

A WORD FROM OUR CHAIR

Patty Metheny, Ed.D.

Welcome to IMPACT! It is truly my pleasure to introduce you to the inaugural edition of the SELPA Administrators of California Association's newsletter. For more than 45 years, the SELPA Administrators of California has been a voice for students with disabilities in California. Through partnerships with local school districts, county offices of education, charter schools, family empowerment centers and many others, SELPAs have ensured every student with a disability in California has the special education services necessary for educational growth and success.

Now, through IMPACT, we are expanding by providing insightful and valuable resources to all who effect the lives of students with disabilities. To be truly impactful, we must work in partnerships that produce results. SELPAs do this day-in and day-out throughout California in multiple ways. In this first issue, we highlight



and provide resources for understanding the work of SELPAs. As importantly, we make available to our partners resources to advance equity, diversity and access, to increase the inclusion of students with disabilities in all typical educational settings, and to partner with parents as well as actively engage in dispute prevention and alternative dispute resolution practices.

Like many of you, I have experienced 'disability' in my personal life as well as professionally. I view it as an opportunity to enhance 'ability.' SELPAs are the educational agencies developing the ability of all to do this work we call special education in California. SELPAs are making it happen for each student every day.

INSIDE THE ISSUE

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- Understand Your LRE Performance Data
- Legislative Sharing Day: May 3, 2023
- Legislative Advocacy and Recent Successes
- NEW! SELPA Professional Learning Opportunities
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- Publications, Videos, and Podcasts
- Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Association Activities



MAKING IT HAPPEN.
EACH STUDENT. EVERY DAY.

PARENTS AS PARTNERS

The Napa County SELPA, its Community Advisory Committee (CAC), and the Napa Valley [ParentsCAN](#) Child Advocacy Network work with an aligned vision to form the support system for parents of children with Special Needs in Napa County. Inclusive programming is their collective goal. Professional development activities, committee work, outreach to families, and networking create the foundation of cohesive parent support in Napa County. These agencies positively and productively coordinate to provide relevant and timely information, access to services, training, and support to all families, keeping relationships at the core of every decision. Coordinated efforts, led by parents of students with special needs, include collaborative presentations, parent/guardian support activities, guest speakers, and interagency communication.

Please check out a video clip of some of the amazing results that came out of their [Inclusion Creativity Challenge](#), presented by Darcy Storms and Amy Barberi, CAC Co-Chairs, as part of their CAC Awards.

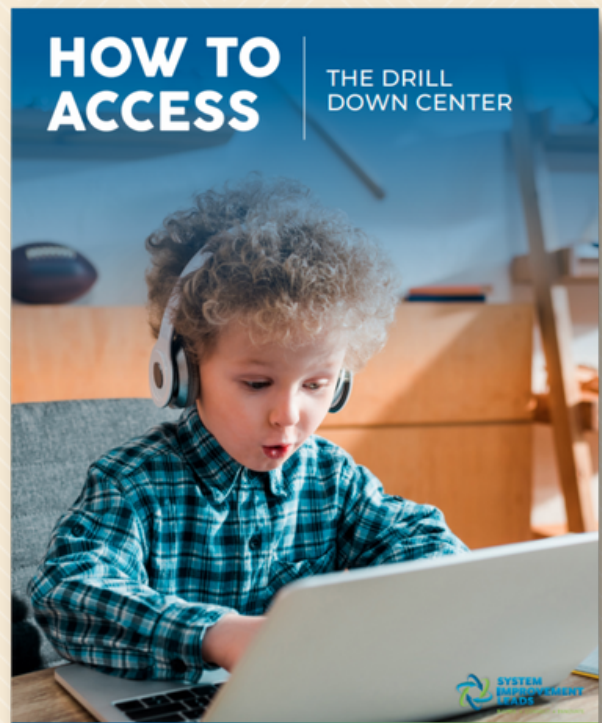


Their kick-off activity for the 2022-2023 school year engaged the Superintendents from each district in Napa County presenting their plans, programs, and vision in serving students with special needs. The CAC followed through with the Superintendents' initiatives by providing essential input for district level planning and sharing monthly resources with each school, highlighting selected topics related to Special Education.

PREDICT L.R.E. PERFORMANCE

Did you know that State Performance Plan Indicator targets for least restrictive environment (LRE) were newly approved by the federal government, and they will require that by the year 2025, 70% of all students with disabilities be educated in the general education classroom 80% or more of the school day? The recent passage of SB 692 (Cortese) on "LCAP Priorities and LRE," also requires that the CDE will, by November 30, 2023, publish data related to federal measures of least restrictive environment, disaggregated by race or ethnicity and LEA, and include this as a feature of the California School Dashboard.

