of providers listed in IEPs for each related service; documentation of funding allocations for mental health; reports on the frequency and duration of related services; and other mandates.
- The bill was gutted of all mandates in the Assembly. As amended, the bill requires that funding for mental health services be subject to existing audit procedures and that CDE create a report on its compliance findings and corrective action plans related to mental health services.
- The bill was signed by the Governor on September 29<sup>th</sup> and takes effect on January 1, 2017.

## Legislative Wrap-up

### **SB 1113 – EPSDT pilot programs**

- This bill would have authorized counties and LEAs to enter into partnerships for the provision of EPSDT mental health services and be subject to certain requirements. Unspecified funding would be made available for four pilot programs over the course of three years.
- Earlier versions of the bill would have funded the pilots with AB 114 dollars, using that as a match to draw down additional federal funding.
- The bill was **VETOED** by Governor Brown on September 28<sup>th</sup>.

## Legislative Wrap-Up

### **AB 2785 (O'Donnell) – Special Education/English Learners**

- This bill requires CDE to develop a manual providing guidance to LEAs on identifying and supporting English learners with disabilities.
- Existing resources developed by SELPAs may be used as a model for the manual.
- SELPA Administrators actively supported this bill authored by the Chair of the Assembly Education Committee and staffed by a key consultant.
- The bill was signed into law by Governor Brown on September 24<sup>th</sup> and will go into effect on January 1, 2017.

## Implementation Issues

**SB 277 (Pan)** – We had sent a letter to Senator Pan regarding the need for clarity around students with IEPs and developed specific questions for Senator Pan's staff to submit to Legislative Counsel for an opinion. Legislative Counsel has responded to Senator Pan that due to pending litigation, they have put their opinion on hold pending the outcome of existing litigation.

# CLIENT NEWS BRIEF

## New State Guidance Pending on English Learners in Special Education

Assembly Bill (AB) 2785 was signed by the Governor on September 24, 2016. AB 2785 requires the California Department of Education (CDE) to develop a manual providing guidance to local educational agencies (LEA) on identifying, assessing, supporting and reclassifying English learners who may qualify for special education services, and also, pupils with disabilities who may be classified as English learners. Other states offer similar guidance.

Last year, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) alleged that California failed to adequately address reports dating back to the 2007-2008 school year indicating that more than 20,000 students in the state's English learner population of 1.4 million had not received proper instruction. In a recent federal settlement with the DOJ, the CDE and State Board of Education (SBE) agreed to implement new training and monitoring procedures to ensure language education is provided for all students designated as English learners. (See [2016 Client News Brief No. 67.](#))

With over 700,000 pupils with disabilities in California public schools, some of whom are English learners, the passage of AB 2785 follows decades of concern regarding the over- and under-identification of English learners in special education. Existing special education law requires LEAs to "search and serve" individuals with exceptional needs, from birth through 21 years of age. As special education relates to the English learner population, research has uncovered longstanding issues, such as difficulty distinguishing between language needs and disabilities, poor reclassification practices and insufficient referral and intervention strategies.

AB 2785 seeks to ameliorate these problems through the provision of state-issued guidance. The development of the manual would include the review of other available and relevant manuals and resources and consultation with experts and practitioners in special education and/or English learner education. The manual is to contain evidence-based and promising practices, and address topics such as how to accurately identify English learners who may have disabilities, how to accurately classify pupils with disabilities as English learners, early interventions, referral and reclassification processes, assessments, the development of Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) for English learners and the exit of English learners from special education.

AB 2785 requires the CDE to develop the manual on or before July 1, 2018, for voluntary use by LEAs, charter schools and state special schools. With the availability of this guidance, combined with the obligations outlined in the recent federal settlement with the DOJ, English learners will hopefully have their educational needs better served and districts will have more clarity regarding their obligations to these students.

Separately, the United States Department of Education released what it billed as significant guidance on September 23, 2016 intended to help states and LEAs meet their obligations to English learners under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds

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# CLIENT NEWS BRIEF

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Act of 2015. Among other things, the guidance, which can be found [here](#), addresses a new requirement to separately report the progress English learners with disabilities are making toward English proficiency.

For more information on AB 2785 or on requirements for serving special needs students who are English learners, please contact the authors of this Client News Brief or an attorney at one of our [10 offices](#) located statewide. You can also visit our [website](#), follow us on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#) or download our [Client News Brief App](#).

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## Level of Benefits At Issue In Special Ed. Case Case Could Yield Landmark Ruling

By Christina A. Samuels

*Education Week*

October 11, 2016

Just how much benefit must a student receive through special education to meet the goals of the key federal law?

Four decades after the passage of what was to become the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, the U.S. Supreme Court plans to take up that question in *Andrew F. v. Douglas County School District*.

Experts in special education law say the court's decision could mean as much to educators as the landmark case *Rowley v. Hendrick Hudson Central School District*, which in 1982 defined the central question of special education law: What is a "free, appropriate public education?"

Andrew F. "potentially will be as important as Rowley to shape what we do in special education for years to come," said Antonis Katsiyannis, the president of the Council for Exceptional Children and a professor at Clemson University with a focus on special education law. "[It's] very exciting to have the Supreme Court addressing the meaning of [free, appropriate education] again."

### **'Meaningful' vs. 'Some'**

In Rowley, the Supreme Court said that the IDEA requires instruction that is "reasonably calculated to enable the child to receive educational benefit." The court intentionally declined to say just how much benefit would be adequate. "[C]ourts must be careful to avoid imposing their view of preferable educational methods upon the states," Chief Justice William Rehnquist wrote for the six-justice majority.

But lower courts have grappled with that question and come up with different terms. Should the educational benefit to students be "meaningful"? Are schools required to offer just "some" benefit? Or can the standard be met if educational benefits are little more than trivial?

That's the question that the newer case is intended to answer.

Andrew, called "Drew" in court briefs, is now a 17-year-old student with autism living in suburban Denver. In 2010, his parents pulled him out of the 66,000-student Douglas County district because they said he wasn't making any meaningful educational progress in public school. The parents argued that the district should be required to pay for Drew's private school tuition.

An administrative-law judge, a federal district judge, and the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals all decided against the parents. The appeals-court ruling in August 2015 said that Drew was gaining "some" educational benefit from his individualized education program. Referring to an earlier case in the same circuit, the court also said the IDEA requires that special education only offer a more than "de minimis," or trivial, benefit.

While the parents lost at the lower-court levels, they gained a powerful supporter when they appealed to the Supreme Court—the federal government.

“No parent or educator in America would say that a child has received an ‘appropriate’ or a ‘specially suitable’ or ‘proper’ education ‘in the circumstances’ when all the child has received are benefits that are barely more than trivial,” wrote the U.S. solicitor general’s office, urging the Supreme Court to take the case. “That is particularly true when a child is capable of achieving much more.”

The 10th Circuit Court is among several that have said educational benefits under special education need be only more than trivial, the solicitor general’s brief said. Other circuits, however, have stated that educational benefits must be “meaningful,” a more robust standard. That is a disagreement that only the U.S. Supreme Court can resolve, the solicitor general’s brief says.

### **Setting a Standard**

Paula Hans, a spokeswoman for the Douglas County district, said in a statement that “it would be inappropriate to discuss the specifics of the case while it is still being litigated, but the court’s decision is not a decision on the merits, and we look forward to addressing the issues before the court.”

Ronald Wenkart, the general counsel for the Orange County education department in California, explored those differing circuit-court standards in a 2009 article for West’s Education Law Reporter. Some circuits have at times used both “meaningful educational benefit” and “some educational benefit,” his paper says, leaving even the judges in those circuits questioning the ambiguity.

The impact of the high court’s decision could rest on how broadly the justices decide to interpret the question, Wenkart said in an interview.

“They could set a standard and explain what the standard is,” Wenkart said, a move that he believes would lead to more harmonious meetings between parents and school officials. Conflicts over educational progress currently arise all the time, he said.

“This actually might be better for the courts to decide. Congress could add to the law, but that’s probably going to be a huge political fight. I don’t know if Congress could actually agree,” Wenkart said.

### **Having the Conversation**

Kathleen Sullivan, the chief counsel for the Colorado Association of School Boards, agrees that the case is significant, because there are only a “handful of Supreme Court cases interpreting the law.” However, Sullivan said she doesn’t see the conflict among the circuits that the parents have alleged.

“School districts across the country really talk about providing a free, appropriate public education to students with disabilities and do not talk about there being a higher or lower standard in certain jurisdictions,” she said.

She also noted that Congress has amended the special education law several times since Rowley was decided in 1982. “If Congress wanted to tell the Supreme Court that it was wrong in Rowley, Congress knows how to do so, and it hasn’t,” she said.

Jack D. Robinson, the lawyer representing the parents, said he has two objectives in the suit: first, to convince the high court that the IDEA requires more than trivial educational progress; and second, “to articulate a coherent standard to the Supreme Court for them to adopt and flesh out and for the nation to apply.”

“What are we investing these millions and millions of dollars on? Are we serving the purpose of the IDEA by requiring some meaningful benefit in light of the child’s potential?” Robinson asked. “It’s important, regardless of the outcome, to have this conversation.”



LAO   
**75**  
YEARS OF  
SERVICE

# Improving Education for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students in California



MAC TAYLOR • LEGISLATIVE ANALYST • SEPTEMBER 21, 2016

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### ***Most Students Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing (DHH) Experience Language Delays.***

California currently serves about 14,000 DHH students a year. Because DHH students cannot respond to spoken language as easily as their hearing peers, they often lag behind in developing important language, social, and cognitive skills. These developmental delays lead to academic challenges, with DHH students as a group performing far behind other student groups on statewide assessments of reading/writing and math.

### ***A Variety of DHH Educational Programs Exist, but Some Students Have More Options Than Others.***

Several types of DHH educational programs operate in California, with programs varying by classroom setting and instructional approach. Regarding setting, some programs serve DHH students in mainstream classrooms, whereas others serve them in special classrooms consisting either solely of other DHH students or broader groups of students with disabilities. Regarding instructional approach, some DHH programs provide instruction in spoken language, others provide instruction using sign language, and still others use a combination of spoken and sign language. No single programmatic approach works best for all students. Students in some districts, typically large urban districts, tend to have access to more DHH programmatic options than students in other districts. DHH options typically are most limited in small, rural districts.

***DHH Education Is Costly, but Programs With Many Students Cost Less Than Smaller Programs.*** The cost of DHH education ranges from about \$20,000 to more than \$100,000 per student per year. Even using the low end of this range, the state spends significantly more on DHH students than it does on most other student groups, including students with various other disabilities. While DHH educational costs vary for several reasons, programs with many DHH students generally cost less than smaller programs.

***Two State Special Schools (SSS) Serve a Small Number of DHH Students at High Cost.*** The SSS, which are located in Fremont and Riverside, use sign language to educate about 800 DHH students a year. About 60 percent live on campus as residential students, whereas the remaining 40 percent live nearby and commute to school each day. Even though the SSS are larger than most local DHH programs, they currently spend on average \$92,000 per student annually, significantly more than most local DHH programs.

### **Assessment**

#### ***California Could Address Many DHH Educational Issues by Fostering “Critical Mass.”***

Programs with a certain number of DHH students (between 3 and 20 students per grade) are said to have critical mass. DHH students in these programs are less likely to be socially isolated and thus more likely to develop important language and social skills. Programs with critical mass also are more likely to offer a variety of DHH instructional approaches, increasing the chances of finding the best fit for each student. Finally, programs with critical mass generally can offer the same services as smaller programs at a lower cost.

## A N L A O R E P O R T

***Regional Programs Help Foster Critical Mass, but Currently Are Rare.*** Regional programs are more likely to have a critical mass than programs organized within individual districts or Special Education Local Planning Areas (SELPA). This is because regional programs draw DHH students from multiple SELPAs and serve them on a few campuses. Despite the advantages of assembling critical mass, relatively few regional programs exist in California today. These programs tend to be more difficult to form because they require school administrators both within and across SELPAs to agree on DHH programmatic and fiscal decisions.

***The SSS Have Major Shortcomings.*** Though the SSS are intended to help foster critical mass by drawing together DHH students from sparsely populated areas of the state, the SSS serve mostly DHH students from urban areas. These are the students most likely to be able to access local programs with critical mass. Districts also currently pay far less to place DHH students at the SSS than they do to serve these students locally. This arrangement likely discourages some administrators from establishing their own regional programs. Finally, SSS funding is not linked to enrollment. Over time, inflation-adjusted SSS spending per student has increased significantly—the result of enrollment declines coupled with funding increases.

### **Recommendations**

***Encourage More Regional Programs to Foster Critical Mass.*** Though the state already fosters critical mass through SELPA arrangements, we believe the state could do more in this area—particularly given the low incidence of DHH students statewide. Specifically, we recommend the Legislature take three key actions to encourage more cross-SELPA regional programs. First, we recommend providing one-time grants to cover the cost of starting or expanding these programs. Second, we recommend simplifying the process for creating regional programs by allowing these programs to serve all interested students without first obtaining permission from their home districts. Third, we recommend authorizing regional programs to charge districts a reimbursement rate that covers the average cost of participating students. Based on our review of available cost data, we recommend initially setting a default rate of \$35,000 per student.

***Help the SSS Refocus on Serving Students From Rural Areas.*** Because even regional programs are unable to foster critical mass in some rural areas, we recommend refocusing the SSS to serve students from sparsely populated areas. To this end, we recommend the Legislature adopt an enrollment-based funding formula for the SSS that explicitly encourages rural enrollment while also reducing funding disparities between SSS and local DHH programs gradually over time. We further recommend providing transitional support to the SSS.

***Change Reimbursement Rate SSS Charges Districts to Improve Student Placements.*** In tandem with the above recommendations, we recommend raising the amount districts pay to send students to the SSS initially to \$35,000 (or the going rate for regional programs). Setting the rate at this level would lessen districts' incentives to place students at the SSS solely for fiscal reasons. It also would encourage more districts to develop local DHH programs by minimizing the cost difference between placing students at the SSS and serving them directly. Finally, this change would result in state savings that could be redirected for the regional program grants mentioned above.



# CAPTAIN Partners

Diagnostic Centers, CDE



Family Resource Centers Network of California



Center for Excellence for Developmental Disabilities at UC Davis MIND Institute



USC University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (USC UCEDD)



California Department of Developmental Services

SELPA Administrators of California



For Resources & Additional Information:

Visit: [www.captain.ca.gov](http://www.captain.ca.gov)  
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# C.A.P.T.A.I.N.



California Autism  
Professional  
Training and  
Information  
Network

## Welcome!

CAPTAIN is a multiagency network developed to support the understanding and use of Evidence Based Practices for individuals affected by Autism Spectrum Disorder across the state.

