# Professional Learning Opportunities

2023-24

Diagnostic Center  
Central California

****

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Fresno, CA 93705  
559-243-4047

California Department of Education Seal



[https://www.dcc-cde.ca.gov](https://www.dcc-cde.ca.gov/)

Published June 2023

## California Department of Education Diagnostic Center, Central California Service Area Map

DCC is located in Fresno, California, and serves the following counties: Amador, San Joaquin, Calaveras
Stanislaus, Tuolomne, Merced, Mariposa, Madera, Fresno, Kings, Tulare, San Luis Obispo, Kern Northern and Western.

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## Overview

Find us on the Web!  
[https://www.dcc-cde.ca.gov](http://www.dcc-cde.ca.gov/)

Trainings

The Diagnostic Center, Central California offers formal professional learning opportunities to Local Education Agency (LEA) staff and parents and other educational professionals. Our topics are based on statewide and local needs assessments, as well as other areas of interest. As the provision of assessment services is our primary responsibility, we may not be able to accommodate all requests for training. In an effort to maximize our training resources, we offer training and technical assistance in several formats including:

* Single training presented in person to your district or region at your selected location
* Single training presented virtually but sponsored by your district or region
* Special event workshops hosted by the Diagnostic Center (virtual and/or in-person)
* Training series hosted by the Diagnostic Center (virtual and/or in-person)
* Regularly scheduled interactive virtual mini sessions on specialized topics
* On-demand (pre-recorded) training sessions accessed through our website
* Comprehensive Professional Development Projects
* Consultation and Coaching Services (virtual and/or in person)

Trainings are scheduled in an equitable manner for Local Education Agencies, Special Education Local Planning Areas (SELPAs), Regional Coordinating Councils, and related community agencies who serve children. There are no fees for our services.

To request trainings, please refer to “How to Schedule Trainings” in the following section. If you have any specific questions, please contact: Melanie Johnson, Director, by email at[mjohnson@dcc-cde.ca.gov](mailto:mjohnson@dcc-cde.ca.gov)or by phone 559-243-4047.

**Please submit your request(s) for 2023-24 no later than October 31, 2023, to secure your training requests and dates as schedules fill up quickly!**

Comprehensive Professional Development Projects

Comprehensive professional development projects are individually and collaboratively designed to meet the specific school site or district needs. Projects incorporate in-depth content training, multiple levels of follow up support including demonstration teaching, coaching, and on-site collaboration. Our projects are implemented over an agreed upon span of time that could include a period of weeks, months or even a year and more. For more information about our projects please refer to pages 73 and 74.

## How to Schedule Trainings

Review the training manual and select topics. The manual can be viewed online or downloaded at <https://www.dcc-cde.ca.gov/professionaldev/manual/>

* Connect to the Diagnostic Center, Central (DCC) website at <https://www.dcc-cde.ca.gov/>
* Click on the “Request a Training” quick link towards the middle, right side of the page.
* **Download** the Request for Trainings Form at <https://www.dcc-cde.ca.gov/professionaldev/requesttraining/index.aspx>

and save to your computer.

* Depending on your browser and the configuration you have set in place, you may be asked to save the file to your local disk (It's preferable to save to your Desktop or Downloads folder). If you are **not** asked to save to an external location and the file opens, immediately go to “File,” then “Save As” and save it to either your Desktop or Downloads folder.
* Identify two or more potential training dates for each topic requested and be sure to include time span.
* Identify the district or agency contact person who will be responsible for coordinating the training.
* Fill in the other necessary information in the document. Once the document has been completed with your requested trainings and required information, please save the document and send as an email attachment to: [dcctrainings@dcc-cde.ca.gov](mailto:dcctrainings@dcc-cde.ca.gov)
* If you have special requests or specific questions, you can contact Melanie Johnson, Director, 559-243-4047.
* You will be contacted via email or by phone with a confirmation or request for further details if needed.
* Be sure to specify if in person or virtual. If in person, be sure to include location of training.
* Once topics, dates, times and locations are confirmed, Darlene Morse, Office Technician, will develop and email you the contract/training agreement.

If you have any specific questions or requests, please contact: Melanie Johnson, Director, by email at[mjohnson@dcc-cde.ca.gov](mailto:mjohnson@dcc-cde.ca.gov)or by phone 559-243-4047.

Please submit your request(s) for 2023-24 no later than October 31, 2023, to secure your training requests as schedules fill up quickly!

## How to Prepare for a Training

Once the requesting/hosting agency receives the training agreement that includes all the training titles, dates, times, presentation format, locations, etc., the hosting agency is responsible to ensure the following steps are taken:

* Sign and return the Diagnostic Center Central (DCC) training agreement to Darlene Morse, Office Technician, [dmorse@dcc-cde.ca.gov](mailto:dmorse@dcc-cde.ca.gov).
* Please note: Trainings are not officially confirmed until the signed training agreement is received.
* Assign a contact person responsible for coordinating with the DCC Office Technician, Darlene Morse.
* Assign a contact person (phone and email) for presenter to contact in case of an emergency, technical difficulty, or cancellation (if different than above)
* Assign an administrator or designee to attend the workshop
* Secure the training site (in-person only)
* Advertisement of the training
* Meet the minimum attendance requirement (at least 20)
* Provide for audio-visual needs as discussed and coordinated with the presenter
* Cancel the presentation if attendance requirement is not met two weeks prior to presentation date
* Duplicate and distribute handout materials, as applicable based presentation format (in-person or virtual)
* Introduce the presenter (in-person and virtual)
* Distribute the link for evaluation surveys (virtual) or the hard copy evaluation form (in person)
* Duplicate and distribute a “Certificate of Completion” for each participant

Further Considerations and Details When Hosting a Training:

* Diagnostic Center services are provided at no cost; however, the hosting agency could incur costs such as advertising, duplication, refreshments, securing the site, and other similar costs.
* The hosting agency agrees to the above and will ensure that for in-person trainings, the training room is available to the presenter at least one hour before the presentation.
* Virtual training platform, invites, settings, and details will be coordinated between the requesting agency’s identified contact and the DCC presenter or Darlene Morse, Office Technician.
* Any updates or changes regarding the training details or time must be communicated to the DCC at least 24 hours prior to the scheduled training.
* Expect to receive workshop evaluations and certificates of completion 2-3 weeks prior to the training date.
* It is required that DCC evaluations are disseminated and provided to the trainer at the conclusion of the training (in-person trainings). For virtual trainings, evaluations will be completed electronically — a link will be sent to the district agency contact person for dissemination.
* Ensure a “Certificate of Completion” is available for dissemination to participants at the conclusion of each workshop (in-person and/or virtual).
* We strongly recommend that, as appropriate, and if space is available, the sponsoring agency ensures that neighboring school districts, parents, general and special education staff, administrators, and community agencies (Mental Health, Regional Centers, etc.), are invited and/or welcome to attend workshops presented by Diagnostic Center staff.
* Due to Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 Information and Communication (ICT) final standards and guidelines — you may not post DCC materials on your external websites.

## Diagnostic Center Central Presenters

### Melissa Aguirre, M.D., Pediatrician

Dr. Aguirre obtained her undergraduate degree with honors in Psychology at Stanford University, her M.D. at Stanford University School of Medicine and is a board-certified pediatrician who has worked with vulnerable pediatric populations her entire career ~~at a~~ including a Federally Qualified Health Center, UCSF Fresno Pediatric Residency Program, California Children’s Services, Reach Out and Read, and the Diagnostic Center, Central California. She enjoys helping families thrive through caring for the whole child to achieve wellness through listening well, comprehensive assessment, accurate diagnosis and collaborative learning.

### Michelle Austin, M.A., CCC-SLP

Michelle is a Speech-Language Pathologist who specializes in Assistive Technology. She has worked within the school setting for over 20 years. Additionally, she has worked in private practice, hospital settings, and has taught at the post-secondary level. She received an administrative credential and a master’s degree in Speech Language Pathology from California State University, Fresno, and an Assistive Technology Certificate from New Mexico. She is currently employed by the California Department of Education at the Diagnostic Center, Central California. Her professional resume includes publications and presentations at both state and national conferences. During the course of her career, Michelle has worked with students of varying ages, abilities, and disabilities. Michelle has placed an emphasis on working with students who have significant speech and language needs. She has presented numerous workshops on the following areas: Assistive Technology, Augmentative Communication Strategies, Serving Children with Autism, and Feeding and Swallowing Issues in the Schools.