Your SELPA System Improvement Leads (SIL) Team designed a powerful [Improvement Data Center](#) to help LEAs analyze past performance trends and upload current files into a Data Drill Down tool that produces real-time reporting on LRE indicators and all special education performance indicators, and includes guides for use and interpretation with your teams. Learn more from your SELPA administrator or visit the SELPA System Improvement Leads website at: www.systemimprovement.org/resources



LEGISLATIVE SHARING DAY 2023

Each year, Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) Administrators and members of the Coalition for Adequate Funding for Special Education (CAFSE) join together with Community Advisory Committee (CAC) members, parents, families, students, and other interested individuals from across the state as a community of advocates to speak with legislators about proposed bills that may impact education in California.



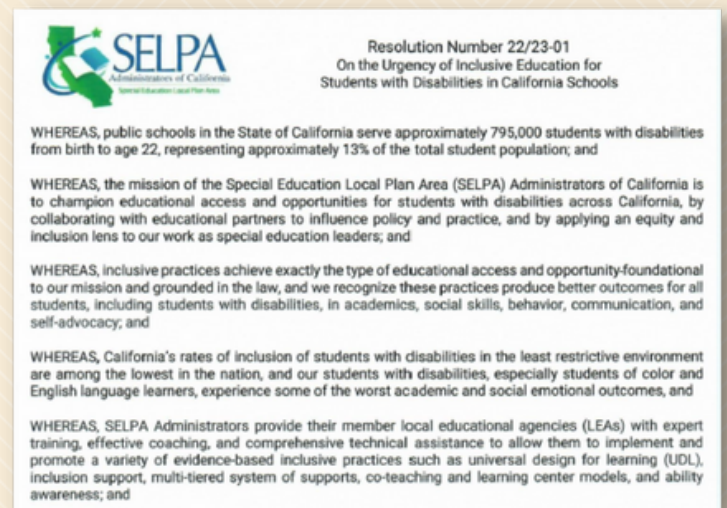
This year's event will be held in person at the Hilton Arden West in Sacramento on May 3, 2023.

The 2023 Legislative Sharing Day will provide participants with briefings on proposed legislative bills and advocacy priorities, as well as the opportunity to hear from Heather Calomese, Director of Special Education for the California Department of Education. Additionally, we have the privilege of honoring Senator Rosilie Ochoa Bogh as an advocate for special education. Guest speakers Dr. Katie Novak and Dr. Shelley Moore will inspire us regarding Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and inclusive practices.

Legislative Sharing Day provides participants with the opportunity to advocate for improved outcomes for individuals with disabilities. We hope that you will join us! Questions? Please contact your local SELPA Administrator.

LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY

Last year, SELPA Administrators of California sponsored SB 1113 (Ochoa Bogh), "Removing Barriers to Inclusion in the General Education Classroom," a measure that was met with broad support from educators, parents, and other constituents throughout the entire legislative process, but was subsequently vetoed by Governor Newsom. In response to this news, the following resolution, "On the Urgency of Inclusive Education for Students with Disabilities in California Schools," was unanimously adopted by the Association this past Unity Day, October 19, 2022.



RECENT SUCCESS

Over the last four State Budgets, SELPA Administrators of California and the Coalition for Adequate Funding for Special Education (CAFSE) have successfully advocated for more than \$1.5 billion in ongoing equalization funding, bringing the statewide rate from \$557.27 per ADA to \$820 per ADA.

SELPA and CAFSE also advocated for \$550 million (in one-time dollars) to invest in increased support for COVID -19 special education dispute prevention and resolution and learning recovery supports over a two-year period ending June 2023.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

SELPA Administrators have planned some specific professional development opportunities this year on a variety of topics of high interest. Save these dates!!

SELPA ADR Conference - This premier in-person event will be held at the Riverside Convention Center and will feature top-quality presentations on dispute prevention and resolution strategies. They recently expanded capacity due to high demand. For more information, click [HERE](#).

DATES: March 16 and 17, 2023

The Data Advantage Series - This three part virtual series features Corey Stacy, Expert Consultant, and is scheduled to support special education data specialists as they work through Fall 1 and End of Year submissions, and the new special education file redesign.

DATES: Parts 2 and 3 will be held March 8 and April 27, 2023, respectively, 9:00 to 11:00 a.m.

Understanding Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Series - This 5-part virtual training features Dr. Ron Powell and Dr. Sheri Wilkins who will break down everything educators and families should know about FASD assessment and interventions using information from *Guided Growth*, by Dr. Ira Chasnoff and Dr. Ron Powell.

DATES: February 27, March 13, April 3, April 24, and May 22 from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Hot Legal Topics of 2023 - This full-day virtual training will feature five engaging expert attorney presenters to address a variety of high-interest topics for special education administrators and staff.