*CAPTAIN is dedicated to the following:*

- Providing statewide access to trainings and resources in Evidence Based Practices (EBPs) that are culturally sensitive, family centered, cost effective, and competency based.
- Establishing supports that are locally based with trainer of trainers at the local level.
- Emphasizing how to use EBPs to assist students in accessing the California Common Core State Standards and developing College and Career Readiness.
- Providing ongoing training, support, and technical assistance to implement EBPs and ensure fidelity of implementation.
- Supporting the development of local multiagency collaborations to support consistent use of EBPs.
- Providing an annual training summit and a forum for collegial communication and support to CAPTAIN Cadre members.
- Providing web based access to materials and resources that are vetted and align with current EBPs.
- Providing information and outreach to other interested stakeholders and provider groups who could benefit from learning more about EBPs (e.g. Professional Organizations, Higher Education, Self-Advocates, Allied Health Providers)

## About Us:

### Leadership Team:

The Leadership Team is comprised of professionals from the California Department of Education, Diagnostic Centers, University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDDs), Regional Centers Network, the Department of Developmental Services, Family Resource Center Network, and the Special Education Local Plan Areas (SELPAs). Our leadership participated as trainers in the National Professional Development Center for Autism Spectrum Disorders (NPDC-ASD) statewide training project. As a part of the dissemination efforts of the NPDC-ASD, we have established CAPTAIN to support implementation of EBPs across our state.

### Cadre Members:

Cadre members are nominated by SELPAs, Regional Centers, and Family Resource/Family Empowerment Centers. They receive training through our annual summit so that they can provide local training, implementation coaching, cross agency collaboration, and dissemination of the EBPs at the local level. Cadre members have access to the NPDC-ASD and CAPTAIN training materials and will assist with the statewide distribution of the EBPs by providing support and training locally. For a list of local Cadre members, please refer to the CAPTAIN website.



# Professional Learning Opportunities

## October – December 2016

Program	Date	Location
<a href="#">Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI) Certification Full Day</a>	October 27 8:00am – 4:00pm	Gompers Charter 1005 47 <sup>th</sup> Street San Diego, CA
<a href="#">Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI) Certification Full Day</a>	October 27 8:00am – 4:00pm	Fortune School of Education 2890 Gateway Oaks Drive Sacramento, CA
<a href="#">Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI) Recertification</a>	October 28 8:00am – 12:00pm	Fortune School of Education 2890 Gateway Oaks Drive Sacramento, CA
<a href="#">Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI) Recertification</a>	October 28 8:00am – 12:00pm	Gompers Charter 1005 47 <sup>th</sup> Street San Diego, CA
<a href="#">Unpacking Evidence-Based Practices / Autism</a>	October 31 8:00am – 11:00am	Fortune School of Education 2890 Gateway Oaks Drive Sacramento, CA
<a href="#">Impactful Interventions/Autism</a>	October 31 12:00pm – 3:00pm	Fortune School of Education 2890 Gateway Oaks Drive Sacramento, CA
<a href="#">Unpacking Evidence-Based Practices / Autism</a>	November 1 8:00am – 11:00am	Empower Charter 2230 East Jewett Street San Diego, CA
<a href="#">Impactful Interventions/Autism</a>	November 1 12:00pm – 3:00pm	Empower Charter 2230 East Jewett Street San Diego, CA

For any questions about upcoming professional learning offerings, contact Tara Stout  
[tstout@edcoe.org](mailto:tstout@edcoe.org) | 530.295.2462



# Professional Learning Opportunities

October – December 2016

<a href="#">Unpacking Evidence-Based Practices / Autism</a>	November 3 8:00am – 11:00am	Rocketship 2001 Gateway Place, Ste. 230E San Jose, CA
<a href="#">Impactful Interventions/Autism</a>	November 3 12:00pm – 3:00pm	Rocketship 2001 Gateway Place, Ste. 230E San Jose, CA

For any questions about upcoming professional learning offerings, contact Tara Stout  
[tstout@edcoe.org](mailto:tstout@edcoe.org) | 530.295.2462

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10/6/2016



**California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress Update**

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Special Education Local Plan Area  
Directors Meeting  
October 6, 2016

Don Killmer, Administrator and Terry deBoer, Consultant  
Assessment Development and Administration Division



**TOM TORLAKSON**  
State Superintendent of Public Instruction

1



**Presentation Purpose**

- Update on 2016-17 accessibility supports
- Update on the timeline for the California Next Generation Science Assessments
- Share information on the development of the California Alternate Assessment for Science
- Share information of the new “LEA notification” requirement

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## Accessibility Supports: New Additions for 2016–17



- Non embedded designated support:  
*Simplified test directions*
- Non embedded accommodation:  
*100s Number Table starting in grade 4*

## Integrating New Supports into CAASPP System



- Revised student setting user interface in Test Operations Management System (TOMS)
  - Applicable tests shown for each accessibility resource
- Individual Student Assessment Accessibility Profile (ISAAP) Tool
- Reorganized Unlisted Resources online request form for easier completion

10/6/2016

# Changes to the Unlisted Resources Online Request Form



- New response options and comment boxes will allow CDE to ask for specific information about the requested support
- CDE responses will indicate if the support is already available on Matrix One

# Accessibility Resources



## • CDE Student Accessibility Supports Web page:

- Updated 2016-17 Matrix One
    - o Hyperlinked to short demo videos of the embedded Universal Tools, Designated Supports, and Accommodations
- New** Student Accessibility Graphic
- Smarter Balanced Resources

### 2016-17 California Student Assessment Accessibility for Mathematics

Universal Tools		Designated Supports	
<b>EMBEDDED</b> Calculator (grades 5-8, 11) Graphing calculator Handwritten responses Handwritten responses Handwritten responses	<b>NON-EMBEDDED</b> Calculator (grades 5-8, 11) Graphing calculator Handwritten responses Handwritten responses Handwritten responses	<b>EMBEDDED</b> Calculator (grades 5-8, 11) Graphing calculator Handwritten responses Handwritten responses Handwritten responses	<b>NON-EMBEDDED</b> Calculator (grades 5-8, 11) Graphing calculator Handwritten responses Handwritten responses Handwritten responses

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/ca/accesssupport.asp>

## Accessibility Resources (cont.)



- CAASPP.org Web portal Accessibility Web page:

- Training videos
  - Student Test Settings
  - Using the ISSAP Tool
- Universal tools, Designated supports, Accommodations short demo videos
- Manuals and Quick Start Guides

<http://www.caaspp.org/>

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## Test Delivery Enhancements: Expandable Items



Allows students to expand the test question just like the feature to expand a passage

Questions: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 896, 897, 898, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 935, 936, 937, 938, 939, 940, 941, 942, 943, 944, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 951, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 981, 982, 983, 984, 985, 986, 987, 988, 989, 990, 991, 992, 993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000

Grades 2-3 ELPAC Practice Test (5 out of 11) QUEST, QUEST (S010), QUEST, QUEST, SESSION

Back Next Save Print

Notes Zero Out Zoom In

Read about how to make a paper snowflake. Then answer the questions.



It is easy and fun to make a paper snowflake. Let's learn how.

Here is what you need:

- white paper
- a circle plate
- a pencil
- scissors

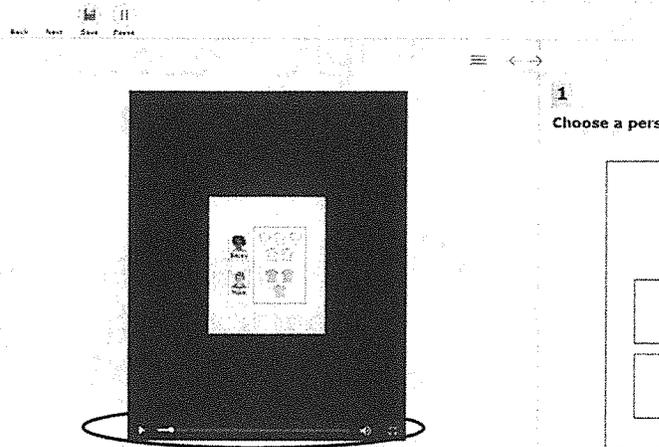
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# Test Delivery Enhancements: Video Playback Controls



Added common video playback functionality such as scrubber, mute/unmute, and full screen



# Test Delivery Enhancements: Enhanced Contrast



Change the contrast on the menu button so that it is more visible to low vision students

## Normal Contrast

Which detail from the text best supports the idea that the narrator is feeling discouraged?

- The narrator says that Libby is not understanding the training.
- The narrator says that Libby leaps on other dog owners during class.
- The narrator is disappointed about missing a trip to the water park with a friend.
- The narrator hears Libby howl and whine when she sees the other dogs in class.

2

## Enhanced Contrast

Which detail from the text best supports the idea that the narrator is feeling discouraged?

- The narrator says that Libby is not understanding the training.
- The narrator says that Libby leaps on other dog owners during class.
- The narrator is disappointed about missing a trip to the water park with a friend.
- The narrator hears Libby howl and whine when she sees the other dogs in class.

2

## Test Delivery Enhancements: Larger Zoom Levels



Adding  
5X, 10X,  
15X, and  
20X zoom

→ [icon] [icon] [icon] [icon]

### Sample Passage

This is the passage content

1

Which statement **best** summarizes the central idea of the text?

A Ansel Adams volunteered






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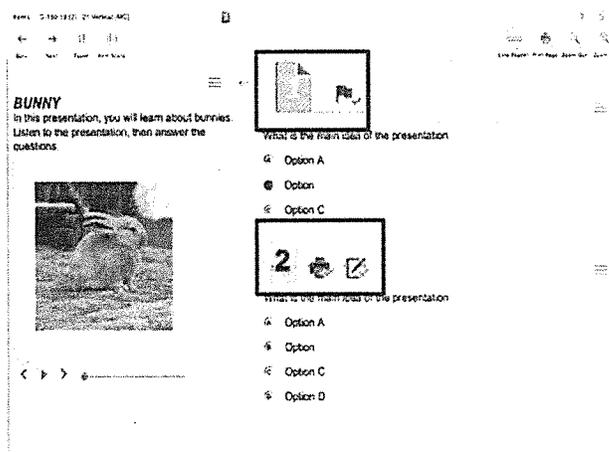
11

## Test Delivery Enhancements: Item Badges



Status indicators for items:

- Items marked for review
- Item has been printed
- Item has notes



The screenshot shows a presentation slide about bunnies. Two question items are highlighted with boxes. The first item has a '1' badge and a review icon. The second item has a '2' badge, a print icon, and a notes icon. The question text for both items is: 'What is the main idea of the presentation?' with options: Option A, Option B, Option C, and Option D.

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## CA NGSS Assessment Implementation Timeline

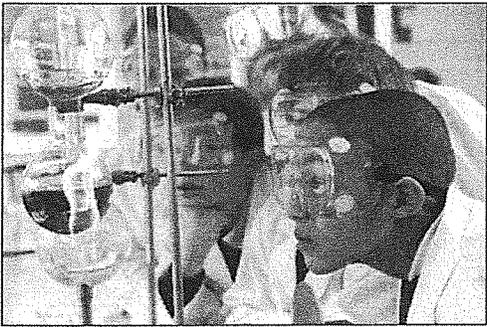


Year	California Science Test (CAST)	Available Testing Window	California Alternate Assessment for Science	Available Testing Window
2016-17	Pilot test	March 20, 2017 to the LEA's last day of instruction	Pilot test	March 20, 2017 to the LEA's last day of instruction
2017-18	Field test	TBD	Pilot test	TBD
2018-19	Operational test	*Second Tuesday in January to the LEA's last day of instruction	Field test	TBD
2019-20	Operational test	*Second Tuesday in January to the LEA's last day of instruction	Operational test	*Second Tuesday in January to the LEA's last day of instruction

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## 2017 CAST Pilot Test Components





- Items
- Student survey
- Accessibility supports
- Teacher survey

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## CAST Pilot Test



- Purpose
- Each form will have 10-25 discrete items and a performance task.
- Student survey:
  - One survey per student
  - Approximately three to five questions
  - No more than seven minutes to complete
- The pilot will take approximately one hour to complete.

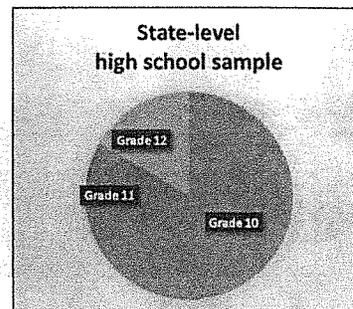
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## 2017 Full Census Pilot Test



- All students enrolled in grades five and eight
- High school sample:
  - All high schools
  - Each high school assigned a single grade
  - All students enrolled in that grade at that school



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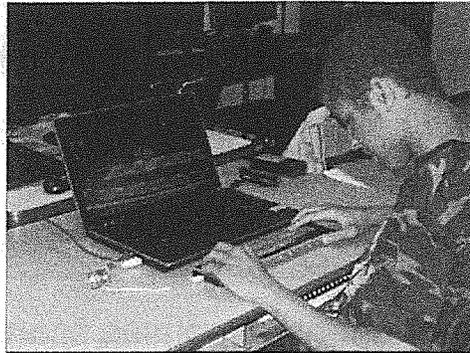
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## Accessibility Supports



- The purpose is to evaluate the functionality of the specific accessibility features.
- Student eligibility will be determined by the accommodations identified as required in the student's individualized education program and/or Section 504 Plan.



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## Teacher Survey



- Collect feedback on the pilot test administration
- One survey per science teacher
- Approximately 10–12 questions
- No more than 15 minutes to complete

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## 2017 CAA for Science Pilot Test Design

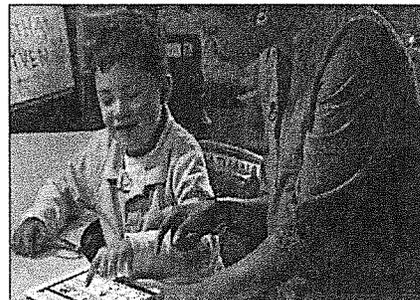


- Assessment based on student performance on a collection of instructionally-embedded performance tasks/assignments
- CAA pilot tests will be state-developed classroom tasks/assignments
- Tasks will be administered by the student's primary teacher
- Student responses scored according to state-defined criteria and protocols

## Purpose of the CAA for Science Pilot



1. Introduce teachers and students to embedded performance tasks.
2. Support teachers in becoming familiar with the Connectors, which are aligned to CA NGSS PEs.
3. Introduce teachers to the process of routinely embedding performance tasks into instructional activities.
4. Provide students exposure to Connector-aligned embedded performance tasks.
5. Introduce teachers to scoring student responses based on externally developed scoring criteria.