### Tamar Bedoyan, M.A., Education Specialist

Tamar joined the Diagnostic Center in 2018 as a trilingual education specialist with a passion for supporting students who demonstrate complex academic, behavioral, social-emotional trauma, and communication needs. Tamar provides assessment, consultation, training, and support to educators, administrators, families, and care providers for students ages 3-22 in all possible educational settings. She strives to share knowledge, research, fresh perspectives, and strategies so that all stakeholders have equitable access to the tools for maximizing their students’ capabilities and quality of life. Tamar completed her undergraduate education at UC San Diego with a major in Cognitive Science and a minor in Spanish Literature. She earned Dual Credentials in Multiple Subject and Education Specialist for Moderate/Severe Disabilities from CSU Fresno. She earned a master’s degree in Special Education and Teaching, receiving the Outstanding Project Award for her thesis project titled: “Benefits of Decreasing Parental Stress for Parents of Elementary-Age Children with Special Needs Through Parent Support Groups.” Tamar understands and considers the needs of the whole family when meeting the needs of individual students. Prior to the Diagnostic Center, Tamar worked as ~~a~~ Teacher on Special Assignment for Autism, foundational lead teacher, teacher mentor, special day class teacher for K-4th and middle school, behavioral interventionist (ABA), and tutor. With care and compassion, Tamar strives to unlock the minds of families, teachers, administrators, and students themselves to reveal their own potential and promise.

### Gwen Deeter, M.A., Education Specialist

Gwen joined the Diagnostic Center, Central California in 2008. She has over twenty years of experience teaching general education, reading intervention, and special education in public schools at the elementary level. She has also taught classes on special education at the university level. She has had extensive training and practical experience in diagnostic assessment and interventions to meet the learning needs of students with a wide range of disabilities in special education. She is also a Nationally Certified Educational Diagnostician (NCED 0768). Gwen earned a master’s degree in special education from California State University, Fresno, and a bachelor’s degree in elementary education from the University of Wyoming.

### Patricia Deroian, M.A., Education Specialist

Patricia has worked professionally in the special education field over the past 40 years in the capacity of an administrator, school psychologist, and education specialist. Her experiences span from working with special education students in preschool settings through post-secondary levels as well as community college. She has served in the following special education programs: Specialist Programs, preschool, non-severe special day classes, severe special day classes, autism programs, emotional disturbance, deaf and hard of hearing, and home hospital instruction. In addition, Patricia has taught various special education courses at Fresno Pacific University in the general education and special education credentialing programs.

### Laura Lavery, M.A., Education Specialist

Laura is an Education Specialist at the Diagnostic Center, Central California.  She has worked in the field of special education over 35 years. She also holds a Specialist Instruction Credential in Special Education Learning Handicapped, a Resource Specialist Added Authorization, an Education Specialist Instruction Credential Moderate/Severe Disabilities, an Early Childhood Special Education Authorization, a Multiple Subjects Teaching Credential, a Single Subject Teaching Credential Home Economics, a Cross-cultural, Language and Academic Development Certificate, and an Assistive Technology Specialist Certificate through California State University, Dominguez Hills.  Her experiences include working with special education students in preschool through high school settings. Her professional career has included teaching classes at California State University, Fresno; National University, Fresno; Fresno Pacific University; and Fresno City College.

### Melissa J. Miller, M.A., School Psychologist

Melissa has worked for the Diagnostic Center, Central California since 2002. She is originally from the Southern California area where she completed her education and training in School Counseling and Educational Psychology at Chapman University. She has worked as a school psychologist for over 25 years having served students in school districts in Orange County, Los Angeles County, and throughout Central California. In her earlier years, she worked as a group home counselor in the inland valley and a foster youth counselor for schools in inner city Los Angeles. After receiving her degrees, she was hired as a school psychologist for an inner-city Los Angeles school district where the student population was primarily composed of second language learners or of African American descent. Additionally, she has served as the school psychologist on district-wide preschool assessment teams in both Southern California as well as the Central Valley. As a result, she has a wealth of experience in assessing students who require the use of an interpreter, an alternative/non-biased assessment battery, and/or play-based and developmental assessment measures. Melissa has been an active member of the **P**ositive **E**nvironment **N**etwork of **T**rainers (PENT) since its inception in 2003 from which she has gleaned both a wealth of information and training on serving students with a variety of behavioral and social-emotional needs. Additionally, she has attended multiple professional trainings and conferences hosted by the California Association of School Psychologists (CASP) and the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP). Melissa is passionate about working with children with special needs and their families and thrives on consulting with school personnel in bringing about positive results for children.

### Paula Velez, M.A., Education Specialist

Paula earned a master’s degree in clinical psychology before starting her career in special education. She also holds a Mild/Moderate Education Specialist Credential with Added Authorization in autism spectrum disorders. Paula was an elementary resource specialist teacher prior to joining Diagnostic Center, Central California in 2011. Her professional training and interests include reading and dyslexia, learning disabilities, and attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). Paula is currently leading the Diagnostic Center Central’s Science of Reading Academy. Her other projects have included the provision of technical assistance and support to teachers in the area of reading instruction. Outside of the Diagnostic Center, Paula has taught university courses in psychology and provided field supervision and support to pre-service teachers. She is passionate about helping students learn and teachers teach.

## Diagnostic Center Central Special Event Offerings

### Tech Tuesday

The Assistive Technology Act of 2004 defines an *assistive technology device* in the following way:

…any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities. (29 U.S.C. Sec 2202(2))

Assistive technology in the classroom helps to ensure students with disabilities have the same opportunity for education as students who do not have disabilities. Assistive technology helps schools and teachers deliver on the promise of educational equity. Exploring how students with learning disabilities and other impairments use assistive technology in virtual and physical classrooms illuminates its vital role. Assistive technology can help improve a child's participation, well-being, confidence and self-esteem by improving a child's functioning and opportunities for play and social interaction. Give children a level of autonomy and self-determination to direct their own care and ambitions.

**The Diagnostic Center, Central California** will be hosting a series of learning opportunities which focus on assistive technology to support individuals in the areas of organization, engagement, learning, reading, writing, mathematics, and communication each month for the 2023-2024 school year. Each monthly session will be scheduled from 3:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.

If you're interested in joining a class, please visit our Tech Tuesdays webpage for specific dates and topics at:

<https://www.dcc-cde.ca.gov/professionaldev/events/techtuesday.aspx>

If you would like to submit a question or request more information on a specific assistive technology area/topic in advance, please send an email to [techtuesday@dcc-cde.ca.gov](mailto:techtuesday@dcc-cde.ca.gov) and be sure to:

* Include the date and topic in the subject area
* If student specific, leave out any identifying student information (e.g., name, date of birth, gender, etc.)

### Dyslexia Forums

The Diagnostic Center, Central California offers the Dyslexia Forums each year as an avenue to disseminate current research and evidence-based practices regarding assessment and instruction for students diagnosed with Dyslexia and other reading disabilities. The Diagnostic Center Central will be offering three Dyslexia Forums during the 2023-24 school year.

Refer to our website for updated information on dates, times, topics, and registration details <https://www.dcc-cde.ca.gov/professionaldev/events/index.aspx>, or contact Jodie Dittmar [jdittmar@dcc-cde.ca.gov](mailto:jdittmar@dcc-cde.ca.gov)

### Experience Dyslexia®

This Learning Disabilities Simulation is designed to increase awareness of the difficulties and frustrations people with dyslexia encounter daily.  The experience provides insight into working more effectively with students with dyslexia and leads to greater empathy and understanding. Facilitators guide participants through learning stations that simulate varied language-related learning tasks encountered in the classroom or workplace.  This opportunity will be offered two times as an in-person event—one Fall 2023 and one Spring 2023.

Dates: Visit our website for dates and times

Location: Diagnostic Center, Central California

1818 W. Ashlan, Fresno, CA 93705

For information or registration contact Gwen Deeter [gdeeter@dcc-cde.ca.gov](mailto:gdeeter@dcc-cde.ca.gov) or go to <https://www.dcc-cde.ca.gov/professionaldev/events/index.aspx>

### Assisting Older Struggling Readers: It’s Never Too Late!

For the older struggling reader, school tasks can be laborious, frustrating, and time consuming with little success in the end. Reasons for this may be complex, but, for many, it lies in underlying language-based literacy difficulty. The science of both instruction and intervention has been well established for years, and a growing focus on social emotional supports can aid the upper elementary through high school aged struggling reader.