DATE: April 18, 2023

SELPA Fiscal Services Onboarding - SELPA Fiscal Expert Eddie Davidson from Fresno County SELPA and Charter SELPA will break down complex fiscal reporting processes to strengthen your knowledge in budgeting, accounting, and reporting best practices for business officials and administrators new to LEA and SELPA special education fiscal responsibilities.

DATE: TBD - Coming Soon!!

A.D.R. INNOVATION CONTINUES

Since fall of 2021, the Straus Institute for Dispute Resolution at Pepperdine Caruso School of Law has partnered with Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) Administrators of California to offer training in alternative dispute resolution (ADR) practices for special education professionals across the State of California. The institute brings its world-class training and deep knowledge of conflict resolution processes and mediation techniques to SELPAs, special education administrators within Local Education Agencies (LEAs), and other professionals to support their capacity to resolve and prevent disputes around special education. The Straus Institute's faculty designs and implements trainings geared towards participants in a variety of roles in the education field and serving diverse stakeholders across the state.

Participants are trained in the foundations of the mediation process, unique negotiation styles, and facilitation of problem-solving around education-related disputes, among other topics. Current offerings include:

- **Conflict 101** on March 27 or April 24, 2023
- **Connecting Across Cultures**, April 27-28, 2023
- **Mediating the Litigated Case** (5-day) - options in February, May, and June, 2023

This partnership is made possible through funding provided by the State of California to address dispute prevention and resolution related to COVID-19. We were honored to recently have Straus lead faculty personalize a training for our December meeting.



PUBLICATIONS

The SELPA Administrators have long engaged in important projects and advocated on issues that directly affect students with disabilities and the staff who serve them. Recently, our work has included:

- [Letter to Governor Newsom and Superintendent Thurmond, "Immediate Relief for Severe Staffing Crisis Impacting Students with Disabilities,"](#) in collaboration with the Coalition for Adequate Funding for Special Education.
- [Article on the impact of proposed funding shifts of Educationally-Related Mental Health Services dollars on Tier 3 mental health supports for students with disabilities,](#) published in *ACSA Leadership Magazine*, November 2022.
- [California SELPA Community Advisory Committee Guide, 5th Edition,](#) in collaboration with the SEEDS of Partnership and the California Department of Education.


Read more we have written at:

<https://selpa.info/info/special-topics>


VIDEOS & PODCASTS

The SELPA Administrators produced three videos and five podcasts that help our educational partners better understand our purpose and our impact. Click the image to visit our videos landing page.






SELPA Students
 Release Date: February 24, 2022
 Details: This video highlights some of the work of Special Education Local Plan SELPAs, do across Northern, Central, and Southern California to create inclusive, supportive educational environments for students with disabilities. This installment features several powerful student stories, and is told in their words and the words of their staff who assist them in achieving success.
 Credits: Directed by David Benson. Produced by Maurice Ghysels. Executive Producer: Rob Kirk, Aaron Benton, Patty Metheny, and Arjanette Pelletier



SELPA Parents
 Release Date: March 29, 2022
 Details: Understand the value of SELPA through the journeys of six amazing parents across various regions of California who have directly benefited from SELPA leadership, the design of programs and services for their children, and SELPA advocacy for students with disabilities.
 Credits: Directed by David Benson. Produced by Maurice Ghysels. Executive Producer: Rob Kirk, Aaron Benton, Patty Metheny, and Arjanette Pelletier



SELPA Overview
 Release Date: June, 2022
 Details: Special education local plan areas provide access to regionalized programs and services but also work to improve educational outcomes for students with disabilities. In this brief video, the work of SELPAs is framed through their work as connectors.

Don't miss the SELPA Making It Happen Podcasts at: <https://selpa.info/info/podcast-series>

EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

Our Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee fosters a mindset for change by facilitating courageous conversations about Association values and decisions, and ensuring we embed an equity and inclusion lens in our work. This year's theme is, *"The Healing Power of Storytelling: A Quest for Social Justice."*

We began the year by revisiting the research in neuroscience, trauma, mindfulness, and polyvagal theory, led through this work by a leading voice in the field, Dr. Niki Elliott, Director of the Center for Neurodiversity, Learning, and Wellness at the University of La Verne. Dr. Elliott explained the science that supports the use of "narrative empathy" as a highly effective means to connect with others.



We plan to spend additional time this year listening to and learning from individuals and allies of traditionally marginalized groups, and have plans to host student and parent panels for targeted questioning that will give members the opportunity to shape, strengthen, and challenge their beliefs and values.

EXECUTIVE OFFICERS



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