# Delivery Mode for the CAA for Science Pilot



- PDFs will be available for download
- Administered to students either by displaying via a computer or by displaying a printed copy
- Student survey will be administered through the California Test Delivery System
- Link to the teacher survey will be provided by the Site Coordinator



# Test Examiner Training



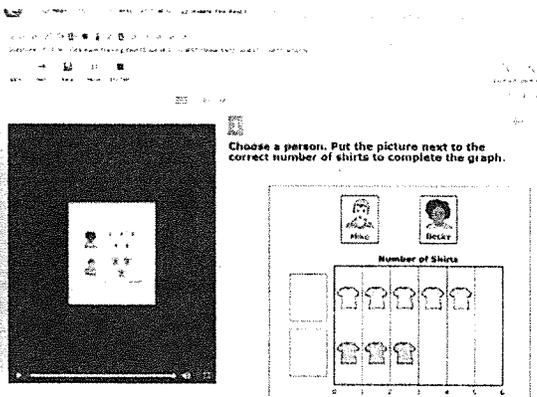
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## Practice and Training Tests



Available Winter 2017:

- Updated CAA Training Tests for English language arts (ELA) and mathematics
- New CAA for Science Training Test
- New CAA Practice Tests for ELA and mathematics



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## New Alternate Assessment Notification Requirement



Process for notifying the CDE that your LEA may administer the CAAs to more than 1%:

- LEA must notify on/before the date specified by the State Superintendent
- LEAs must provide justification

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## Possible Justifications



- SELPA/County Office Program (exclusively serving high needs student populations)
- High concentration of Regional Center care homes or group homes with the LEA
- State special school
- Military compassionate care area
- Others???

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## How to Get Involved in the Development of the California Alternate Assessments



California's move toward the implementation of the CAAs offers California educators many opportunities for involvement, including:

- Item writing
- Item review
- Data review
- Form review

To get involved, complete the application at  
<http://caaspp.org/reviewers.html>



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## For Further Information



**Assessment Development and Administration  
Division Office**  
916-319-0803

**California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress  
Office**  
[caaspp@cde.ca.gov](mailto:caaspp@cde.ca.gov)  
916-445-8765

**Educational Testing Service  
California Technical Assistance Center**  
<http://californiatac.org/index.html>  
800-955-2954

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## December 1, 2016 CASEMIS Report Top 10 – Preparing for CASEMIS

- 1. Review and correct CASEMIS errors and warnings daily.**
  - CASEMIS errors and warnings are found on the SEIS Homepage.
  - Please review and correct all errors and warnings by November 17, 2016.
- 2. Avoid making any changes to the future IEPs after November 17, 2016.**
  - Staff can resume prepping for future IEPs on December 2, 2016.
- 3. Remember that CASEMIS is pulled at the end of day on December 1, 2016.**
  - CDE does not give us an exact time of when the CASEMIS data will be pulled, just that the pull will happen sometime after 5pm.
  - Avoid holding IEP meetings between November 17, 2016 and December 1, 2016. This can cause avoidable errors and possible DINC issues.
- 4. If changes in the future IEP are necessary, pay caution to the blue/red boxes.**
  - SEIS has distinguished CASEMIS data fields on the Future IEP forms by enclosing the data in blue boxes (which will turn into red boxes closer to the CASEMIS pull date). Any changes in the CASEMIS fields in the future IEP may negatively impact CASEMIS reporting by triggering errors, warnings, and/or DINC.
- 5. Check SEIS and/or your e-mail regularly for updates from your assigned SELPA Program Technicians.**
  - Your assigned program technician will send your LEAs assigned District Level User updates during the upcoming weeks to ensure your LEA is prepared for the CASEMIS report.
  - Your assigned program technician will also post updates on the homepage of SEIS regularly.
- 6. Avoid changing “pending” students to “eligible” students.**
  - Students who are currently in “pending” status should remain there until the determination IEP is held and you are ready to affirm/attest the IEP. This will help to avoid errors and warnings
- 7. Watch for DINC issues.**
  - Data Identified Non-Compliance (DINC) components are not considered errors. These components are considered warnings. The codes for the warnings that could be considered DINC are:
    - W909 – LAST\_IEP DATE IS OVER 1 YEAR
      - On the CASEMIS A Page in SEIS (Field A-36), the date entered for the last annual IEP is over 1 year ago. Either the date needs to be changed, an

- already held IEP needs to be affirmed/attested, or an IEP needs to be held before 12/01/16 in order to correct this warning.
- W910 – LAST\_EVAL DATE IS OVER 3 YEARS
    - On the CASEMIS A Page in SEIS (Field A-37), the date entered for the last triennial is over 3 years ago. Either the date needs to be changed, an already held triennial needs to be affirmed/attested, or a triennial needs to be held before 12/01/16 in order to correct this warning.
  - W928 – TRAN\_REG IS EMPTY FOR AGE 16 & OLDER
    - On the CASEMIS A Page in SEIS (Fields a-47 through A-54), either one or more of the transition fields is marked “No” for a student who is age 16 or older. All transition fields should be marked “Yes” (except for Field A-54 which can be marked either “Yes” or “N/A”). In order to correct this error, you can check the current IEP to see if the IEP was marked yes (if so, make sure CASEMIS A reflects the same information as the current IEP) or an IEP would need to be held before 12/01/16 in order to correct the transitions marked “No.”
  - W935 – EVLDLAY CODE IS MISSING
    - On the CASEMIS A Page in SEIS (Field A-30), a delay reason is missing for initial evaluation that was held over the 60 day requirement. If there was an acceptable reason for the evaluation to be held late, please enter the delay reason. Only leave this section blank if the evaluation was truly late with no acceptable reason. This action does not require an IEP be held.

## 8. Check “Shared Searches” in SEIS.

*From the Black Navigation Bar → Searches → Shared Searches*

- CASEMIS Prep → Duplicate Services: This search will show all CASEMIS duplicate services. During the month prior to CASEMIS, these student records will generate an error code (E211).
  - A service code may only be used once per student. All duplicated must either be removed or marked DNR.
- CASEMIS Prep → Services ended in the Previous School Year: This search will show all service codes that ended in the previous year.
  - These services should be verified and deleted before the December report date.
- CASEMIS Prep → No Services Listed: This search will show all students that are being reported to CASEMIS as “eligible” but have no services on their record.
  - There are 2 options:
    - ✓ Student has not been determined eligible yet and is not receiving services so the student record should be marked as “pending.”
    - ✓ Student had been determined eligible and is receiving services so the service page needs to be verified that services are listed and the start date is before 12/02/2016.
- CASEMIS Prep → Service Marked DNR: All services that are marked Do Not Report.
  - Since the December CASEMIS is the reporting time that helps determine your budget, it is important to make sure you are reporting all services that should be reported.
- CASEMIS Prep → Blank SSIDs: Students with no SSID number on their student record, this will cause an error code (E522).

- If there are any student records in this search you will need to find the students SSID and enter it on the CASEMIS A page in SEIS. Only District Level Users and SELPA Level Users can enter SSIDs.
- CASEMIS Prep → Transition Fields: This search will list all students ages 15 or over. This is a DINC issue.
  - Ensure that the Transition Fields (1 through 7) are marked “Yes”. Transition 8 can either be marked “Yes” or “NA”.
- CASEMIS Prep → Projected Exit Dates: A search that lists all students with a future exit date.
  - Please remove the future exit date.

## 9. Watch for the most common errors during CASEMIS reporting.

- The top 5 most common errors are:
  1. E130 – LAST\_IEP IS A FUTURE OR PROJECTED DATE
    - a. CASEMIS A (A-36) is showing a date later than 12/01/15 which is past the report date.
  2. E201 – INVALID PLAN\_TYPE FOR ELIGIBLE STUDENT OR VERIFY EXIT\_DATE/REASON
    - a. Student is listed eligible but has an exit date/reason, please remove exit date/reason or exit student.
  3. E211 – DUPLICATE SERVICE
    - a. More than one of the same service codes is listed on CASEMIS B page. Please mark at least one of the services DNR. There should only be one of each service code listed as active.
  4. E519 – PARINPUT CODE IS IN ERROR
    - a. Parent Input (A-56) is blank. Please mark either “Yes” or “No” (Remember the statewide requirement is 90%, but it should reflect what was marked on the current IEP).
  5. E522 – SSID IS MISSING
    - a. The students SSID is missing (A-11). Please enter the 10-digit number.

## 10. Feel free to contact your assigned SELPA Program Technician for assistance.

- Your designated SELPA Program Technician is always more than happy to help with assisting you while you try to fix the student records listed in the above shared searches. Our contact information is below:

El Dorado County Charter SELPA – Program Technicians	
Name	E-mail
Amanda Ramirez	aramirez@edcoe.org
Kate Hewett	khewett@edcoe.org





## DATA IDENTIFIED NON-COMPLIANCE (DINC)

### Background

The California Department of Education (CDE) Special Education Division (SED) reviews and analyzes student level data submitted to the California Special Education Management Information System (CASEMIS) for compliance with state and federal requirements. Specifically, the data is analyzed in relationship to three compliance indicators from the California State Performance Plan (SPP):

- Indicator 11: One hundred percent of children were evaluated within 60 days of receiving parental consent for initial evaluation.
- Indicator 12: One hundred percent of children referred by Part C prior to age three, who are found eligible for Part B, have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) developed and implemented by their third birthday.
- Indicator 13: One hundred percent of youth aged 16 and above have an IEP that includes the eight required measurable postsecondary goals.

In addition, the CASEMIS data is analyzed for compliance with the state and federal timeframe requirements for:

- Annual IEP meeting (once a year)
- Triennial re-evaluation to determine the student's continued eligibility (every three years)

### Overall Process and Timelines

- **August:** June 30 CASEMIS data is analyzed to determine non-compliance.
- **September to November:** LEAs are notified of non-compliance findings. The CDE forwards a link to the DINC portal and provides a unique password to those LEAs deemed non-compliant. LEAs use the portal to examine noted non-compliance and to record corrections.
- **December to February:** December CASEMIS data is used to verify correction of previous non-compliance and to retest for new non-compliance in the same areas found non-compliant in the June 30 submission. Federal procedures require the CDE to evaluate a subsequent data set to determine if there is continuing non-compliance in the same areas. This is called a Prong II test.
- **March:** LEAs are notified if they have successfully completed a Prong II evaluation. If the LEA does not meet the requirements of Prong II, they must correct any new student findings of non-compliance

and submit a revised CASEMIS Table A by March 31. Specific instructions for this submission will be sent at this time.

- April:** The March 31 Table A submission will be evaluated to verify correction of previous non-compliance and to retest for any new non-compliance in the areas found non-compliant in the December 1 CASEMIS submission. LEAs that do not pass this second Prong II evaluation will be required to conduct a CDE guided root cause analysis and submit a compliance plan for CDE approval. In addition, the LEA will be given an overall compliance determination of “needs assistance.” Two consecutive years of a “needs assistance” determination requires the CDE to take certain actions that will affect the use of IDEA funds (see 34 CFR 300.600 et seq). Specific instructions will be sent when this determination is made.

Corrective actions for each of the noncompliant indicator findings is specified below:

<b>Corrective Actions Table</b>	
<b>CASEMIS Noncompliance Name</b>	<b>Student Non-Compliant Finding Corrective Action</b>
<b>60 Day</b>	If the IEP has not yet been completed, the LEA must convene the IEP team to develop the IEP and update the student data record. If the IEP was late, but has been completed, the LEA must update the student data record.
<b>Part C to B</b>	If the IEP has not yet been completed, the LEA must convene the IEP team to ensure that the student transitioning from early intervention services under Part C has an IEP developed and implemented, and update the student data record. If the IEP was late, but has been completed, the LEA must update the student data record.
<b>IEP</b>	For the student whose annual review was late and has still not been completed, the LEA must convene the IEP team to review and revise the IEP and update the student data record. If the IEP was late, but has been completed, the LEA must update the student data record.
<b>3 Year Evals</b>	For the student whose triennial review was late and has still not been completed, the LEA must convene the IEP team to review and revise the IEP and update the student data record. If the triennial review was late, but has been completed, the LEA must update the student data record.
<b>Tran_Reg1</b>	The LEA must provide evidence that the IEP contains measurable postsecondary goals for education or training, employment and, as needed, independent living. In addition, the LEA must update the student data record.
<b>Tran_Reg2</b>	The LEA must provide evidence that the IEP contains measurable postsecondary goals that are updated annually and must update the student data record.
<b>Tran_Reg3</b>	The LEA must provide evidence that the IEP contains measurable postsecondary goals <b>based on age appropriate transition assessments</b> related to training or education, employment, and where appropriate, independent living. The LEA must also update the student data record.
<b>Tran_Reg4</b>	The LEA must provide evidence that the IEP contains transition services that will reasonably enable the student to complete the annual goals. The LEA must also must update the student data record.
<b>Tran_Reg5</b>	The LEA must provide evidence that the IEP includes a course of study with focus on improving the academic and functional achievements of the student to facilitate movement from school to post school. The LEA must also update the student data record.
<b>Tran_Reg6</b>	The LEA must provide evidence that the current IEP includes annual goal(s) that match transition services identified on the IEP. The LEA must also update the student data record.

<b>Tran_Reg7</b>	The LEA must send a notice of the meeting inviting the student to the IEP meeting to discuss transition services, and must reconvene the IEP team for the purpose of transition planning. The LEA must also update the student data record.
<b>Tran_Reg8</b>	The LEA must send a notice of the meeting inviting a representative of any agency that is likely to be responsible for providing or paying for transition services, and must reconvene the IEP team for the purpose of transition planning. If no other agencies are involved in the payment or provision of transition services, the LEA must submit a statement to that effect. The LEA must also update the student data record.





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# EDgE

## Laying the Groundwork for Unified Systems: California's Blueprint 2.0

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“Predictable” is a common descriptor for many strategic plans for education. These documents typically promote high standards for learning, quality curriculum, and effective instruction. Within the past decade, they have also tended to include calls for closing achievement gaps, promoting diversity and access, using technology to support student learning, and attending to the social and emotional health of students. California’s plan addresses all of these—and adds a singular spin that may prove to be an educational bellwether for the nation.

In 2015 California’s Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson delivered the state’s strategic plan for education: *A Blueprint for Great Schools: Version 2.0*. While framing the California Department of Education’s (CDE) approach to implementing the state’s rigorous academic standards for all students through quality curriculum and instruction and a focus on “the whole child,” the plan offers a vision of a system that is collaborative, unified, and coherent: “The California Way.”