This workshop addresses evidence-based practices in reading and writing (including "learned helplessness," content text comprehension and written language). Resources will be provided for literacy assessment and intervention, multi-tiered supports (MTSS), and both universal and individualized accommodations. Participants will gain strategies for instruction and intervention, as well as assistive technology tools to facilitate text comprehension and day to day tasks.

For additional information email Jodie Dittmar at [jdittmar@dcc-cde.ca.gov](mailto:jdittmar@dcc-cde.ca.gov).

### Science of Reading Academy

#### Overview

Based on science of reading research, this course has been designed for educators and others interested in learning more about the science of reading instruction. Knowledge and skills taught in this course are aligned with California Common Core Standards and California Dyslexia Guidelines. Participants will have the opportunity to engage in interactive training sessions, independent readings to improve teaching practice, connect with other reading teachers, and receive tailored, individualized support from our team of language and literacy specialists.

#### Course Requirements

Participation in the course is provided at no cost, but registration is required, and space may be limited. In addition, participants will be asked to purchase three textbooks that will be used throughout the course. In order to receive certification of course completion, participants are expected to attend all webinar sessions and complete assigned readings and activities.

#### Science of Reading Academy Team Members

Paula Velez, M.A., Education Specialist

Gwen Deeter, M.A., Education Specialist

Patricia Deroian, M.A., Education Specialist

Jodie Dittmar, M.S., Education Specialist

To obtain specific information regarding dates and times of the Science of Reading Academy, the course syllabus and/or how to register for this opportunity, please visit the Diagnostic Center Central (DCC)’s webpage at:

<https://www.dcc-cde.ca.gov/professionaldev/events/scienceofreadingacademy.aspx>

### Executive Function: What’s the Big Deal?

August 18, 2023 | 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

This is an in-person event focused on the topic of executive function and presented in three parts with a lunch break from 12:00 p.m. -1:00 p.m.

#### What Is Executive Function?

An introduction to executive function, including a definition of what it is and some of the models used to describe this concept. Specific skills that contribute to executive function and relationship of these skills to school and social success will be explored. Presented by Melissa Miller, M.A., School Psychologist

#### Executive Function and the Brain

This session takes a closer look at the neurological bases of executive function and considers the role of the specific brain regions in the development of executive skill. Stages of life development and the impact of personal and environmental factors on executive function will be discussed. Presented by Melissa Aguirre, M.D., Pediatrician

#### Executive Function Interventions and Strategies

It is clear that executive function is important for success, and deficits in these skills can negatively impact everything from social skills to math performance. This presentation looks at how educators and families can support students with executive functioning weaknesses. A variety of practical strategies and interventions to address specific deficits will be provided. Presented by Paula Velez, M.A., Education Specialist

#### Registration

Registration information can be accessed through the Diagnostic Center Central’s website at the following link:

<https://dcc-cde.ca.gov/professionaldev/events/efwbd.aspx>

### Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Implementation for the School Team: Breaking Down Barriers and Building a Collaborative Approach to Improving Communication

September 8, 2023 | 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

October 13, 2023 | 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

December 8, 2023 | 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

February 9, 2024 | 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

This training is designed for student AAC implementation teams. It is imperative that participants attend all the sessions to receive their certificate of attendance at the end of AAC Implementation for the School Team series.

#### Presenters

* Michelle Austin, M.A., CCC/SLP Speech-Language Pathologist/Assistive Technology Specialist
* Laura Lavery, M.A., Education Specialist/Assistive Technology Specialist

**Summary**

Effective communication is a fundamental human need, and it is important to provide students with the tools and strategies they need to communicate independently and spontaneously. In order to support students who use AAC to be successful communicators, it is important to consider various factors such as the student's communication abilities, preferences, and needs. An AAC Implementation Plan can be a powerful tool for supporting students who use AAC to communicate effectively. By involving the student and their communication partners in the process, and by breaking down activities into smaller steps and identifying specific communication strategies, you can help ensure that the student is able to communicate independently and spontaneously across a variety of settings and activities.

**Participants will be able to:**

* Identify two team barriers to effective AAC implementation
* Create solutions to address their team’s specific implementation barriers
* Develop a comprehensive AAC implementation plan including what the student is working on (i.e., the goal), when they have opportunities to work on it (i.e., activity/time of day), where it is occurring (i.e., environment), who is supporting it (i.e., skilled communication partners), and how it should be used (e.g., levels of support needed, response of communication partner)

#### Registration

Refer to our website for updated information. Register here: [https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84883795123?pwd=OUtrQ21TUGZ1Q0FIQVJpYzA5VjE4Zz09](https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fus06web.zoom.us%2Fj%2F84883795123%3Fpwd%3DOUtrQ21TUGZ1Q0FIQVJpYzA5VjE4Zz09&data=05%7C01%7CDMorse%40dcc-cde.ca.gov%7C37ac50037a36419243ec08db6937da42%7C5d964075ab42404a9eb89d12b2ae2de9%7C0%7C0%7C638219460824721915%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=rNwEBEfyK3R%2Fmr%2Fr0lqHpmmF1%2BsZxwvrnwqBYcuMFxI%3D&reserved=0)

## Autism Spectrum Disorders

### A-1 Assistive Technology to Support Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders

#### Presenters

* Michelle Austin, M.A., CCC/SLP Speech-Language Pathologist/Assistive Technology Specialist
* Laura Lavery, M.A., Education Specialist/Assistive Technology Specialist

#### Intended Audience

Special and General Education Teachers, Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs), School Psychologists, Parents, Adapted Physical Education Specialists, Special Education Administrators, Program Specialists, and Paraprofessionals

#### Time

3 hours

#### Format

Virtual

#### Summary

Students diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder process visual information easier than auditory information. Research has shown that use of Assistive Technology (AT) can support individuals with autism spectrum disorders. Assistive Technology is defined as: “Any item, piece of equipment, or product system acquired commercially off-the-shelf, modified, or customized that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities.” When addressing AT needs, the assessment process includes a feature match to student needs. Assistive Technology enables students with autism spectrum disorders to process information through their stronger learning modality. This training will discuss a variety of Assistive Technology tools that can support individuals with an autism spectrum disorder.

#### Participants will be able to:

* identify student characteristics/needs that can be addressed through Assistive Technology
* list assistive technology tools to support students with an autism spectrum disorder
* organize AT into core areas to support every aspect of daily living in order to improve the functional capabilities of individuals with autism

### A-2 Autism Spectrum Disorders from A to Z: Assessment to Zany Conversation

#### Presenters

* Michelle Austin, M.A., CCC/SLP Speech-Language Pathologist/Assistive Technology Specialist

#### Intended Audience

Educators and Families

#### Time

2 or 3 hours

#### Format

Virtual

#### Summary

The differing abilities of individuals with autism spectrum disorders can be both a delight and a source of frustration for families and educators. Issues and interventions will be discussed, as well as some of the current trends in both science and advocacy regarding this unique disorder. Some very interesting case studies will be presented and some surprising outcomes! Be prepared to learn, laugh, and listen to what some individuals with autism would like us to know.

#### Participants will be able to:

* recognize the positive characteristics of many individuals on the spectrum which may lead to a better understanding of this interesting group
* understand current trends in the world of autism spectrum disorders
* gain an overview of some evidence-based practices and resources that may support families and schools
* use technology to support the essential elements of literacy including reading, writing, speaking, and language skills

### A-3 Treatment Ideas for the SLP Working with the Student Diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorders…Building a Road Map for Successful Communication

#### Presenter

* Michelle Austin, M.A., CCC/SLP Speech-Language Pathologist/Assistive Technology Specialist

#### Intended Audience

Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs), SLP Assistants, and Administrators

#### Time

6 hours

#### Format

Virtual

#### Summary

Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs) play an integral role in supporting students with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) from assessment to intervention. The SLP’s role in supporting students with ASD to develop communication skills varies from implementation of Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) strategies to teaching diverse pragmatic skills. SLP service delivery models may include direct therapy, consultation, and the collaborative/consultation model. Participants will be introduced to evidence-based practices (EBPs) and therapy ideas for all aspects of verbal and non-verbal communication.