This system “builds on a collaborative team approach to positive educational change and is now attracting attention as an alternative to test-driven reform,” and it “engages students, parents, and communities as part of a collaborative decision-making process around how to fund and implement” improvement efforts.<sup>1</sup>

The California Way echoes a direction that has perhaps been most comprehensively articulated in the report of the California Statewide Task Force on Special Education<sup>2</sup> and that is gaining traction in the state. Collaboration is a word now being applied to the state’s accountability system (see article page 3); to the state’s model of supports for schools, districts, and county offices—a model guided by a process of continuous improvement and collaboration, not sanctions and punishments (see article page 7); to the state’s teacher training programs as they are being reshaped so that all educators can work within the same system and with all students (see article page 11); and to the system of coordinated services and learning supports that constitutes a multitiered system of these supports (MTSS), in which the state has made a significant investment (see article page 9).

The *Blueprint’s* definition of The California Way also reflects critical components of the state’s landmark school funding law, the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), and its underpinnings of “subsidiarity.”

(*Blueprint 2.0* continued on page 6)

1. For the complete blueprint, go to <http://www.cde.ca.gov/eo/in/bp/documents/yr15bp0720.pdf>. This document furthers the plans of *A Blueprint for Great Schools*, released in 2011 and available at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/eo/in/bp/documents/yr11bp0709.pdf>.
2. This task force report is at <http://www.smcoe.org/assets/files/about-smcoe/superintendents-office/statewide-special-education-task-force/Task%20Force%20Report%205.18.15.pdf>.

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## Letter from the State Director

*The goal: one coherent, unified system that effectively and efficiently serves all children.*



During the past year, the Special Education Division—the second largest division in the California Department of Education, with its staff of more than 140 committed professionals—has seen three directors at the helm. As the third, I am both privileged to build on the foundation that my predecessors have laid and excited about the opportunities that lie ahead for students with disabilities, their families, and the professionals who support them.

Expressed appreciation goes to Fred Balcom, who led the division during its landmark alignment of special education accountability with that of general education, a practical as well as an importantly symbolic step toward unifying both “educations.” Balcom retired from the position of director in October 2015.

More appreciation goes to the eminently qualified Chris Drouin who, on the eve of his retirement from a 30-year career in public service, selflessly agreed to serve as acting interim director until a permanent director was selected. Drouin carefully navigated important work with the federal Office of Special Education Programs and furthered within the Special Education Division an atmosphere of innovation, collaborative thinking, and creative progress. This atmosphere is especially important for a number of reasons: The Local Control Funding Formula and its accountability plans are still taking shape. A new special education accountability system is under construction. And the state's rigorous learning standards and aligned assessments are in the middle of a complex unfolding. It's safe to suggest that every part of the state's PreK–12 system of education is in flux. With the many complications of these dramatic changes, the Special Education Division has made remarkable and steady progress during the past year, contributing to a system that improves school outcomes for students with disabilities and aligning efforts across all education-related initiatives and divisions. The goal: one coherent, unified system that effectively and efficiently serves all children.

There's an irony to this goal. The Special Education Division has been uniquely involved in and guided by the work of the California Statewide Task Force on Special Education. The recommendations of this group grew out of a discontent that parents, educators, policymakers, and other stakeholders had with a fragmented system of special education that seemed driven more by labels and funding categories than by a child's educational needs, a system that for too long had failed to support clear progress for too many students with disabilities. However, what has emerged from the work of this group is a general understanding that its recommendations articulate more than just the changes that need to be made to better serve students with disabilities. There is the growing belief that, when a system serves well its most vulnerable children, it is better able to serve all students. There is also the realization that the task force recommendations describe what needs to be accomplished for all children; they are, in fact, general education recommendations, which serve as a whole-system guide for improving outcomes for every student.

I assumed the mantle of state director because I believe in the vision of one coherent system of education that serves all students well. And I assume it with optimism because of the promising landscape that my predecessors have worked hard to shape. I am confident that the talent and commitment that exists within the Special Education Division will advance this one-system vision in a way that will contribute in unprecedented ways to the educational success of all students with disabilities. —Kristin Wright

# Creating a Unified Accountability System: Federal Legislation and Beyond

**T**he recent history of educational legislation in the United States brings to mind the story of “Goldilocks and the Three Bears.” What’s too little federal involvement? What’s too much? What’s just right?

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB, passed in 2001) provided schools with an unprecedented amount of money—and established a commensurately unprecedented and weighty set of obligations. Through NCLB, the federal government required schools to achieve 100-percent student proficiency at grade level on standardized tests by a particular date. This was certainly an admirable target. However, those schools that failed to make “Adequate Yearly Progress” toward this goal faced serious sanctions—sometimes reorganization by an outside entity or even closure. More than two-thirds of states were unable to abide by the law’s requirements and were operating under waivers by the time NCLB was reauthorized—indicative, perhaps, of a vision not well tied to realities.<sup>1</sup>

Yet NCLB left one powerful and important legacy that has radically altered the focus and vocabulary of education in this country: local education agencies (LEAs: school districts, charter schools, and county offices of education) for the first time had to break out—“disaggregate”—test scores for individual subgroups of students: racial and ethnic minorities, low-income students, and students with disabilities who received special education services. For the first time, all students had to take standardized tests, and their scores had to be factored into school and district results. Those

students who traditionally or predictably performed poorly on tests could no longer be easily absented from the process. Their educational achievement mattered, and people had to start paying attention not just to the quality of the education and services provided but to the actual achievement and advancement of all students. The degree to which students were “college and career ready” and “prepared for independent living and adult life” became an integral part of conversations about school improvement and reform.

NCLB is history, replaced in December 2015 by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA); and there is good reason to believe that things are a little closer to “just right.” Gone is the “high-stakes testing” hammer over the heads of LEAs and states. Preserved, however, is NCLB’s underlying philosophy of accountability for all students and standards-based reform, which uses objective metrics to accurately assess student performance. The new law also continues to hold schools and districts answerable for the performance of specific subgroups: students who receive special education services, English language learners, racial minorities, and those in poverty. As such, ESSA continues the commitment to “providing all students—regardless of their background or circumstances—with a high-quality college- and career-ready education. As President Obama has said, this is the civil rights issue of our time.”<sup>2</sup>

California is months away from submitting its ESSA plan to the federal government, but the state has already been in alignment with ESSA in a number

(*Accountability* continued on page 4)

1. Kamenetz, A. (2014). “It’s 2014. All Children Are Supposed To Be Proficient. What Happened?” nprEd: How Learning Happens. <http://www.npr.org/sections/ed/2014/10/11/354931351/it-s-2014-all-children-are-supposed-to-be-proficient-under-federal-law>
2. U.S. Department of Education. (2016). *Implementing the Every Student Succeeds Act to Enhance Equity and Excellence*. Home Room. <http://blog.ed.gov/2016/05/implementing-the-every-student-succeeds-act-to-enhance-equity-and-excellence/>

- ▶ Read more about the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) System, California’s statewide student assessment system, at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/ca/>
- ▶ The National Conference of State Legislatures provides a summary of the Every Student Succeeds Act at [http://www.ncsl.org/documents/educ/ESSA\\_summary\\_NCSL.pdf](http://www.ncsl.org/documents/educ/ESSA_summary_NCSL.pdf)
- ▶ The Parent Center Hub explains how ESSA impacts students with disabilities at <http://www.parentcenterhub.org/repository/essa-reauth/#disability>

**(Accountability** *continued from page 3*)

of important ways. In fact, the U.S.

Department of Education appears to have complimented California by taking a page from the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) playbook as it constructed the federal law. And California has taken the best part of the accountability focus of NCLB and incorporated it into LCFF, which “states that the performance of all student subgroups matter—all races and ethnic subgroups and students with disabilities.

They are actually a part of what student outcomes are,” says David Sapp, deputy policy director and assistant legal counsel at the California State Board of Education. The federal government has wisely provided enough flexibility in ESSA to make it possible for California to establish one more level of coherence and alignment in its system of educational accountability.

### **The Nexus of ESSA and California Reform**

In 2013, Governor Brown proposed LCFF, his groundbreaking path to school reform. Through this new formula, the state gave back to LEAs an unprecedented degree of authority and control over the way they could spend their education dollars. In addition to creating a more straightforward financial formula for schools, the law also embodied formulas that were conceptual: Since high-need students cost more to educate, those places with more high-need students (i.e., English language learners, students in poverty, and foster youth) should receive more money. (Money designated for students with disabilities through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act was untouched and currently

follows previous distribution formulas.)

In addition, since the people closest to the students (parents, teachers, local administrators, and community members) know best what their students need, these local stakeholders also know best how to develop and enact plans for spending school dollars to meet those needs; and they should be accountable for the outcomes of those plans.



In a comparable move, ESSA hands back to “State Education Agencies (SEAs), school districts, and Local Education Agencies (LEAs) much broader autonomy in shaping education policy, particularly on issues related to funding, access, data, and accountability.”<sup>3</sup> States and local school systems will be responsible for determining what school success looks like for their students, what schools and LEAs need to track in order to ensure that success, and how the system’s efforts will be evaluated.

The general belief is that “the new federal law appears to mesh well with California’s plans for its accountability program.”<sup>4</sup> The Superintendent’s Advisory Task Force on Accountability and Continuous Improvement wrote, “California now has the opportunity to develop a system of accountability and continuous improvement that aligns with

and extends the provisions outlined in the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) to support a world-class education for every student in the Golden State.”<sup>5</sup>

### **Additional Alignment**

ESSA promises to become an aligned and integrated piece of LCFF.

As LCFF placed a primary focus on students who live in poverty, so also ESSA provides much greater flexibility in how schools can use their federal dollars earmarked for economically disadvantaged students (a fair move, since the federal government provides less than 10 percent of the actual funding for education<sup>6</sup>).

As LCFF has collapsed dozens of categorical programs into a single funding stream, eliminating many prescriptive requirements on how money is spent and ceding more control to local entities, so also has ESSA combined 50 programs into one block grant,

which districts can use largely at their own discretion and with only such general guidelines as “helping students become well-rounded” and “safe and healthy.”<sup>7</sup>

As California is developing a tiered system of interventions and supports for struggling schools and districts through its California Collaborative for Educational Excellence, an important part of LCFF, so also ESSA is promoting two levels of intervention for struggling states and districts: targeted and comprehensive.

As LCFF is moving away from sanctions/punishment-based accountability to a process of continuous improvement, ESSA is allowing for more flexibility in how school improvement is designed and supported.

As California is developing a robust and multifaceted set of rubrics for determining school success and support,

so also the new federal law encourages states to use multiple measures to evaluate student and school progress, “setting their own long-term and short-term goals for improvement, which would require them to collect data on multiple factors for all students and for subgroups of students.”<sup>8</sup>

As LCFF’s Local Control and Accountability Plans<sup>9</sup> are designed to chart growth, so also ESSA is designed to focus on measurements of growth and improvement rather than strict proficiency.

### California’s Response

No wonder California is treating ESSA as another opportunity to create a more unified system. A great deal of alignment is already in place, and there are visions of more, according to Barbara Murchison, ESSA state lead at CDE. “As we develop the plan for the federal government, CDE is bringing together representatives from every division to capitalize on opportunities to build on the work that is already being done,” she says. These division liaisons meet every two weeks “to study the law and explore further opportunities for collaboration, integration, and coherence.” As Murchison sees it, members of this working group are balancing the vision of a “big-picture, coherent, unified system” with the unique needs of their respective constituencies: students with disabilities, English language learners, students growing up in poverty, foster youth, and so on.

In broad strokes, the current effort is “to build a vision, write a plan, meet federal requirements, and then implement the plan. Our goal is to have a plan to the California State Board of Education in January 2017,” says Murchison.

Theresa Costa Johansen, an administrator for the Special Education Division at CDE, believes that “ESSA is a gift” and an opportunity to work together across divisions. “We’re asking each other, ‘Have you thought about this? How are specific student groups being considered and incorporated into the larger plan?’” Through this collaborative approach, students with disabilities and their school achievement are becoming an integral part of the planning process—not an afterthought.

Focusing on systems improvements as well, Johansen reports that she and her colleagues are exploring how they can streamline requirements for districts. “How can we make all of these initiatives and plans line up and match?” is another question they are grappling with. “We never had the opportunity before to work this way. ESSA is giving states more control over how they write their plans—what to include, how to evaluate it, and how to support districts.”

Having worked as a teacher, a school and district administrator, and now a CDE administrator, Johansen knows well the reporting requirements that schools and LEAs face. Ticking them off, she lists what districts have had to deal with in the immediate past: “the Consolidated Application (ConApp),<sup>10</sup> the LCAP, the LEAP [Local Education Agency Plan] and the SPSA [Single Plan for Student Achievement] from NCLB (parts 1 and 2),<sup>11</sup> and the SARC [School Accountability Report Card],<sup>12</sup> and then there’s special education reporting and accountability. All of these different reports have historically operated separately from each other. The department’s mega-priority is to create one coherent system of public

(*Accountability* continued on page 8)

3. Partners for Each and Every Child. (January 2016.) *The Every Student Succeeds Act: Implications for California and Equity*. [http://partnersforeachandeverychild.org/ESSA%20in%20CA%20Webinar%20Backgrounder\\_1.11.16.pdf](http://partnersforeachandeverychild.org/ESSA%20in%20CA%20Webinar%20Backgrounder_1.11.16.pdf)
4. Murphy, P., & Warren, P. (December, 2015). *Good Timing for New Federal Education Law*. Public Policy Institute of California. [http://www.ppic.org/main/blog\\_detail.asp?i=1923](http://www.ppic.org/main/blog_detail.asp?i=1923)
5. *Preparing All Students for College, Life, and Leadership in the Twenty-first Century*, p. 32. (May 2016). <http://cdefoundation.org/staging/wp-content/uploads/Final-ACITF-Report-May-16-2016.pdf>
6. Ed100. Lesson 8.3: *Who Pays: Where California’s Public School Funds Come From*. <http://ed100.org/support/whopays/>
7. Cue. (2016). *Significant Potential State and Federal Funding Available for Technology*. [http://www.cue.org/news/legupdate\\_2\\_16](http://www.cue.org/news/legupdate_2_16)
8. Hiler, T., & Hatalasky, L. (December, 2015). *“How the Every Student Succeeds Act Changes No Child Left Behind.”* Third Way Fresh Thinking. <http://www.thirdway.org/memo/how-the-every-student-succeeds-act-changes-no-child-left-behind>
9. “The LCAP is a three-year plan that describes the goals, actions, services, and expenditures to support positive student outcomes that address state and local priorities.” WestEd. *Developing a Quality Local Control and Accountability Plan: Resource*. <https://lcff.wested.org/developing-a-quality-local-control-and-accountability-plan-resources/>
10. The Consolidated Application is used by the California Department of Education (CDE) to distribute categorical funds from various state and federal programs to county offices, school districts, and direct-funded charter schools.
11. These two plans were rolled into a Single Plan for Student Achievement. See <http://www.cde.ca.gov/nclb/sr/le/singleplan.asp>
12. For more about the SARC, see <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/sa/>

(*Blueprint 2.0* continued from page 1)

## Subsidiarity

Succinctly phrased, subsidiarity occurs when decisions are made “at the lowest level possible and the highest level necessary.”<sup>3</sup> Within the context of education in California, Governor Brown described the principle in the following terms: “Higher or more remote levels of government, like the state, should render assistance to local school districts, but always respect their primary jurisdiction and the dignity and freedom of teachers and students.”<sup>4</sup>

In no way does subsidiarity grant an abdication of responsibility on the part of those in authority or power or a license to say, in effect, “Here, you take over.” Linda Darling-Hammond and David Plank write, “Reciprocity and subsidiarity should guide state-local relationships. Each level of the system should be held responsible for the contributions it must make to support learning for every child. The state is responsible for providing adequate and equitable resources, while

3. Clark, M. (2012). *Subsidiarity Is a Two-Sided Coin*. <http://catholicmoraltheology.com/subsidiarity-is-a-two-sided-coin/>
4. Brown, J. (2013). *State of the State Address*. <https://www.gov.ca.gov/news.php?id=17906>
5. Darling-Hammond, L., & Plank, D. L. (2015). *Supporting Continuous Improvement in California's Education System*. PACE; Stanford Center for Opportunity Policy in Education. <http://edpolicyinca.org/sites/default/files/PACE%20Scope%20CCEE%20January%202015.pdf>
6. *Two Years of California's Local Control Funding Formula: Time to Reaffirm the Grand Vision*. PACE Policy Brief. December 2015. <http://edpolicyinca.org/publications/two-years-californias-local-control-funding-formula-time-reaffirm-grand-vision>

## What Is Subsidiarity?

Developed within Catholic moral theology and social justice teachings, “subsidiarity” is an organizing principle that emerged from the complexities of modern life and the struggle to balance the dignity and good of the individual with the power of large systems. Oftentimes, “individuals and groups . . . are unable to accomplish something on their own.” Subsidiarity comes into play when they are “aided by a higher or broader authority,” which then, to the fullest extent possible, allows those being helped “to decide how to allocate” that assistance.<sup>1</sup>

1. McKenna, K. E. (2013). *Catholic Social Teaching* (pp. 32–33). South Bend, IN: Ave Maria Press.

local districts must allocate resources intelligently to meet students’ needs.”<sup>5</sup> And as the LCFF “encourages decision-making at the lowest appropriate level,” school districts will have to discern carefully which decisions are best made at their level and “which more appropriately are delegated,”<sup>6</sup> either to individual schools themselves or back to the state.

Much of the LCFF is still evolving. The final rubrics for evaluating school and district progress are in development, the template for local plans is a work in progress, and the system of assistance and supports for districts is in its infancy. What is clear is that, for all of this to work as envisioned, collaboration is essential.

### Mission Statement and Principles

The first part of the mission statement of the *Blueprint* charges CDE with providing “a world-class education for all students, from early childhood to adulthood.” The statement becomes visionary when it also calls on the department to serve “our state by innovating and collaborating with educators, schools, parents, and community partners. Together, as a team, we prepare students to live, work, and thrive in a multicultural, multilingual, and highly connected world.”

Recognizing that the *Blueprint* asks educators and stakeholders to change in new and perhaps uncomfortable ways, the authors of the plan looked for the most robust and proven “drivers”—those factors that, when applied, encourage and enable people to build “the capacity of California educators and the systems that support them” to become more effective and collaborative.

The *Blueprint* offers four such drivers: 1) investing in and building educator professional capital; 2) emphasizing collaborative efforts based on shared aspirations and expectations; 3) supporting effective pedagogy; and 4) developing systemic solutions to create a coherent and positive education system.

The *Blueprint* then lists nine principles to serve as a “filter or litmus test for future policies and programs” and to guide educators and policymakers in their efforts to create in California the best possible system of education. These principles emphasize meaningful learning, a focus on the whole student, community engagement, creativity and flexibility, transparency, multiple measures for evaluation, trust and responsibility, reciprocity and subsidiarity, and equality. And they call out collaboration and

(*Blueprint 2.0* continued on page 8)

# California Collaborative for Educational Excellence: Supporting Continuous Improvement

“**A** hero with a cape, parachuting into schools and rescuing systems that are struggling” is not a role any state can play, says Carl Cohn. While the approach California is developing to help schools improve is something less dramatic than superhero magic, it may turn into one of the state’s most innovative and successful reform efforts yet.

Cohn, who is the executive director of the newly created California Collaborative for Educational Excellence (CCEE), is not alone in thinking that the recently outdated federal No Child Left Behind Act wielded an unrealistic stick over states and school districts.<sup>1</sup> Under NCLB, if the designated measures on high-stakes tests weren’t met, the consequences were often dire. “We’re pivoting away from that toward the emerging concepts of improvement science, taking a good hard look at what continuous improvement and capacity building is all about,” says Cohn.

Continuous improvement and capacity building are apt descriptions of the goals of the CCEE, the state agency created in the wake of the Local Control Funding Formula and designed to help school districts figure out how to use their Local Control Accountability Plans (LCAPs) to raise student achievement. Cohn is determined to operate within the

1. Resnick, B. (Dec 16, 2010). “The Mess of No Child Left Behind.” *The Atlantic*.
2. For a list of the eight state priorities, go to <https://lcff.wested.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/required-data-for-8-areas-july-2014-update.pdf>

“organizing principle of subsidiarity—this belief that if we want to rescue all kids, it starts with those closest to where the kids are.” Cohn was for many years superintendent in Long Beach Unified School District, where “our improvement efforts are now owned by the people at that local level. It can’t be about fear of Sacramento or catering to DC. It must be all about coming together in the interest of the community to better serve students.” In his vision for the CCEE,



Cohn is taking that approach “to 1,000 school districts, the charter schools, and the 58 counties across California.”

Recounting a common presumption that “the reason things are so bad is because something is wrong with the locals,” Cohn says, “We’re out to change that dynamic. We’re looking to develop a thought-partner relationship. What we’re giving [school administrators and educators] is the ability to improve on their own—building capacity and improvement efforts so that they’re owned by stakeholders at the local level. This is the formula for success. We want to work with them, not do things to them.”

In general, explains Cohn, the collaborative will be “looking at school systems that are struggling with student performance.” What is “fair game” in this effort, he says, is “any aspect of improvement under the eight state priorities<sup>2</sup> and any and all underperforming subgroups, including special education.

“We’re starting small. The governor and the legislature have given us money for training and a pilot project.” The CCEE chose Palo Verde in Blythe for the first of a number of pilots because, according to Cohn, “here’s a school system where since the mid nineties numerous interventions have been tried” to improve student outcomes—and nothing has been successful. “New eyes are needed.”

Cohn is optimistic about the ability of the CCEE to provide those new eyes. “Even though we are a new state agency, we’re independent of CDE and not in Sacramento.” This independence, Cohn suggests, distances the agency from previous ways of providing support and allows people to consider CCEE from a fresh perspective. “We make it clear that we’re there because of a reciprocal duty to reach all youngsters, wherever we find them. And we have a responsibility to reach all places and make sure the new efforts are working,” Cohn says.

In the fall, the California State Board of Education will decide on the final rubrics for the LCAPs. As the LCAP is the focus the CCEE’s training and support, these decisions will launch the collaborative’s work in earnest. “The roll-out of the system and its philosophical

(CCEE continued on page 8)

**(Accountability** continued from page 5)

education that supports the whole child. The direction we're getting from the State Board of Education, CDE leadership, and OSEP is to create a single system with one plan and one reporting mechanism—to make [the reports] all align and synergistically support improved educational outcomes for all students.”

That direction is already being realized. The accountability requirements from the federal Office of Special Education Programs for special education in California are being addressed in a State Systemic Improvement Plan, which has been integrated into LCFF accountability.<sup>13</sup> OSEP approved that alignment in March 2016. For the first time in the history of the state, special education and general education accountability will be one and the same.

What CDE ultimately develops for the accountability system described in its ESSA plan will be “an excerpt of our larger LCFF plan,” says Murchison. The structure of that “larger LCFF plan,” as it has to be informed and shaped by numerous requirements from multiple entities, is showing itself to be a sturdy vehicle for aligning these entities and creating a unified and coherent system of education in the state. The most important question for students with disabilities hangs on the degree to which this vision actually translates into practice

in the field. LCFF has been called a “grand experiment”<sup>14</sup> of faith in local school boards, superintendents, principals, teachers, and parents to assume new roles and work creatively, intelligently, and collaboratively for the good of children; and it relies on the patience and will of state-level leaders to develop a robust system of supports, encouragements, and guidelines so that local educators are willing and able to do their jobs.

A great deal still has to be put in place at the many levels of California's system of education to ensure that the vision and the plan translate into success in the classroom for every student. When that happens, education in the state will be “just right.” ◀

**(CCEE** continued from page 7)

approach to improvement will be seen in all parts of the state.”

Cohn is not alone in being excited about the challenge. David Sapp, deputy policy director and assistant legal counsel for the California State Board of Education (SBE), is also optimistic about the potential of the CCEE to provide “targeted and tailored” technical assistance (TA). The SBE is working to design the LCAP so that it supports this process of continuous improvement that is central to the CCEE's approach. “The more LCAP data provides a clear look at the school progress of every group of students and identifies which isn't meeting performance expectations,” explains Sapp, the better CCEE can “focus on the particular reason that a county office, district, or charter needs assistance.”

As the LCAPs are being used as a vehicle for creating a single system of accountability, Sapp also sees the potential for creating a single TA system for all K–12 educational interests, with the

CCEE being an important centerpiece; in effect, “building a TA structure for LEAs to be integrated into a single source of support.”

There is nothing boilerplate about the CCEE's approach, and “we don't underestimate the difficulty of these kinds of changes,” says Cohn. While the vision is as unprecedented as the single accountability system, both are starting to happen. ◀

**(Blueprint 2.0,** continued from page 6)

coherence: “Collaboration and coherence at the state level, across districts and LEAs, within schools, and between early childhood, preK–12, and higher education, as well with the diverse state and private agencies and departments serving children and families [see article page 16], should enable California's educational system to operate more effectively to meet the state's educational needs.”<sup>7</sup>

### The North Star

The *Blueprint* has labeled the combination of CDE's mission, drivers, and guiding principles as the state's educational “north star,” orienting and informing all decisions and efforts.

Any blueprint is just that—a paper charting a plan. Actually changing large and complex systems is something else entirely. California is on track to turn its system of education into a flexible, responsive, and continuously improving force. While the actual creation and construction of what is in *A Blueprint for Great Schools, Version 2.0* may be years in the making, the California vision holds great promise. ◀

13. See the spring 2016 insert to *The Special EDge*—“California's State Systemic Improvement Plan: An Overview”—at <http://www.calstat.org/specialEdge.html>

14. Fuller, B., & Tobben, L. (2014). *Local Control Funding Formula in California: How to Monitor Progress and Learn from a Grand Experiment*. Berkeley Law. [https://www.law.berkeley.edu/files/PEEC\\_LCFFinCA\\_HTMP.LFTGE\\_11.5.14.pdf](https://www.law.berkeley.edu/files/PEEC_LCFFinCA_HTMP.LFTGE_11.5.14.pdf)

7. *A Blueprint for Great Schools, Version 2.0* (p. 4). <http://www.cde.ca.gov/eo/in/bp/documents/yr15bp0720.pdf>

THE  
CALIFORNIA  
ADVISORY  
COMMISSION  
ON  
SPECIAL  
EDUCATION

# 2015-2016



## OVERVIEW



During 2015–2016, the California Advisory Commission on Special Education (ACSE) worked to support efforts that create coherence and unity in California’s K–12 education system and that align with the recommendations of the Statewide Task Force on Special Education. The singular focus of the commission is on strengthening this system to improve school outcomes for children with disabilities. As the system recently has come several steps closer to becoming truly unified, we are cautiously thrilled with the trajectory.

The ACSE used the following strategic priorities to guide its efforts: coherently conceived and coordinated systems, the involvement of families in the educational life of their children,

effective assessment for all, and successful transition to adult living.

The State Board of Education (SBE) approved, on March 9, 2016, a proposal from the California Department of Education (CDE), Special Education Division, to begin aligning special education accountability with the master accountability plan for general education. The ACSE had voiced unanimous support for this very practical, concrete, and importantly symbolic move to make special education part of general education and ultimately toward creating a unified system that is aligned, efficient, and effective for all students.

Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) rubrics require an unprecedented level of parent participation and involvement.

This includes parents of children with disabilities. The ACSE has committed itself to exploring ways that these parents can become “general education parents first” and an integral part of the larger system. The commission began in 2016 a search for resources and supports so that all parents can be informed and effective in their efforts to participate in the local education plans that are critical to preparing their children for the future.

The ACSE also focused on student assessments, which provide another vehicle for unifying systems. Most students with disabilities will take the general education assessment, California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP), which is built on California’s rigorous content standards. What is taught is what will be tested. The ACSE also argued for the importance of including the one percent of students with significant cognitive disabilities in quality standards and testing. These students will take the California Alternate Assessment, which the ACSE insisted should be directly based on students’ curriculum and instruction—an important right for all students and reflective of an integrated and aligned system. In addition, the ACSE stressed the importance of ensuring that students with significant cognitive disabilities are taught to standards based on those taught to their peers.

Given the many—and dramatic—changes that teachers face in adopting the relatively new state academic standards and assessments, the ACSE has stressed the critical importance of quality supports and resources for teachers to make it possible for them to administer tests effectively.

Part of the current sea change toward a unified system is reflected in how, for the first time in our experience, special education is included at the inception of important initiatives. The Superintendent’s Task Force on Accountability is just one example of how special education is no longer an afterthought and is now being given “a seat at the table” of efforts to improve education for all children.

One of the ACSE’s most concrete accomplishments was its creation of a Disability Equity Rubric (see pages iv and v). Designed to advise and guide the Governor, SBE, legislators, policymakers, and other stakeholders, the ACSE rubric offers a template of considerations for making program, policy, and legislative decisions that affect students with disabilities. These students are among the most vulnerable populations;

they are the first to feel the effects of less-than-adequate systems and instruction. What is clear from research and reflected in these rubrics is that any decision that creates a more effective system of education for students with disabilities ultimately serves to create a stronger and more effective system for all students.

As the system of K–12 education in the state becomes more unified, the system’s increased efficiencies and effectiveness, coordination and coherence, alignment and alliances will ensure that students are prepared to transition out of high school into the worlds of college, career, and independent living. This is an exciting time to be part of efforts to merge special education into the larger general education system—a place where it squarely belongs and where the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) originally intended it to be. We have been privileged to be those commissioners who provided information, council, and advice toward realizing that vision.