#### Participants will be able to:

* define the role of the SLP in an ASD assessment
* recognize the characteristics associated with ASD
* review qualifying criterion for an ASD diagnosis (DSM 5, federal/state education code descriptions)
* discuss and analyze other disorders that may be diagnosed as ASD
* identify and discuss various formal and informal assessment measures
* discuss evidence-based practices for support communication development for verbal and non-verbal student

### A-4 Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder: Social Intimacy and Social Skills

#### Presenters

* Michelle Austin, M.A., CCC/SLP Speech-Language Pathologist/Assistive Technology Specialist
* Laura Lavery, M.A., Education Specialist/Assistive Technology Specialist

#### Intended Audience

Special Education Teachers, Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs), School Psychologists, Parents, Special Education Administrators, Program Specialists, and Paraprofessionals

#### Time

3 hours

#### Format

Virtual

#### Summary

Individuals growing up with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) have the same human needs for intimacy and relationships as anyone. Intimacy is the sharing of emotional, cognitive, and physical aspects of oneself with those of another. This process is often thought of in terms of normal development; however, individuals with ASD and other developmental delays also go through sexual stages as they physically mature. This concept can be difficult to accept for some families or care providers. Often their tendency is to view individuals with ASD and/or developmental disabilities as not having the same emotional and physical needs. Therefore, they are viewed as not understanding or wanting mature relationships. For individuals with ASD, the inability to read the thoughts, feelings, or expressed sensations of one’s partner can lead to miscommunication, emotionally or physically painful experiences, and/or shame and guilt. Individuals with ASD are at a disadvantage unless social skills and navigation of social situations are explicitly taught. There are several options for types of relationships, typically to include living single, cohabitating with one or several others, and living in a marriage/partnership. For individuals with ASD, evidence-based practices can be utilized to address their specific social and intimacy needs. In addition, individuals with ASD may require additional external supports (e.g., activities based on shared interests, highly structured or scripted social activities, and small groups or dyads); communication supports (e.g., alternative modes of communication, explicit communication, and instruction in interpreting and using social cues); and self-initiated strategies for handling social anxiety.

#### Participants will be able to:

* identify the characteristics of autism spectrum disorder which impact the development of social intimacy and social skills
* discuss evidence-based practices that can be utilized to address specific social and intimacy needs
* explore additional external supports (e.g., activities based on shared interests, highly structured or scripted social activities, and small groups or dyads); communication supports (e.g., alternative modes of communication, explicit communication, and instruction in interpreting and using social cues); and self-initiated strategies for handling social anxiety

### A-5 Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD): Strategies for Supporting Students with ASD, Attention, and Social Anxiety Needs – **New**

#### Presenters

* Tamar Bedoyan, M.A., Education Specialist

#### Intended Audience

Special and General Education Teachers, Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs), School Psychologists, Parents, General and Special Education Administrators, Program Specialists, and Paraprofessionals

#### Time

1 – 2 hours

#### Format

Virtual or in person. This training can be adapted or customized to meet individual district/group needs and desired outcomes.

#### Summary

Thistraining is aimed at supporting students who exhibit social anxieties in educational settings, whether they have autism or any related diagnoses, from a place of compassion and care. The sharing of strategies and supports facilitates the development of communities geared toward supporting ALL students. A bevy of relevant tools, supports, mindset shifts, and fresh perspectives will be presented to support students and reinvigorate those who work with them to achieve their greatest potential. This training will include opportunities for sharing to remind one another of our mutual purpose.

#### Participants will:

* receive a review of autism including the most recent research and statistics on diagnosis and prevalence. This review will cover characteristics, strengths, signs of onset, and target skills critical for maximizing potential in all arenas of life
* consider and understand student learning and behavior with regard to present levels of abilities, difficulties of social anxiety, attention, or autism
* explore the possible strategies and supports including explicit instruction, cognitive behavior intervention, evidence-based practices, environmental design, visual supports, and mindfulness

### A-6 Autism Spectrum Disorders: Combining Evidence-Based Practices to Optimize Learning – **New**

#### Presenters

* Tamar Bedoyan, M.A., Education Specialist

#### Intended Audience

Special and General Education Teachers, Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs), School Psychologists, Parents, General and Special Education Administrators, Program Specialists, and Paraprofessionals

#### Time

1 – 2.5 hours

#### Format

Virtual or in person. This training can be adapted or customized to meet individual district/group needs and desired outcomes.

#### Summary

Evidence-Based Practices (EBPs) for autism are the gold standard for working with students with autism and related diagnoses for a reason – the results, the progress, and the relief! Often, we believe we have tried *everything* and that’s when and why we need to recalibrate before we see regression. This training will guide participants in prioritizing EBPs to maximize learning and minimize interfering behaviors. This training will include opportunities for sharing to remind one another of our mutual purpose. By building our skills, we build the communities of support for the students we serve every day.

#### Participants will:

* receive a review of autism including the most recent research and statistics on diagnosis and prevalence. This review will cover characteristics, strengths, signs of onset, and target skills critical for maximizing potential in all arenas of life
* learn about three EBPs for autism, the overlap in the implementation, and strategies for prioritizing and selecting EBPs.
* explore the possible strategies and supports including explicit instruction, cognitive behavior intervention, evidence-based practices, environmental design, visual supports, and naturalistic interventions.

## Student Engagement and Behavior

### B-1 Maximizing Student Engagement; Minimizing Disruptive Behavior

#### Presenter

* Jodie Dittmar, M.S., Education Specialist

#### Intended Audience

Special and General Education Teachers, Speech Language Pathologists, School Psychologists, General and Special Education Administrators, and Program Specialists

#### Time

2 – 3 hours

#### Format

In person (or may be virtual if requested)

#### Summary

Do you need effective ways to increase the engagement of all students in the classroom including mainstreamed, “at-risk,” and struggling students?  If so, this workshop may be just what you’re looking for!

As one of the Diagnostic Center, Central California’s most requested trainings, this interactive workshop includes essential principles of direct instruction, differentiation, student engagement, and multi-tier behavioral support. Proactive strategies to increase student engagement not only maximize classroom learning opportunities, but often decrease reactive behavioral strategies as well.  This workshop keeps the Common Core State Standards in mind while focusing on student engagement and Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS). Practical solutions, video modeling, and workable behavior supports for common attention or behavior problems will be included.

#### Participants will be able to:

* immediately apply active learning strategies with groups and individuals in varied settings
* relate classroom, student, school site, or distance learning needs to MTSS
* consider proven interventions for common interruptions to student success (including ADHD, learning disabilities, environmental factors, learned helplessness, and more)
* access helpful resources for active student engagement, Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and proactive functional behavior supports

### B-2 No Good Very Bad Day…Could it be Communication?

#### Presenters

* Michelle Austin, M.A., CCC/SLP Speech-Language Pathologist/Assistive Technology Specialist
* Laura Lavery, M.A., Education Specialist/Assistive Technology Specialist

#### Intended Audience

Special and General Education Teachers and Administrators

#### Time

3 hours

#### Format

Virtual

#### Summary

Everybody communicates through behavior. An infant may cry when hungry or wet, just like an adult may yawn when bored. Adults and children are communicating something through their behavior during every moment in every day, even if they are not aware of it. A child’s problematic or inappropriate behavior is a sign that he is upset and that something is not right. Children sometimes have trouble communicating because they may not be able to verbally describe the problem or know what to do in a situation. At these times, children may act out their feelings or needs. If a child has an underlying communication disorder, their behavior can often be a primary means for their communication. The purpose may be getting someone’s attention, stopping an activity they don’t like, or satisfying sensory needs — but there is always a reason behind the behavior. Once adults understand what children are communicating through their behavior, they can respond better. When adults help children find positive ways to communicate their needs to others, children learn important social and problem-solving skills that will help them throughout their life.

#### Participants will:

* identify ways to read non-verbal communication
* discuss the relationship between communication and behavior
* relate behavior to individuals with communication disorders and discuss the possible underlying impact
* list evidence-based practices to address behavior for individuals with communication disorders

### B-3 Enhancing Check-In, Check-Out (CICO) to Create Effective Student Support

#### Presenter

* Jodie Dittmar, M.S., Education Specialist

#### Intended Audience

General and Special Education Teachers, Administrators, and others

#### Time

2 hours

#### Format

Virtual

#### Summary

Check-In, Check-Out Systems (CICO) have long been shown to be effective support to students with difficulties in organization, attention or self-regulation. This workshop will consider components of CICO systems that work and provide examples for varied ages and needs. Participants will be given the opportunity to consider what might be missing, revised, or added to make their own students more successful.