## One System

The ACSE supports legislation and initiatives that ensure a system of education that is built on a framework of coordinated, tiered academic and behavioral programs, supports, and interventions and that is supportive of the strengths and needs of local communities. During its 2015–2016 meeting year, the ACSE listened to numerous speakers who represent the growing commitment across the state to unifying educational systems. This vision of one, coherent system of education is relatively new, and the fact that so many educational leaders and stakeholders are dedicating

their efforts to make the vision a reality has refined the ACSE’s focus and sharpened its enthusiasm for the work that is yet to be done.

## State Systemic Improvement Plan

The ACSE was pleased to be the first formal organization to learn of the Special Education Division’s (SED) plans to tie special education reporting and accountability requirements, as defined by the federal government, to the state’s Local Control and Accountability Plans of general education—an unprecedented advancement toward a single, coherent, and unified system. The federal Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) monitors how states use the money they receive from IDEA, along with the benefits student receive from that use. In this capacity, OSEP gave states a great deal of leeway to define their plans—State Systemic Improvement Plans (SSIP)—and

## Additional ACSE Priorities

- Adequate Funding
- Data Collection and Accountability
- Assistive Technology and Accessibility
- Teacher Preparation and Professional Learning
- Identification and Early Intervention
- Addressing Disproportionality

the SED took advantage of the opportunity to coordinate and unify efforts.

### State Board of Education

As the state struggles to interpret how exactly to create one coherent system out of very complex and disparate structures, meetings with the SBE have provided a glimpse of the possibilities. The commission has been encouraged by the unparalleled inclusion of and interest in special education issues by the members of the SBE, who are intentional in their efforts to make special education an inherent part of general education. The SBE liaison to the ACSE, Niki Sandoval, expressed a desire to see “one, coherent system that supports each child as a general education student first. Every student in California deserves an inclusive learning environment that fosters his inherent abilities and strengths. We have a responsibility to make this happen.”

The commission continues to explore with great interest the fact that 70 percent of students with disabilities also qualify for educational supports from other categorical sources—Title 1 and English language learner funds, for example—contributing to the understanding that no student holds a static, singular label and that every student would benefit from a uniquely devised and coordinated set of resources and supports that are an intrinsic part of the larger, general education system. The ACSE is eager to see how plans to serve multifunded students take shape across the divisions of CDE.

### Blueprint 2.0

The state’s strategic plan for education, *A Blueprint for Great Schools: Version 2.0*, also expresses a vision of a unified system. The plan focuses on success for all students, including students with disabilities. In a statement to the commission, the deputy superintendent for the District, School, and Innovation Branch of CDE said, “We can’t be successful in our local control plans if we can’t figure out how to help kids with disabilities be successful.” The ACSE endorses this plan and applauds its seamless treatment of students with disabilities as members of the general education community.

### Every Student Succeeds Act

With the reauthorization of the federal law governing general education, now the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the ACSE saw the SED take advantage of another opportunity to make California’s system of education more

unified. While the division clearly acknowledges the funding complications, the need “to keep clear identity of IDEA money,” and the attitudes and structures that reinforce a “you have your IDEA money and you work on your kids” approach, the ACSE was pleased and encouraged that the SED is working intently on ways to address cross-program student need, in spite of past prohibitions and cultures of segmentation. With 70 percent of students with disabilities also belonging to one of the three specific subgroups targeted by the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) for additional school monies—students who live in poverty, students who are English language learners, and students who live in foster care—the division is working across CDE to enhance the policy and program conversations about these three groups to include children with disabilities. The goal, as ACSE sees it, should be to make

multifunded services the norm in the system and not an anomaly.

### Teacher Credentialing

In a presentation about teacher preparation, the ACSE learned about the work of the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing to contribute to a unified system by preparing teachers to serve all students through educator preparation and professional

learning. The ACSE heard and supports this organization’s clear commitment to unified systems: “All adults on a school campus are responsible for student learning. All students have a right to participate and learn together. All students are welcomed and valued in the general education classroom. And all teachers will be prepared through a ‘common trunk’ [of knowledge and skills], using evidence-based practices.”

### Inclusion Collaborative

The ACSE sees the CDE-funded Inclusion Collaborative at the Santa Clara County Office of Education as an important initiative for creating a statewide culture of inclusion and contributing to the creation of a unified system. The ACSE especially appreciated the collaborative’s focus, which ironically “is not inclusion, rather student success,” according to one of the program’s directors. Building trust, providing what’s best for the child, focusing on relationships, putting in place a solid foundational system, being proactive rather than reactive—all of these principles guide the collaborative and make it a powerful force for change, improvement, and coherence in California’s schools.



## Family Engagement

The ACSE supports legislation and initiatives that strengthen collaboration between schools and families to ensure active and meaningful parent and family engagement.

### Parents and Accountability Plans

The ACSE has played an important role in bringing the voice of students, parents, practitioners, and stakeholders together in this new era of local control. With its long history of attending carefully to the voice of parents and the importance of their contributions to their children's education, the ACSE is pleased that parent involvement is now one of the central tenets of LCFF. Local Education Agencies (LEAs: charter schools, county offices of education, and school districts) are responsible for the school success of students with disabilities and must plan for that success in their LCAPs.

The commission sees a conundrum in this proposed involvement. While parents of students with disabilities are included and ostensibly welcome to this process, these parents often do not

see themselves or their children as belonging in general education first. In addition, many are often not familiar with the general education initiatives that could benefit their children. And while some LEAs may not have an infrastructure in place or a culture that invites or welcomes authentic participation and partnerships, the responsibility for developing this system now resides

at that local level. As such, the ACSE assumed a new commitment to supporting parents of students with disabilities in their involvement in schools and the LCAP process. The commission began and will continue to study what it means to include children with disabilities within general education and will continue its effort to inform parents about what the LCAP is, how it influences the education of their children, why it is important for them to get



involved in LCAP processes, and what those involvement opportunities are.

### Parent Centers

In its commitment to parents, the ACSE has been a staunch supporter of parent training and information centers, family resource centers, and other organizations that provide support, counsel, resources, and direction to parents of children with disabilities. The ACSE sees these organizations as ideal sources of training for parents to become effective contributors to LCAPs and other local initiatives.

### Assessments and Accountability

The ACSE supports legislation and initiatives that ensure that assessments are aligned to instruction, with the appropriate accommodations in place to allow students to fully and accurately demonstrate what they know and can do.

### California Curriculum Framework

As California aligns its rigorous state academic standards to its curriculum and assessments for all students, the ACSE has closely

followed the integration of the English language arts and the English language development frameworks, another unprecedented educational breakthrough in its coherence. The framework sharpens the state's focus on how to make all students successful through aligned curriculum and instruction. The ACSE recognizes this effort as a vital step toward school success for students with disabilities—and an important step in unifying systems.

### California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP)

The ACSE received several updates on the progress of the CAASPP and appreciates the intricacies of introducing this complex process to the thousands of schools in the state. The ACSE has expressed numerous times the importance of training teachers on how to administer these tests and of providing them with ongoing sup-

## ACSE Disability Equity Rubric

The purpose of this rubric is to provide policy makers a tool to help ensure that future legislation and policies consider access for the full range of California learners including students with disabilities.

### 1. Access and Equity

- How will the proposed policy/program/initiative ensure equity, inclusion, and access for the full range of California learners, including students with disabilities
- Are there participation requirements that might exclude specific student populations, including students with disabilities?
  - ◆ Are there provisions/special circumstances that can be put in place to prevent exclusion?

### 2. Dialogue and Discussion

- Are/were appropriate disability stakeholders included in the initial planning and/or development of policy/program/initiative?
- Which stakeholders have been informed and authentically engaged in the development?

### 3. Learning and Technical Assistance

- What supports and resources might allow students with disabilities to access and find success through this proposed policy/program/initiative?
  - ◆ What existing programs/policies that serve students with disabilities might align or serve to support or partner with the proposed policy/program/initiative?
- What considerations have been given to how students with disabilities might be supported through this policy/program/initiative?
- Will training and supports be available for parents, teachers, and administrators to successfully implement the policy/program/initiative?

### 4. Ensuring Accountability and Continuous Improvement

- What data will be collected to measure the success of this policy/program/initiative specific to serving students with disabilities?
  - ◆ Is student data going to be disaggregated by students with disabilities?
- What program requirements have been included that specifically address access for students with disabilities?

port throughout the school year. One challenging feature of this effort involves the online delivery of the assessment. The ACSE is optimistic about this test's potential to more fully and authentically include students with disabilities in the general assessment process, since the majority of them take this test. But the commission is also concerned that online accommodations and modifications may represent a significant stumbling block for those students

and teachers who are less experienced with computers than others. The goal is to provide a fair and accurate test statewide for all students, and numerous factors influence that goal: the alignment of the test with classroom instruction so that

students are tested on what they are taught, the knowledge that teachers have of the test and their experience administering it, and the familiarity on the part of students with the test format. ACSE has confidence in the state's ability to create a robust structure for ensuring that all of these necessary components and supports are in place.

### California Alternate Assessment

The commission is passionate about the importance of providing students with the most significant cognitive disabilities with the same kind of opportunity to show knowledge and mastery and to experience school success that other students have. Ensuring this opportunity is a critical component of a cohesive and unified educational system that promotes the success of all students. As such, the ACSE awaits with anticipation a final California Alternate Assessment and will continue to monitor the progress of this assessment as it is being field tested.

### New Accountability System

During every meeting of the 2015–2016 year, the ACSE received an update on the progress of the state's efforts to create a new educational accountability system. The ACSE

views favorably the proposed use of a multiple-measures approach to constructing this system, which will include a robust capacity to build technical assistance and supports directly into the accountability cycle, allowing LEAs and the state to quickly “course correct” as they learn from their own data. The ultimate goal of the new accountability system is to improve programs and services for all students. One presenter on the topic said, “Our focus is on mak-

ing the connection between instruction and assessment. . . . We've lived through a very sanction-oriented accountability system. That is changing. The goal now is to continuously improve.” The ACSE appreciates the great

care and time the state is giving to this effort to ensure that all components work together in a coherent, aligned way.

### Transition

The ACSE supports legislation and initiatives that ensure that students with disabilities are given the education and supports they need to transition successfully out of high school into the world of college or career and to live independently to the fullest extent possible.

Through this lens of transition, the ACSE followed the developments of the California Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE) initiative as it aligns its efforts with the California Community of Practice on Transition and with WorkAbility. The commission sees the current focus on tightening linkages among CDE, the Department of Rehabilitation, and the Department of Developmental Services as one more important way that educational efforts in the state are becoming more collaborative and coordinated. While “there is a lot to be worked out, and we are just at the beginning” of these efforts, according to a CIE presenter to the ACSE, this initiative represents an important start as the state seeks to better serve students



with significant cognitive disabilities and prepare them for independent living and adult life.

In general, the ACSE is in support of any effort at every level of the educational system that promotes quality learning and instruction to prepare students for success in life and employment after high school.

## Disability Equity Rubric

Perhaps one of the ACSE's most enduring accomplishments during 2015–2016 was the development of its Disability Equity Rubric (see pages iv and v), designed to guide SBE members, legislative staff, and other policymakers in how to develop relevant initiatives and legislation in a way that appropriately considers students with disabilities. It is the ACSE's hope that this rubric continues to be used in the creation and adoption of policies and that it will contribute to a system of education that is responsive and sensitive to the needs of California's diverse student population.

## The GOAL Award

Certainly one of ACSE's most satisfying activities during the year is presenting the GOAL Award. The commission created this award in 2005–2006 through a generous contribution from film producer Brian Grazer, who donated \$100,000 to recognize educational programs in the state that demonstrate exemplary practices for students with disabilities. The GOAL Award—Grazer Outstanding Achievement in Learning—celebrates both the programs that serve California youth with disabilities and the professionals who work with them.

The recipient of the 2016 GOAL Award is Camino Nuevo Charter Academy's Dynamic Blended Inclusion (DBI) program. The school was founded 17 years ago and serves 570 students in a K–8 setting in the MacArthur Park neighborhood of Los Angeles; 97 percent of these students qualify for free or reduced-price meals, and more than 98 percent are Latino. Twelve percent of students qualify for special education services.

### History

Before 2011, the school's special education program educated many of its students with disabilities in self-contained, segregated classes; others were taken out of their general education classes to receive specialized academic

services and instruction. School leaders saw that providing special education services apart from general education deprived students with disabilities of effective access to the core curriculum. Beyond this problem of access, the approach was triggering social-emotional and behavior challenges among the segregated students, who felt stigmatized and marginalized. This realization led to the creation of DBI, an innovative, full-inclusion special education model.

### Principles and Structure

"A moral imperative to serve all kids" guided the school's leaders in creating DBI, along with four fundamental principles. First, school leadership and staff made special education a priority: the DBI model drives the operations of the school—from bell schedules, staff planning schedules, teaching partnerships, and class rosters—and all decisions are made with special education first in mind. Second, the school made a commitment to support the collaborative efforts of general education and special education teachers; co-planning time is scheduled each week for co-teaching teams, and annual release days are budgeted to allow for longer-term planning and data analysis. Third, all adults in the school are responsible for all students. And finally, students' services are

individualized across a spectrum of supports, which are determined by ongoing data analysis.

Within the DBI model, each special education teacher has a caseload of 10 to 12 students and works with the support of a nine-person paraprofessional team. The school treats these paraprofessionals as important contribu-



*ACSE commissioners with GOAL Award recipients from Camino Nuevo Charter Academy*

tors to the DBI model. All staff receive ongoing coaching, professional development, and training so that they can work with all students. The students with individualized education programs (IEPs) are strategically clustered into heterogeneous general education classrooms, and a special educator provides academic supports by co-planning weekly and co-teaching daily with a general educator. Co-planning sessions focus on scaffolding lessons and activities and ensuring that all necessary accommodations and modifications are accounted for as outlined in each student's IEP. This general education-special education

collaboration results in a variety of teaching models—team teaching, co-teaching, and station teaching—all of which make it easier to group students to optimize their access to core content.

The school's original plan was to roll out its new model over the course of five years, beginning in the elementary grades. However, the results from the first months of implementation were so positive that the teachers themselves asked to accelerate the process. In addition to the numerous social and emotional successes that students with disabilities experienced when fully included in general education classrooms, these students most notably realized a 50-point increase on the Academic Performance Index at the end of the first year of implementing DBI.

DBI is a replicable model, and staff from Camino Nuevo regularly participate in districtwide professional development events as well as in state and national conferences to share their work and best practices. They have given consultation support to many schools and other organizations on how best to serve all students, and the school itself serves as a lab site where other professionals can observe and learn. As such, ACSE is proud to have recognized the exemplary work of Camino Nuevo.