#### Participants will leave with:

* key components essential to making a CICO system effective
* examples of CICO systems addressing varied ages and developmental needs
* considerations of individual student connection to key adult support
* resources to further consider how CICO can enhance Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)

### B-4 Looking at Behavior Through a New Lens

#### Presenter

* Jodie Dittmar, M.S., Education Specialist

#### Intended Audience

General and Special Educators, Day Care Providers, Social Workers, Nurses, Paraeducators, or Parents

#### Time

2 hours

#### Format

Virtual

#### Summary

This workshop is perfect for the new or experienced educator, parent, or administrator who can benefit from a fresh set of eyes, or fresh start, in addressing particularly challenging behavior. In a unique and interactive way, participants will consider impacts on behavior including communication, cognition, and anxiety and reconsider both traditional structures and personal beliefs. A practical look at adult/child relationships, barriers to success, and ideas for renewed energy (for both adult and child) will be included.

#### Participants will:

* note impacts to behavior, including typical and atypical child development, communication, and/or adult and child experiences
* consider self-beliefs and/or skill limits that can impact the child or adult
* consider strategies and examples for the classroom and other environments
* use resources to reengage or reconsider a child’s behaviors and needs

### B-5 Impacts of Emotions and the “Rage Cycle” for School Age Children and Adolescents

#### Presenter

* Jodie Dittmar, M.S., Education Specialist

#### Intended Audience

General and Special Educators, Day Care Providers, Social Workers, Nurses, Paraeducators, or Parents

#### Time

2 – 2.5 hours

#### Format

Virtual

#### Summary

This workshop addresses student behaviors at home or in the classroom when emotional impacts (and/or communicative challenges) prompt what is often termed a “meltdown.” Research regarding the “rage cycle” will be shared, along with helpful considerations in addressing the “rage cycle,” no matter the student’s age

#### Participants will consider:

* reasons for student “meltdowns,” including challenges in communication setting, disability, experience, trauma, and emotion
* the “rage cycle” and related intervention
* myths when addressing emotional outburst and defiance

### B-6 What is Executive Function?

#### Presenters

* Melissa Miller, M.A., School Psychologist
* Paula Velez, M.A., Education Specialist

#### Intended Audience

Special and General Education Teachers, Speech Language Pathologists, School Psychologists, Administrators, Paraeducators, and Parents

#### Time

1.5 hours

#### Format

Virtual or In-person

**Summary**

An introduction to executive function, including a definition of what it is and some of the models used to describe this concept. Specific skills that contribute to executive function and relationship of these skills to school and social success will be explored. The influence of specific executive function skills on academic subjects such as reading, writing, and math will also be discussed.

#### Participants will be able to:

* provide a working definition of executive function
* identify the importance of executive function for all students, with and without learning disabilities
* consider ways specific executive function skills influence performance in academic subjects
* consider the role of executive function skill in social-emotional functioning

### B-7 Executive Function and the Brain

#### Presenters

* Melissa Aguirre, M.D., Pediatrician
* Paula Velez, M.A., Education Specialist

#### Intended Audience

Special and General Education Teachers, Speech Language Pathologists, School Psychologists, Administrators, Paraeducators, Parents, and Medical Staff

#### Time

1.5 hours

#### Format

Virtual or In-person

**Summary**

This session takes a closer look at the neurological bases of executive function and considers the role of the specific brain regions in the development of executive skill. Stages of life development and the impact of personal and environmental factors on executive function will be discussed.

#### Participants will be able to:

* Identify regions of the brain involved in executive function
* Learn about differences in executive function relative to development
* Consider the impact of various factors on the development of executive skills

### B-8 Executive Function Instruction Strategies

#### Presenters

* Paula Velez, M.A., Education Specialist
* Melissa Miller, M.A., School Psychologist

#### Intended Audience

Special and General Education Teachers, Speech Language Pathologists, School Psychologists, Administrators, Paraeducators, and Parents

#### Time

1.5 hours

#### Format

Virtual or In-person

**Summary**

It is clear that executive function is important for success, and deficits in these skills can negatively impact everything from social skills to math performance. This presentation looks at how educators and families can support students with executive function weaknesses. A variety of practical strategies and interventions to address specific deficits will be provided.

#### Participants will be able to:

* identify specific executive function skills necessary for success
* review the impact of these skills on academic and social functioning
* learn useful strategies to support executive function skill development and improved performance

## Emotional and Behavioral Disabilities

### D-1 Selective Mutism: Assessment and Intervention Strategies

#### Presenter

* Michelle Austin, M.A., CCC/SLP Speech-Language Pathologist/Assistive Technology Specialist

#### Intended Audience

Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs), School Psychologists, Special and General Education Teachers, and Administrators

#### Time

6 hours

#### Format

Virtual

#### Summary

Individuals with Selective Mutism are at a significant disadvantage personally, socially, and educationally. These “quiet” children are not just choosing not to communicate. Selective Mutism is described as social communication anxiety. It not only affects verbal communication, but also nonverbal communication skills. This training will discuss assessment and treatment of students with Selective Mutism utilizing a team approach.

#### Participants will be able to:

* understand a multifaceted assessment approach
* identify members of a transdisciplinary team
* list and understand the four stages of Selective Mutism
* identify evidence-based treatment approaches

### D-2 Functional Communication Training

#### Presenters

* Michelle Austin, M.A., CCC/SLP Speech-Language Pathologist/Assistive Technology Specialist
* Laura Lavery, M.A., Education Specialist/Assistive Technology Specialist

#### Intended Audience

Special Education Teachers, Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs), School Psychologists, Parents, School Nurses, Adapted Physical Education Specialists, Special Education Administrators, Program Specialists, and Paraprofessionals

#### Time

3 hours

#### Format

Virtual

#### Summary

Functional communication training (FCT) is one of the most common and effective interventions for severe behavior problems. FCT is a systematic practice to replace inappropriate behavior or subtle communicative acts with more appropriate and effective communicative behaviors or skills. Non-Symbolic communicators, or individuals with significant communicative needs, often require augmentative or alternative language supports to address their behavioral communication. This training will address the evidence-based practice of FCT and the steps to implementation and development of a more socially acceptable form of communication.

#### Participants will be able to:

* identify the function of the student’s behavior
* match the function of the behavior to its communication message
* develop a plan to shape the behavior toward more socially acceptable communication

## Early Childhood

### E-1 Fun, Phonemes and Future Reading Success -**Updated**

#### Presenter

* Jodie Dittmar, M.S., Education Specialist

#### Intended Audience

Educators, Families, and Care Providers

#### Time

2 hours

#### Format

In Person or Virtual

#### Summary

Research has shown that the foundations to reading success begin as early as infancy. If you are a parent, care provider, or early childhood educator, this workshop will clarify key features of evidence-based, structured literacy instruction and how it applies to the very young child.

Specific focus will be given to phonological and phonemic awareness skills developed between birth and first grade. Evidence-based resources and practical activities for teachers, families, and care providers will be shared.

#### Participants will be able to answer:

* What is phonological awareness and how do we enhance it through fun, developmentally appropriate activities?
* What is a phoneme, and what are the phonemes of the English language?
* What might we consider for the child who struggles to communicate adequately in the English language?
* How do we set a strong foundation in these (and other) pre-reading skills?

### E-2 Making Every Day a Learning Day

#### Presenter

* Jodie Dittmar, M.S., Education Specialist

#### Intended Audience

Preschool and Kindergarten Teachers, Speech-Language Pathologists, Parents, and Care Providers

#### Time

2 hours

#### Format

Virtual

#### Summary

Language, concepts, communication, and relationships can all be strengthened in child centered and child driven active learning. This workshop provides insight and ideas for enhancing engagement and learning in everyday tasks, routines and play. Related technology, learning and behavior considerations, as well as interaction with others, will be included.

#### Participants will be able to:

* better utilize child-centered developmental opportunities for learning within typical daily activities
* hear/see examples of language and concept learning in typical activities of a young child’s day
* gain insight into addressing children’s developmental limits, risks, and growth
* enhance activities for immediate application in early childhood home or school settings

### E-3 Planting the Seeds of Early Literacy

#### Presenter

* Jodie Dittmar, M.S., Education Specialist

#### Intended Audience

Early Childhood Educators, School Psychologists, Administrators, Teachers, School Nurses, Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs), Paraeducators, and Parents

#### Time

2 – 2.5 hours

#### Format

In Person or Virtual

#### Summary

Communication Competence and becoming college, career, and community ready begins in early childhood. The benefits to talking, singing, and reading to young children has been demonstrated in the science of reading as well. Activities will be explored to assist parents and educators in ensuring a good foundation for every young child. Research, resources, examples, and practice will be included in this fun, interactive workshop.

#### Participants will be able to:

* describe language, print, and experiential foundations for building literacy skills
* practice interactive everyday activities to enhance early phonological, vocabulary, and language skills
* consider specific children’s books as they apply to child development, language, and learning
* walk away with evidence-based practices to ensure good foundations in language and structured literacy (for later concept understanding, text comprehension, and classroom success)

### E-4 Shaping Positive Early Childhood Behaviors

#### Presenter

* Jodie Dittmar, M.S., Education Specialist

#### Intended Audience

Special and General Education Teachers, Administrators, Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs), School Psychologists, Parents, School Nurses, Paraprofessionals

#### Time

2 hours

#### Format

In Person or Virtual

#### Summary

Children's behavior is dependent on developmental level as well as impacted by parenting and discipline styles of adults who support them. An important task for adults is to help the child learn what behaviors are appropriate and which behaviors are not, as well as the skills to be successful. The way children are parented and supported when young also influences the child’s learning and social emotional development. This training will provide participants an overview of the developmental levels of children 12 months to 5 years old, as well as explore varied styles of parenting and behavior support.

#### Participants will:

* become familiar with typical development and behaviors associated with each level of development
* utilize child developmental level information to explore problematic and typical behaviors
* consider styles of parenting/discipline, websites, and resources for further exploration
* consider evidence-based strategies in behavior and social emotional support

### E-5 Managing Meltdowns; Impacts of Emotions and the “Rage Cycle” for Young Children

#### Presenter

* Jodie Dittmar, M.S., Education Specialist

#### Intended Audience

Teachers, Paraprofessionals, Speech-Language Pathologists, School Psychologists, Administrators, Parents, School Nurses, and Families

#### Time

2 – 3 hours

#### Format

Virtual

#### Summary

This workshop is beneficial to parents or educators dealing with children’s difficult behaviors and “meltdowns” at home or in the classroom. Special consideration will be given to the communicatively challenged child (including child’s age, development, and emotional stress). Research regarding the “rage cycle” will be shared, as well as helpful considerations in addressing behaviors in young children (or older students with limited communication or frequent “meltdowns”).

#### Participants will consider:

* frequent reasons for childhood “meltdowns” at home and in school
* myths when addressing emotional outbursts, defiance, and “meltdowns”
* the “Rage Cycle” and intervention related considerations for communicatively challenged children of any age

*\*Please note: This workshop can be adapted to meet the needs of any age group, student needs, or setting.*

## Complex Communication and Intellectual Disabilities

### I-1 Building Communication Opportunities Throughout the Day for Students with Complex Communication Disorders

#### Presenter

* Michelle Austin, M.A., CCC/SLP Speech-Language Pathologist/Assistive Technology Specialist

#### Intended Audience

Educators, Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs), School Psychologists, Paraeducators and Parents

#### Time

3 hours

#### Format

Virtual

#### Summary

This session will discuss building communication into everyday environments for students with limited verbal language or students who may utilize augmentative communication devices. A naturalistic language approach will help these students generalize specific communication strategies and build upon functional communication.

#### Participants will be able to:

* understand naturalistic language approaches
* develop a communication script
* infuse language opportunities into everyday activities

### I-2 Students with Complex Communication and Intellectual Disabilities…Avoiding the Impact of Learned Helplessness

#### Presenter

* Michelle Austin, M.A., CCC/SLP Speech-Language Pathologist/Assistive Technology Specialist
* Laura Lavery, M.A., Education Specialist/Assistive Technology Specialist

#### Intended Audience

Special and General Education Teachers, Speech Pathologists, School Psychologists, Parents, Adapted Physical Education Specialists, Program Specialists, Paraprofessionals

#### Time

3 hours

#### Format

Virtual

#### Summary

Students with complex communication needs require specialized interventions. These individuals may suffer from a sense of powerlessness arising from a persistent failure to succeed. For students with moderate severe and severe profound disabilities this may be further impacted by over prompting and ineffective assistance. As a result of this learning, an individual surmises that any response will be pointless; they learn that they have lost control and so they give up trying. This training will provide participants with factors to consider in avoiding learned helplessness and strategies to address these factors. “With the appropriate amount of guidance, a student can become more independent and confident in their skills, negative attributions for success and failure can be replaced…learned helplessness can be removed.”

#### Participants will be able to:

* assess barriers to student independence
* list two intervention strategies to overcome learned helplessness through empowerment and expectations
* develop an appropriate plan to address motivation and effective teaching strategies to reduce learned helplessness

### I-3 Evidence-Based Practices that Support Students with Complex Communication and Significant Cognitive Disabilities

#### Presenter

* Michelle Austin, M.A., CCC/SLP Speech-Language Pathologist/Assistive Technology Specialist
* Laura Lavery, M.A., Education Specialist/Assistive Technology Specialist

#### Intended Audience

Special and General Education Teachers, Speech-Language Pathologists, School Psychologists, General and Special Education Administrators, Parents, Program Specialists, and Paraprofessionals

#### Time

3 hours

#### Format

Virtual

#### Summary

Individuals with complex communication and significant cognitive disabilities require specialized instruction to support their diverse learning needs. Specialized instruction can include specially designed and differential instruction, assistive technology/augmentative alternative communication, and engineering the learning environment.

#### Participants will be able to:

* discuss assistive technology tools/augmentative alternative communication strategies to support individuals with complex communication needs and significant cognitive disabilities
* discuss evidence-based practices to support individuals within the learning environment
* describe strategies and develop goal matrices and opportunities within the learning environment

## Language and Literacy

### L-1 Developing a Language Enriched Environment

#### Presenter

* Michelle Austin, M.A., CCC/SLP Speech-Language Pathologist/Assistive Technology Specialist
* Laura Lavery, M.A., Education Specialist/Assistive Technology Specialist

#### Intended Audience

Special Education Teachers, Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs), School Psychologists, Parents, School Nurses, Adapted Physical Education Specialists, Special Education Administrators, Program Specialists, and Paraprofessionals

#### Time

3 hours

#### Format

Virtual

#### Summary

Research has shown that individuals with complex communication needs have less opportunities to communicate. When developing a language enriched environment, the selection of functional and motivating vocabulary is critical for effective use of an augmentative alternative communication device. To build on communication opportunities, communication partners must have guiding beliefs: presume competence, Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) is a right, a communication system is always available, and learning AAC language should be fun. AAC language should focus on core vocabulary and include individual fringe vocabulary as well. Communication opportunities should focus on multiple language functions (i.e., comment, greet, ask/answer, direct, argue, protest, share, social communication, express emotions, and gain attention).

It has been proven that students use their communication systems in the way they were first trained to use them. If the student is taught to use the system in a structured, stimulus-response format, they tend to use the system only when asked to do so. However, if the student is trained in a highly interactive format, he/she tends to use the system in a spontaneous and interactive manner. This technique can be used with individuals who demonstrate complex communication and intellectual need. Constant exposure to the symbols will encourage them to learn and use the symbols appropriately.

#### Participants will be able to:

* delineate and prioritize classroom environment and activities to develop language enriched environments
* analyze the environment to use core words to access multiple communication opportunities throughout the day
* create a list of activities conducive to interactive communication

### L-2 Integrating Literacy for Students with Complex Communication Needs

#### Presenters

* Michelle Austin, M.A., CCC/SLP Speech-Language Pathologist/Assistive Technology Specialist
* Laura Lavery, M.A., Education Specialist/Assistive Technology Specialist

#### Intended Audience

Special and General Education Teachers, Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs), Assistive Technology Specialists, School Psychologists, General and Special Education Administrators, Parents, Special Education Administrators, Program Specialists, and Paraprofessionals

#### Time

3 hours

#### Format

Virtual

#### Summary

Literacy is important in virtually all aspects of our daily lives. It is fundamental in education, at work, in accessing the internet, and in communicating with friends. For students with complex communication needs, developing literacy skills is a critical component. Because of challenges—perceived or otherwise—of providing literacy instruction to learners with complex communication needs, these students are often overlooked in receiving meaningful learning experiences and access to the core curriculum.The development of literacy skills in individuals who use augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) requires the collective efforts of collaborative literacy teams who have expertise in language, literacy, and AAC. Literacy teams responsible for teaching reading and writing skills to students with complex communication needs face many challenges including students who often cannot participate in conventional literacy activities (e.g., reading aloud), and a lack of materials and resources in the area of AAC and literacy.