## A Look Forward

In the coming year, the ACSE will continue to be actively engaged in all aspects of educational accountability as the state develops a system that accurately assesses what students have learned.

A number of LEAs in the state have begun to create their own successful versions of “one coherent system.” As these efforts grow, the ACSE looks forward to highlighting those models that demonstrate improved outcomes for all students, as well as those that have created systems for not only gathering useful data but contextualizing and translating that data into information that truly informs and guides programmatic and instructional decisions. These kinds of models can be invaluable to other LEAs that are seeking similar paths.

The commission also will continue to work for parents, researching and gathering resources and supporting parent resource centers in this new landscape marked by the operating principle that “all students are general education students first.” The commission is committed to championing any protocol or practice that promotes authentic collaboration within K–12 education and will work to reduce the fragmentation that has historically plagued this system.

For more than a decade, the commission has valued efforts to devise a meaningful Certificate of Completion for students with disabilities who choose a non-diploma track during high school. In this coming year, the ACSE will sharpen its efforts toward making this mark of accomplishment a meaningful tool for students as they enter college, career, or the workforce.

Since the advent of the Local Control Funding Formula in 2013, much has been written about the three subgroups called out in the plan as the locus of extra dollars. What is less well known is that, while the LCFF does not change the way special education dollars flow, LEAs must include students with disabilities in their improvement plans, and LEAs are responsible for the school achievement of these students. It

is worth repeating that 70 percent of our students with disabilities fall into one or more of those subgroups. In the very recent past, siloed funding, siloed programs, and siloed instruction and thinking were the norm. That is changing. The LCFF calls for the educational achievement of all students; California's strategic plan for education, *Blueprint 2.0*, calls for the education of the “whole child.” Students with disabilities are not a group separate or apart from other students in our schools. Many of them are students

who grow up in poverty; many are English language learners; and a disproportionate percentage are students in foster care. The ACSE is committed to working toward an understanding of how to think about students with disabilities within the context of one single system—one system made up of many different types of learners, each with unique strengths and needs, and each being served as a unique individual and as a whole child.

While we are optimistic and hopeful for what is to come, we are also realistic. We know that students with disabilities are one of our most at-risk populations. It is going to take persistent and purposeful coordination and planning to assist our LEAs in meeting the needs of these students. The accountability plan is one important component. The California Alternate Assessment is another key step. Including special education at the outset of policy conversations and as an integral part of all initiatives is a third critical measure. There are probably more pieces to this puzzle than we can know at this stage. But as chair of the ACSE, I have never been so hopeful about California's ability to put together the most important parts. — *Gina Plate*

## Join ACSE Meetings

Guidelines for participating in ACSE meetings and directions for viewing meetings via live Webcast are available at

[www.cde.ca.gov/sp/se/as/acse.asp](http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/se/as/acse.asp)

View archived meetings at

[www.cde.ca.gov/sp/se/as/acsemtgwebcast.asp](http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/se/as/acsemtgwebcast.asp)

## “The California Advisory Commission on Special Education . . .

. . . is an advisory body mandated by federal and state statutes to provide recommendations and advice to the State Board of Education, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the State Legislature, and the Governor in new or continuing areas of research, program development, and evaluation in California special education:

“The State has established and maintains an advisory panel for the purpose of providing policy guidance with respect to special education and related services for children with disabilities in the State.

“Such advisory panel shall consist of members appointed by the Governor, or any other official authorized under State law to make such appointments, be representative of the State population, and be composed of individuals involved in, or concerned with, the education of children with disabilities.”

— *Public Law 108-446; 20 United States Code (USC) 1412(a)(21) A-D Section 612*

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## Commission meeting dates\* and locations: 2016–2017

August 10–11	February 22–23	April 19–20
October 26–27		June 21–22

Location: California Department of Education, 1430 “N” Street, Sacramento, CA

\*Exact dates may change. Please visit the ACSE Web site: [www.cde.ca.gov/sp/sc/as/acse.asp](http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/sc/as/acse.asp)  
or contact the commission's staff liaison for the most current information or to obtain a schedule.  
ACSE meetings can be viewed on live Webcast at [www.cde.ca.gov/sp/sc/as/acsemtgwebcast.asp](http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/sc/as/acsemtgwebcast.asp)

# Multitiered System of Supports: California Creates Its Own

**W**hen the California Department of Education issued a Request for Applications to lead a statewide initiative to address students' academic, behavioral, and social-emotional needs, the Orange County Department of Education (OCDE) was ready.

"We'd been doing this work for at least eight years," says Jami Parsons, manager of student services. Many districts and schools within the county already had implemented a Multitiered System of Supports (MTSS), with its emphasis on inclusion, early intervention, and three tiers of increasingly intensive academic and behavioral supports.

The experience proved valuable this spring when Orange County was awarded a four-year, \$30 million grant to develop a scalable and sustainable MTSS framework for California schools. The project, known as the California Scale-Up MTSS Statewide (SUMS) Initiative, will "address barriers to learning and re-engage disconnected students by creating a culture of collaboration" among disparate and fragmented support systems. The plan envisions a statewide transformation that will "increase equitable access to opportunity, develop the whole child, and close the achievement gap for all students."

Over time, the initiative is expected to lead to positive student outcomes, including increased graduation rates and decreased rates of disciplinary referrals, suspensions, and referrals to special education.

OCDE will have two partners in the

SUMS initiative, the Butte County Office of Education and the SWIFT Center at the University of Kansas.

Butte County is part of the effort because "we needed to make sure we were also addressing the needs of rural counties," says Christine Olmstead, OCDE assistant superintendent for instructional services. "We don't have experience with that." Orange serves more than 500,000 students in 27 densely populated districts. Butte has just 31,000 students in 14 districts, "some of them one-school districts," says Susan Hukkanen, assistant superintendent for educational support services for Butte County.

Hukkanen also saw the Request for Applications and was interested. "But I knew we couldn't do it alone," she says. "I thought that what could strengthen an urban district [proposal] was to partner with a rural district." She approached Olmstead, and the partnership was cemented.

SWIFT, a national technical assistance center, previously worked with five states to scale up MTSS. "There is enough data behind MTSS to suggest that it's a better way to organize schools and teach kids," says Director Wayne Sailor. The center—whose name is an acronym for "Schoolwide Integrated Framework for Transformation"—has developed a framework that helps schools build their capacity to provide academic and behavioral support to all students in inclusive settings. The SWIFT framework will guide the work of the SUMS initiative, with the center providing

trainers and offering professional learning opportunities for California educators. Here's how it will work.

## Structure

The initiative will operate with a "trainer of trainers" infrastructure and four tiers of teams. At the top is the state leadership team (the California Department of Education and the three SUMS partners). They, and a second tier of 11 regional teams, will be trained by SWIFT. The regional teams in turn will work with the county offices of education within each region and provide training with support from SWIFT. The fourth tier involves Local Education Agencies (LEA)—school districts and charter schools. Orange County is developing a Request for Proposals to invite LEAs to apply for subgrants to instruct staff in the principles and practices of MTSS: how they are applied to best support all children; how they address the specific needs of students, staff, and place; and how they incorporate the strengths and resources of each school and district.

Butte County's role is to identify and respond to what Hukkanen sees as the unique challenges facing rural county offices of education and districts, which include limited access to technology, lack of public transportation, limited health care and social services, and the difficulty of recruiting teachers. No schools in that county have fully implemented a true MTSS yet, she says. "There are bits and pieces of it, but nothing comprehensive."

Orange County's Parsons will serve as overall manager of the project. She

(MTSS continued on page 10)

(MTSS continued from page 9)

describes her role as “being a conduit of information, maintaining momentum, supporting the trainers, and focusing on next steps.”

## Content

The SUMS initiative will apply the SWIFT framework of five “domains” that influence the educational life of a child: (1) **Administrative Leadership**, with strong and engaged leaders at school sites and a strong support system for educators (coaching, professional development, etc.); (2) **Multitiered System of Supports**, with inclusive academic and behavior instruction; (3) **Integrated Educational Framework**, with fully integrated organizational structures and a strong and positive school culture; (4) **Family and Community Engagement**, with trusting and authentic family and community partnerships; and (5) **Inclusive Policy Structure and Practice**, with supportive, reciprocal partnerships between schools and LEAs and a clear LEA policy framework. LEAs are expected to show progress in all five domains.

Three principles guide the initiative: implementation science, universal design for learning (UDL), and the whole-child approach. Implementation science, Sailor says, is “the coordination of efforts to install and implement practices for sustainability.” It helps schools “see where they are” on the path to implementing the various aspects of the initiative, adds Olmstead.<sup>1</sup> UDL, a flexible learning environment that accommodates diverse learners, is the “philosophical cornerstone” of the project and “foundational to Tier 1 instruction.” State and regional teams will be trained in UDL principles and in how to provide interventions in Tiers 1 through 3. Tier 1 refers to the core curriculum delivered to all students, including students

with disabilities; Tiers 2 and 3 provide increasingly intensive interventions for students who need additional support.<sup>2</sup> The whole-child approach, which recognizes that each student has unique experiences and abilities, is a part of all SUMS professional learning and technical assistance training. “It makes us stop and think about each child as an individual and produce the teaching tools needed to support them,” says Olmstead.<sup>3</sup>

## Assessment

LEAs will be measured on two assessments developed by SWIFT. The Fidelity Integrity Assessment<sup>4</sup> is “a progress-monitoring tool that is used by schools to self-assess where they are on the framework,” Sailor says. Schools will take this assessment approximately every three months. The Fidelity of Implementation Tool<sup>5</sup> is a rigorous yearly assessment performed by certified outside assessors who score progress on all aspects of the framework. “It’s a way of telling whether the pieces are being put in place and if this is making a difference at the level of outcomes for all students,” Sailor says.

## Broader Context

The SUMS initiative builds on recommendations made in the March 2015 report of the California Statewide Task Force on Special Education, which called for such evidence-based practices as MTSS and UDL to be employed throughout the state. Funding for the initiative was appropriated in direct response to that report.

As an initiative that encompasses the whole state, SUMS also answers the broader national effort for reform called for by Howard Adelman and Linda Taylor, directors of the School Mental Health Project at UCLA. “Leaders for education reform at all levels are confronted with the need to foster

effective scale-up of promising reforms,” they write. “This encompasses a major thrust to develop demonstrations and models for replicating new approaches to schooling on a large scale.”<sup>6</sup>

## Challenges

The project is not without challenges. SUMS leaders see time and sustainability as major concerns. OCDE originally received \$10 million from the state. “With the original grant we would have worked with 250 schools,” Olmstead says. Now, with \$30 million, “it’s 10,000 schools” in the same four-year period.

Many innovative practices “are installed, and four or five years later they are gone,” Sailor notes. “If we are good at implementation science, we will start a process for sustainability.” Adds Olmstead, “This is fundamental to the way we teach kids. It can’t be here and gone because of a grant.” ◀

1. For more about implementation science, go to <http://nirn.fpg.unc.edu>
2. For more about UDL, go to <http://www.udlcenter.org>
3. To learn more about the whole-child approach in education, see <http://www.educatethewholechild.org/what-is-it/>
4. The Fidelity Integrity Assessment is at [http://www.swiftschools.org/Common/Cms/Documents/SWIFT\\_FIA\\_v1.1.pdf](http://www.swiftschools.org/Common/Cms/Documents/SWIFT_FIA_v1.1.pdf)
5. The Fidelity of Implementation Tool is at <http://www.swiftschools.org/sites/default/files/SWIFT%20FIT%20Technical%20Adequacy%20Report.pdf>
6. Adelman, H., & Taylor, L. (2008). *Rebuilding for Learning: Addressing Barriers to Learning and Teaching and Re-engaging Students*. New York: Scholastic. (p. 112). <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/rebuild/RebuidlingV11RD28.pdf>

# Preservice in Support of Unified Systems: Re-envisioning Teacher Training

**J**amie Schnablegger knows she wants to be a resource teacher at a low-income school, but when she finishes her five-year program at California State University Long Beach, she won't be limited to teaching students with disabilities. She will graduate with a bachelor's degree and a dual credential in general education and special education.

As California moves toward a single, unified system of education for all students, one that includes students with disabilities, Schnablegger and her cohort at Long Beach are in the vanguard of a major shift in the way prospective teachers are trained and licensed. The shift is occurring on two fronts: on college

and university campuses throughout the state and in Sacramento at the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC).

The goal: All teachers—whether general educators or special educators—will share a “common trunk” of knowledge and skills that will enable them to serve all students in a general education setting to the greatest extent possible.

The driver of this change, says CTC Chair Linda Darling-Hammond, was the release of *One System: Reforming Education to Serve All Students*, the 2015 report of California's Statewide Task Force on Special Education, which addressed the poor academic outcomes of

students with disabilities. “The task force showed that by all indicators—graduation rates, the achievement gap—California was doing poorly in educating students” who receive special education services, Darling-Hammond says.

According to the task force, the state “must break down the long-standing divisions that exist between teachers within general education and special education” if it is to create that one system of education. A significant barrier: “short-sighted teacher preparation and licensing practices” that restrict the ability of special educators to serve students in general education settings and that offer limited special education training for general educators.



## New Expectations

In December 2015 the CTC issued new standards for general education teacher preparation and has approved six Teaching Performance Expectations (TPEs; see the center column on p. 12) that require beginning teachers to “create inclusive learning environments . . . and use their understanding of all students' developmental levels to provide

effective instruction and assessment for all students, including students with disabilities, in the general education classroom,” according to the preliminary standards document issued by CTC.

The TPEs comprise the knowledge, skills, and abilities that prospective teachers should acquire in teacher preparation programs in California. These include the ability to incorporate universal design for learning (UDL) principles into their instruction, to work within a Multitiered System of Supports, and to collaborate with other instructors and co-teach. The CTC tasked those programs with producing a transition plan for incorporating the new general education standards by March 2017

and implementing them over a two-year period beginning the following September.

In June the commission approved the TPEs for special education teacher preparation programs as well. All programs, and therefore all beginning special and general education teachers, will share this “common trunk” of knowledge and skills. The general education “branch” of the trunk will continue to be mastery of

the single subject or multiple subject content that they will teach. The CTC is forming a working group of stakeholders to identify what additional knowledge, skills, and abilities should be required for a special education credential. The group is expected to report to the commission in April 2017.

(*Teachers* continued on page 12)

(**Teachers**, continued from page 11)

## Model Preparation Programs

Victoria Graf was a co-author of the TPEs. A professor of Special Education at Loyola Marymount University (LMU) in Los Angeles, she says there was “no push back from general educators. People get it.” Graf says, “In conversations over a couple of years” at LMU, “we determined that we as a school of education should be promoting inclusive education.” All departments in the School of Education “have been focused on redesign,” says Candace Poindexter, chair of the department of elementary and secondary education at LMU. “What do we need to do to educate our students to be the best teachers of all students?” In response, all faculty and staff received training in UDL, a framework that offers multiple paths for students to access information and display knowledge. This fall, Graf says, all course syllabi incorporate UDL. “And,” she says, “we’re starting [to incorporate] MTSS” (see article page 9).