#### Participants will be able to:

* define the needs/characteristics of a complex communicator
* define the qualities of literacy instruction and assistive technology tools to support reading, writing and communication
* identify evidence-based strategies and interventions
* identify effective strategies for creating or adapting literacy materials for students with complex communication needs

### L-3 What is Dyslexia?

#### Presenter

* Paula Velez, M.A., Education Specialist

#### Intended Audience

Special and General Education Teachers, Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs), School Psychologists, Administrators, Paraeducators, and Parents

#### Time

1.5 – 2 hours

#### Format

In Person or Virtual

#### Summary

This training is designed to help educators and families understand what dyslexia is according to the definition provided in the *California Dyslexia Guidelines* (2017). Key features of the definition will be highlighted and explained, followed by a brief discussion of identifying dyslexia through assessment. Finally, best practices for teaching students with dyslexia are described.

#### Participants will be able to:

* be familiar with the key characteristics of *California Dyslexia Guidelines* (2017)
* identify assessment considerations given this definition of dyslexia
* learn about recommended teaching strategies to address educational needs of students with dyslexia

### L-4 Once Upon a Word: Morphology

#### Presenter

* Patricia Deroian, M.A., Education Specialist

#### Intended Audience

Special and General Education Teachers, Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs), School Psychologists, Administrators, Paraeducators, and Parents

#### Time

2.5 or 3.0 hours

#### Format

Virtual

#### Summary

This training will provide the participants with the background and history of the English language. We will learn the importance of teaching morphology and etymology to students to help them develop a deeper meaning of words that will aid in developing reading skills, spelling skills, vocabulary, and comprehension. This training will also teach students how to divide multisyllabic words.

#### Participants will be able to:

* understand syllabication
* understand the etymology of the English language (Anglo Saxon, Latin, Greek)
* understand morphology (affixes and bases)
* understand the connection between morphology, orthography, and phonology

### L-5 Assistive Technology and Dyslexia

#### Presenters

* Michelle Austin, M.A., CCC/SLP Speech-Language Pathologist/Assistive Technology Specialist
* Laura Lavery, M.A., Education Specialist/Assistive Technology Specialist

#### Intended Audience

Special Education Teachers, General Education Teachers, Speech-Language Pathologists, Assistive Technology Specialists

#### Time

3 hours

#### Format

Virtual

#### Summary

The term *Assistive Technology (AT)* refers to the services and devices that enable people with disabilities to help achieve independence and enhance their quality of life.  For people with dyslexia, assistive technology provides tools that ease the demands of reading and writing and allow them to learn and function independently. Assistive technology helps students with dyslexia save time and overcome challenges, such as messy notetaking, slow reading speed, and poor handwriting allowing them to demonstrate their abilities in ways that were once unimaginable. As a result of using assistive technology, a student may actually develop a love of reading while building their vocabulary, decoding skills, fluency, comprehension, and confidence. Assistive technology is not a substitute for good teaching or remediation. It simply gives a student access to the curriculum while the student continues to build skills through quality instruction. According to the California Dyslexia Guidelines, “it is never too early to introduce assistive technology to a student. If the student is struggling despite the use of interventions and strategies, assistive technology may help them experience more success. It can help a student to develop independence, bolster self-esteem, and reduce time and stress spent on schoolwork.”

#### Participants will be able to:

* understand the cognitive elements of reading and its relationship to assistive technology
* analyze student data using assistive technology assessment to determine appropriate tools.
* create a list of possible assistive technology tools to support students with dyslexia

### L-6 The What, the How, and the Why of Phonology and Phonics for Parents, Paraeducators, and Child Care Providers – **Updated**

#### Presenter

* Jodie Dittmar, M.S., Education Specialist

#### Intended Audience

Early Childhood Educators, Paraeducators, Parents, and Care Providers

#### Time

2 – 3 hours

#### Format

In Person or Virtual

#### Summary

Learning to read includes language development, sound, and print. Often parents, paraeducators, child-care providers, and others find themselves providing help, but may or may not feel comfortable with these skills themselves! Paraeducators may be assigned direct instructional roles in reading while parents or child-care providers provide tutoring and homework support. This highly interactive workshop includes vocabulary and comprehension supports for reading but predominantly addresses phonemes, phonics, auditory processing, and decoding for the early or struggling reader.

#### Participant activities will include practice in:

* isolating, sequencing, blending, and deleting syllables
* isolating, sequencing, blending, and deleting first, medial, and final sounds in words
* individual sounds of the English language (and strategies for teaching)
* reading with children in ways that enhance relationships as well as concepts, vocabulary, and practice with print

#### Participants will be able to:

* describe the overall picture and specific components of the science of learning to read
* describe what “sounding out words,” phoneme-grapheme mapping and other terms mean, as well as how they fit into the science of learning to read
* support young children and older struggling readers in more accurate ways (especially as it relates to decoding print)

### L-7 Identifying English Language Learners with Disabilities – **New**

#### Presenters

* Melissa Miller, M.A., School Psychologist
* Paula Velez, M.A., Education Specialist

**Intended Audience**

Special and General Education Teachers, Speech Language Pathologists, School Psychologists, Administrators, Paraeducators, and Parents

**Time**

1.5 hours

**Format**

Virtual or In-person

#### Summary

According to the California Department of Education, our state has the largest English learner (EL) student population in the nation. Drawing upon the California Practitioners' Guide for Educating English Learners with Disabilities (2019), as well as other relevant research and resources, the training will provide information on the following topics:

1. Pre-referral, referral, and assessment process
2. Individualized education program (IEP) process
3. provision of educational programs and instructional strategies

#### Participants will be able to:

* Consider needs of the English learner within the Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS) framework
* Review necessary components of an appropriate special education referral for English learners
* Consider the difference between language acquisition issues and disability related issues in English learners
* Consider best practices in developing an IEP which includes consideration of the English learner’s language needs along with linguistically appropriate goals, programs and services.

### L-8 Best Practices in Literacy Instruction for English Language Learners – **New**

#### Presenters

* Paula Velez, M.A., Education Specialist

**Intended Audience**

Special and General Education Teachers, Speech Language Pathologists, School Psychologists, Administrators, Paraeducators, and Parents

**Time**

1.5 – 2 hours

**Format**

Virtual or In-person

#### Summary

Learning to read is a complex process, and this is no less true for the one in four California students who are English learners. This training will look at specific ways to support the literacy and language development of English learners. Topics explored will include the best practices in teaching the key components of reading – phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and text comprehension – as well as two areas that are specific to the English learner: students’ home language and oral language development. Finally, the distinction between language differences and learning disability will be discussed.

#### Participants will be able to:

* consider components of effective literacy instruction for English learners (EL’s), including EL’s with dyslexia or learning disabilities
* focus on foundational reading skills necessary for English learners
* learn effective strategies for building language and promoting literacy skills
* distinguish between language differences and learning disabilities

## Paraeducators

### P-1 Maximizing Student Engagement; Minimizing Disruptive Behaviors – How a Paraeducator Can Help

#### Presenter

* Jodie Dittmar, M.S., Education Specialist

#### Intended Audience

Paraeducators

#### Time

2 hours

#### Format

In Person or Virtual

#### Summary

This workshop will focus on successful strategies the paraeducator can use to increase the engagement of students in a Resource Specialist Program (RSP), intervention, or general education setting. Proven strategies and resources for inclusive settings and addressing student attention, anxiety, sensory, and social difficulties are included. Collaboration and communication will be highlighted, as well as impacts of executive functioning, learned helplessness, and impacts of environmental adversity.