LMU is one of six California teacher preparation programs<sup>1</sup> that have received a four-year grant from the Collaborative for Effective Educator Development Accountability and Reform (CEEDAR), a national technical

1. The six schools receiving CEEDAR funds are Brandman University, California State University (CSU) Fresno, CSU Long Beach, CSU Los Angeles, Loyola Marymount University, and San Francisco State University. For more about CEEDAR, go to <http://ceedar.education.ufl.edu>

assistance center, to improve instruction for students with disabilities in inclusive settings. This work aligns with the recommendations of the special education

task force.

Graf describes the effort as a “coherent and coordinated initiative.” CEEDAR brings staff from the six schools together several times a year to share resources, ideas, and syllabi and recently presented a forum on sustainability. “The schools are very collaborative,” she says. “Years ago we used to be in competition. Now we want to stay together, even when the money runs out.”

California State University Long Beach is another CEEDAR school. Marquita Grenot-Schyer, dean of the College of Education, used the grant to bring general and special education faculty together two years ago to develop a curriculum that would combine the standards for both credentials in a single program.

“There was complete collaboration between general ed and special ed,” says Cara Richards-Tutor, professor and director of the resultant five-year Urban Dual-Credential Program. “They all had the belief that teachers should be prepared to teach all students.”

The first cohort of 10 undergraduate students enrolled in the fall of 2015. The four-semester teacher preparation part of the program is also designed with MTSS and UDL as a framework. “MTSS is drilled into us,” says Jamie Schnablegger. Adds classmate Brittany Roberts, “The program has made me look at students individually. It’s not just one lesson and I hope everybody gets it.”

Structured, supervised clinical practice begins in the very first semester, and field experiences are integral to the curriculum

## Highlights: Teaching Performance Expectations

**Engaging and supporting all students in learning.** Teachers apply their knowledge of students’ learning needs and backgrounds to engage them in learning. They use a variety of instructional strategies, resources, and assistive technology, including MTSS and UDL, to support access to the curriculum for a wide range of learners in the general education classroom.

**Creating and maintaining effective environments for student learning.** Teachers promote students’ social-emotional growth, maintain high expectations for learning with appropriate support, and establish clear expectations for classroom behavior.

**Understanding and organizing subject matter for student learning.** Teachers make accommodations and/or modifications to promote student access to the curriculum.

**Planning instruction and designing learning experiences for all students.** Teachers remove barriers and provide access through such strategies as assistive technology, UDL, and MTSS.

**Assessing student learning.** Teachers collect and analyze data from multiple types of assessments (diagnostic, progress-monitoring, formative, summative, etc.). They use assessment data to establish learning goals for students and to plan and differentiate instruction.

**Developing as a professional educator.** Teachers establish professional learning goals; they recognize their own values and biases and work to mitigate any negative impact these may have on teaching.

throughout the program. Simultaneous coursework covers such subjects as equity, inclusion, positive behavior supports, and transition services, along with the academic subjects that are part of the general education curriculum. The program is team-taught by general and special education faculty. Upon graduation, students will receive a general education credential and either a mild-moderate or moderate-severe special education credential.

“The question we are asking ourselves is ‘Can we in one [dual credential] program prepare teachers as well as a single credential program does?’ We will do research—interviews and interactions with students, observation of student teaching. Everyone is giving us feedback—the students, the teachers and principals at the school sites,” says Richards-Tutor. “We will follow students as they get jobs. Do they stay in the job? We have a rare opportunity to answer these kinds of questions.”

### Challenges and Optimism

The shift in teacher preparation standards raises questions beyond the efficacy of a dual credential program (which not all schools will adopt), and some special educators are concerned about their changing role. “Nobody in our program thinks there isn’t a need for special education instruction,” Richards-Tutor says. “The full continuum of services will still be there. We’re trying to prepare all teachers to work with all students so they understand the role of special education supports and can work with students who need help but don’t have special education labels.”

And yet, Graf says, it’s natural that “there’s a little bit of anxiety. This is a change in mindset; we weren’t prepared in a collaborative way.”

### Teacher Shortages

Some of that anxiety was evident at the CTC meeting in June when the TPEs were approved. A number of speakers expressed concern that additional requirements would only exacerbate a serious shortage of teachers, especially in special education where some districts have had to hire provisional teachers. Darling-Hammond acknowledges the severity of the shortage but says that teachers with “deeper knowledge and better skills” are more likely to remain in their jobs. “In the best years only 50 percent of special education teachers come in fully prepared, and those are the ones most likely to leave,” she says. “Underprepared teachers leave at rates two to three times higher than those who are fully prepared, and the situation is more acute in special education.” Graf agrees that retention is the key. “If we could retain the teachers we train, we wouldn’t have a significant shortage,” she says.

Other speakers worried about the continuing role for teachers of students with low-incidence disabilities—such as blindness, deafness, or physical disability—who are less likely to be integrated into a general education classroom. “There has been no discussion about eliminating low incidence credentials,” Darling-Hammond says, but now those teachers also “will get general education training.”

With the implementation of the new approach to general education training a year away and special education standards still being developed, Graf notes that “change is a process, not an event.” But, she says, with California moving toward one system of education for all students, “I’m more optimistic than I’ve been in a number of years.” ◀

(**Barriers** continued from page 15)

more streamlined care for children and families.”

### Progress and Promise

Both Powell and Estes see the current educational climate, characterized by the commitment to develop one system for all children and families, as a perfect environment for advancing the work of *Breaking Barriers*. “Unified systems hold the promise of greater efficiency and effectiveness in addressing these challenges when interventions are less duplicative, more comprehensive, targeted, and readily available when needs arise—and when they are not driven by categorical funding streams or narrow programmatic confines but by a commitment to serving needs in real time for real people,” says Estes. Through *Breaking Barriers*, “community leaders are learning from the best ideas of others and receiving support in the design of collaborative structures for consolidating services.”

“Even though progress is being made,” says Powell, “much work remains to be done. But all counties seem to recognize that, while they are a long way from realizing a fully integrated system, they can get there. Such coordination requires shared governance, shared goals, shared outcomes, and shared means of measurement. But it also requires the creation of new structures and patterns of service that allow for blended funding and mutual accountability. It requires the setting aside of egos and the politics of personal power for the ultimate outcomes we collectively seek: healthy children, families, and communities. No one entity can do it alone. We are interdependent and these are our children, our families, and our communities. And so we must unite.”

Learn more about *Breaking Barriers* at [www.BreakingBarriersCA.org](http://www.BreakingBarriersCA.org) ◀

**(Barriers** *continued from page 16)*

decade. Such behaviors as hyperactivity, impulsivity, and defiance are on the increase and are particularly disruptive to the learning of all students. Internal behaviors, such as anxiety disorders and depression, frequently go unnoticed and, while generally not disturbing to others, are devastating to the education and long-term trajectory of the child.

The growing question is “why are these behaviors becoming so common?” Recent research has focused on the strong connection between stressful experiences and a child’s ability to learn and behave appropriately. Physical, sexual, or emotional abuse; physical or emotional neglect; the mental illness of a parent; divorce; parental incarceration; intimate partner violence; and parental substance abuse all constitute stressful events in the child’s life—and these things are common in the lives of many of our children. When adverse childhood experiences (ACE) prior to the age of 18 begin to accumulate, these stressful events change brain development in ways that disrupt learning, behavior, and lifetime health.<sup>1</sup> So powerful is the influence of stressful events on the brain of the developing child that, according to one national study, 85 percent of all behavior problems in school occur among those students who have at least one ACE. And studies show that 6 out of every 10 California children have experienced at least one ACE.<sup>2</sup>

Unhealthy stress from whatever source, however, when experienced repeatedly, can alter normal response systems in children by saturating their

brain with a chemical bath of stress hormones.<sup>3</sup> When this happens, it is physiologically impossible for the child to learn and to control his or her behavior in the classroom, home, and community. And problems do not go away. Life expectancy among those with six or more ACEs is shortened by 20 years.<sup>4</sup> More than three ACEs is predictive of seven of the ten leading causes of death in adults,



adult mental health disorders such as depression and anxiety, and engagement in such risky behaviors as substance abuse and multiple sex partners. The magnitude of the relationship between adverse childhood experiences and physical and mental health risk is so huge that the Center for Disease Control (CDC) has called childhood maltreatment the greatest health risk of our time, affecting 17 percent of the population.<sup>5</sup>

The benefits of effective early intervention at the first appearance of any developmental delay in a child are widely recognized. And yet, when it comes to issues of emotional health, fewer than one in five children will ever receive the treatment they need, resulting in financial implications that are as significant as the personal and social. The CDC has

estimated that the lifetime cost associated with children who experience any of the ACE categories in a single year is \$585 billion. Another study calculated the cost of preventing a child from following the life course associated with high-risk youth (crime, school drop-out, and drug abuse); taking into account the duplication and overlap that often occurs between school drop-out, drug use, and criminal behavior, the study estimates the lifetime value of saving one high-risk youth to be between \$2.47 million and \$3.35 million (in 2015 dollars).<sup>6</sup> So, in a world where money is the most often-cited barrier to offering a comprehensive, effective, and sustainable community of care for our children and families, Breaking Barriers believes that the way we do things now costs us so much more than it would if we had a system

capable of addressing problems at their source.

### **What the Model Looks Like: No Wrong Door**

Given the magnitude of the challenge of coordinating systems, the Breaking Barriers model holds that regardless of the cause of significant social, emotional, behavioral, and educational needs, it is unrealistic to expect any one system to shoulder the responsibility alone. The initiative is promoting a focus on the collective alignment of local and regional efforts and resources among agencies involved in serving children and their families, with the conviction that this alignment will positively transform the lives of children, families, and communities now and into the future and that from this effort a shared model of

accountability will emerge. “Otherwise, we are only tackling one part of the problem—or worse, we are not tackling it at all as the proverbial can is kicked from place to place,” says Ron Powell, Breaking Barriers Advisory Committee member and former director of Desert/Mountain SELPA.

So what does a model of collective responsibility among agencies look like, and what responsibilities must agencies be willing to share in order to address the magnitude of this problem? “Fortunately,” says Powell, “we are not left on our own to devise models of service system integration that work for all children. Systems integration occurs at the local community level and can be characterized by four types of relationships among agencies: Communication, Coordination, Collaboration and Consolidation (or Integration). The stages of relationship within each of these models are progressive and characterized by increasing levels of integration of authority, resources, services, and clientele at each stage. Service system integration models combine multiple service agencies to create seamless access to services, including, but not limited to, education, social services, child welfare, behavioral health, juvenile justice, public health, primary health care, California Children’s Services, the Regional Centers, and community partners. No matter what door you enter, you are connected to the services you need.”

### The Challenges

“The challenges facing the development of integrated systems depend largely on the context of the local community and the collective will and interest of key stakeholders and policymakers,” says Powell. Participants in the Breaking Barriers Symposium identified other barriers to providing comprehensive services to children. Many had experienced a pervasive

disconnect across both public and private systems of care throughout the state, which results in disjointed care and impaired outcomes for children and families. As children and families are referred from agency to agency or provider to provider for different services, care is decreased, delayed, or decimated. “It results in incomplete care,” says Estes. “Families cannot navigate the convoluted web we have woven for them. Systems repeatedly fail to collectively prioritize prevention and early intervention, resulting in what many describe as a ‘wait to fail’ model.” Another identified challenge revolves around duplicated services, which at times solely follow funding streams. Symposium participants also pointed to the challenges in service provision for incarcerated youth and the few supports available for cultural competence among service providers, within and across agencies.

The symposium solidified the suspicion that the same challenges exist in every county across the state—even those with the most integrated systems to date. Breaking Barriers is working to change this, promoting targeted efforts and technical assistance to implement coordination teams, consolidate services, and address “the systemic challenges that can only be resolved through integrated governance, shared outcomes, shared funding, and shared care,” says Powell. “Those coordination efforts that do exist typically do not have mechanisms in place to resolve interagency confusion or disputes over responsibilities for agencies tackling the same needs simultaneously but separately. What they require to be successful are a shared governance, shared funding structure, and shared accountability, which participants [at the symposium] felt may ultimately resolve many of the ongoing challenges of providing

(Barriers continued on page 13)

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# Unifying All Child-Serving Efforts and Breaking Barriers

With Elizabeth Estes, Attorney; and Ron Powell, Breaking Barriers Advisory Committee Member and Former Director of Desert Mountain SELPA

“I did not plan to start a statewide initiative for aligning California’s resources around families and children,” Elizabeth Estes recalls. But that is what she’s doing, because one morning in 1990 she ran out of a bar in Berkeley desperate to save her life. A man had come in eight hours earlier and had decided to kill people. He succeeded with one young student, shot many others, and kept Estes and 37 fellow hostages captive until a SWAT team managed to break in and end the crisis.

“I remember the relief of realizing I had survived!” Estes says. “But what I didn’t know was that I would have to relive the experience and trauma over and over and over during the next 25 years. There were all the mass shootings that I had to digest over time. But in addition, as I obtained my own treatment and navigated my own recovery, I started to see, hear, and feel the consequences of the disconnect among our agencies that serve children and families. I started to recognize the tragedy of our systemic failure to offer necessary services to those in need when they need it. As a lawyer in the systems that serve children and families, I realized that I’d been in hundreds of meetings over 22 years with families asking for help from the many entities that are designed to serve children’s social, emotional, behavioral, and academic needs—only to hear repeatedly, ‘That’s not what our agency does.’ ‘We don’t have that.’ ‘Try over there.’ And I finally just couldn’t stay silent anymore when we are not collectively serving needs in the way we know we must.

“In 2014 I was compelled to write an article for *The San Francisco Chronicle*—an impassioned plea for agencies to align and comprehensively serve families and children.

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The article hit a responsive chord, and Breaking Barriers was born.”

Estes and more than 33 experts across the state of California have united through this initiative. Giving presentations across the state on the subject of alignment and collective impact, Breaking Barriers most recently held an April 2016 Statewide Symposium with teams from 12 California counties, partnership organizations, service providers, foundations, and consumer advocates to discuss and address the barriers surrounding the disconnected, disjointed, and incomplete system of child social, emotional, and behavioral health and education supports and services. The ultimate goal is to improve outcomes for children and families.

## Why We Must

The need to align services is clear. Estimates of the prevalence of severe, disruptive behaviors among children have doubled in the last

(*Barriers* continued on page 14)

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