#### Participants will:

* participate in activities to proactively increase student engagement
* participate in activities to proactively and reactively address common interruptive behaviors to classroom success
* review various disabilities and other student needs that impact student participation in the classroom
* leave with resources and tools appropriate to assist teachers in any classroom setting (including online) and any tier of Multi-Tier Systems of Support

### P-2 A Paraeducator’s Role in Enhancing Check-In, Check-Out (CICO) and Effective Student Supports

#### Presenter

* Jodie Dittmar, M.S., Education Specialist

#### Intended Audience

Paraeducators

#### Time

2 hours

#### Format

In Person or Virtual

#### Summary

Check-In, Check-Out systems (CICO) have long been shown to be effective support to students with difficulties in organization, attention, or self-regulation. This workshop will consider components of CICO systems and give participants the opportunity to reexamine the paraeducator’s role in implementation. Examples of successful systems for varying ages and needs will be included. Participants will be given the opportunity to consider what might be missing or added in their own CICO implementations, to increase success for struggling student(s) with whom they work.

#### Participants will leave with:

* an understanding of the key components essential to making a CICO system effective
* examples of CICO systems addressing varied ages and developmental needs
* understanding of mentoring and/or CICO roles, key actions, or limits when implementing paraeducator CICO roles
* clarification of individual student connection roles to key support adult(s)
* resources to further consider how CICO can enhance Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) in the participant’s own school setting

### P-3 A Paraeducators Role in the Science of Reading

#### Presenter

* Jodie Dittmar, M.S., Education Specialist

#### Intended Audience

Paraeducators

#### Time

2 – 5 hours (Can be expanded into a series of sessions for grade level, school site, or instructional implementation.)

#### Format

In Person or Virtual

#### Summary

This interactive workshop provides the paraeducator an understanding of the key features of language and literacy. Typical development will be noted, as well as causes and impacts of limited reading skills.

The science of reading foundations (no matter a student’s age or grade) is the foundation of this workshop. Paraeducator roles in instruction, as well as support, will be considered, and paraeducators will be shown tools and resources for supporting second language learners, students with dyslexia, and others impacted by literacy difficulties.

#### Participants will:

* address the essential elements in the science of reading including:
* phonology/phonemic awareness
* decoding/orthographic mapping
* reading fluency
* vocabulary and word study
* comprehension (in narrative and content text)
* gain evidence-based tools for supporting the struggling reader in day-to-day content work completion
* consider emotional and behavioral impacts for the struggling reader
* access California Department of Education Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) and Dyslexia Guidelines, including paraeducator roles in reading instruction, intervention, and support

### P-4 A Paraeducator’s Role in Assisting Students Impacted by Environmental Adversity, Trauma, or Foster Placement

#### Presenter

* Jodie Dittmar, Education Specialist

#### Intended Audience

Paraeducators

#### Time

2 – 2.5 hours

#### Format

Virtual

#### Summary

This workshop will review such impacts as poverty, homelessness, foster care placement, and/or trauma on student’s development and academic success. Both academic and behavioral impacts will be included, and positive impacts a paraeducator may have on student’s social/emotional, behavioral, and academic success.

#### Participants will:

* consider the increasing research findings on the impacts of environmental adversity on child development and academic skills and current implications in California classrooms
* consider individual perceptions of student behaviors and responses to limited academic success
* consider evidence-based effective supports in developing student success in a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS)
* consider general impacts on equity, school systems, and paraeducator roles in social emotional, behavior, and academic supports

### P-5 A Paraeducator’s Opportunity for Looking at Behavior through a New Lens!

#### Presenter

* Jodie Dittmar, M.S., Education Specialist

#### Intended Audience

Paraeducators, Day Care Providers, and others

#### Time

2 hours

#### Format

Virtual only

#### Summary

This workshop is perfect for any new or experienced paraeducator who can benefit from a fresh set of eyes or fresh start in addressing particularly difficult behavior. In a unique and interactive way, participants will consider impacts on behavior including communication, cognition, and anxiety (and reconsider both traditional structures and personal beliefs). A practical look at adult/child relationships, barriers to success, and ideas for renewed energy (for both adult and child) will be included.

#### Participants will:

* note impacts to behavior, including typical and atypical child development, communication, and/or adult and child experiences
* consider self-beliefs and/or skill limits that can impact a child or adult
* consider strategies (and examples) for the classroom and other environments
* use resources to reengage or reconsider a child’s behaviors and needs

## Speech and Language

### S-1 Assessment and Treatment: Speech Fluency Disorders

#### Presenter

* Michelle Austin, M.A., CCC/SLP Speech-Language Pathologist/Assistive Technology Specialist

#### Intended Audience

Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs)

#### Time

3 hours

#### Format

Virtual

#### Summary

Fluency disorders (stuttering and cluttering) are multifaceted, and many factors impact the listener’s perception of disfluencies. Within the school setting, speech-language pathologists are tasked with addressing fluency disorders. This training will address the current methods of evaluating speech fluency disorders. This training will also describe key features of common treatment approaches to change communication behaviors as well as address social and emotional perspectives. The training will provide evidence-based practice in addressing fluency disorders.

#### Participants will be able to:

* identify types of disfluencies
* discuss assessment tools for speech fluency disorders
* describe key features of common treatment approaches that support the development of speech fluency
* identify the psychosocial issues that may impact a person who stutters and how these issues affect treatment and outcomes

### S-2 Building Social Skills Groups for Diverse Learners

#### Presenters

* Michelle Austin, M.A., CCC/SLP Speech-Language Pathologist/Assistive Technology Specialist
* Laura Lavery, M.A., Education Specialist/Assistive Technology Specialist

#### Intended Audience

Special and General Education Teachers, Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs), School Psychologists, Parents, Adapted Physical Education Specialists, Special Education Administrators, Program Specialists, and Paraprofessionals

#### Time

6 hours

#### Format

Virtual

#### Summary

Social skills are the skills we use to communicate and interact with each other, both verbally and non-verbally, through gestures, body language and our personal appearance. Some kids learn to say “please” and “thank you” and to wait their turn by watching others. Kids with learning and attention issues might not pick up on common social interactions simply through observation. Social skills include far more than the ability to communicate with other people. Social skills are crucial to making friends, succeeding in school and later in life, as well as getting and keeping a job. Social skills groups are small groups (typically two to eight kids) led by an adult who teaches the kids how to interact appropriately with others their age. They can help kids learn conversational, friendship, and problem-solving skills. They can also be useful in teaching kids to control their emotions and understand other people’s perspectives. This training will discuss how to assess social skills and determine strategies to support individuals with social needs.

#### Participants will be able to:

* discuss assessment instruments that can assist the team in determining social/pragmatic needs
* evaluate evidence-based practices to support performance deficits or acquisition deficits of social skills
* analyze and apply information utilizing case studies

### S-3 Differential Assessment and Interventions for Students with Significantly Reduced Speech Intelligibility

#### Presenter

* Michelle Austin, M.A., CCC/SLP Speech-Language Pathologist/Assistive Technology Specialist

#### Intended Audience

Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs)

#### Time

6 hours

#### Format

Virtual

#### Summary

The differentiation of childhood apraxia of speech from severe phonological disorder is a common clinical problem. Severe speech impairment may result from a variety of etiologies and may represent linguistic impairment, motor speech impairment, or both. Differential diagnosis typically refers to the process of determining the appropriate classification or label for the speech sound disorder, such as phonologic impairment, childhood apraxia of speech, or dysarthria. More important than the label, however, is the determination of the relative contribution of cognitive versus linguistic versus motor impairment because children with speech sound disorders frequently exhibit impairment in more than one area. Determining the degree to which the child is struggling to learn the rule-governed system of phonology, compared with having problems planning and programming movement gestures for speech, directly affects appropriate treatment planning. Each disorder lends itself to specific treatment approaches. Determining the correct diagnosis can improve the child’s ability to make progress on specific speech and language goals. This training will discuss the differential diagnosis and various treatment approaches specific to each disorder.

#### Participants will be able to:

* differentiate between
* articulation disorder
* phonological disorder
* apraxia
* dysarthria
* determine appropriate assessment tools

## Assistive Technology and Augmentative and Alternative Communication

### T-1 Assistive Technology Assessment – Certificate Program

#### Presenters

* Michelle Austin, M.A., CCC/SLP Speech-Language Pathologist/Assistive Technology Specialist
* Laura Lavery, M.A., Education Specialist/Assistive Technology Specialist

#### Intended Audience

Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs), Psychologists, Occupational Therapists, Physical Therapists, Special Educators, Administrators, Program Specialists, or others designated by their district to address Assistive Technology

#### Time

7 full days (Scheduled approximately one session per month)

#### Format

Virtual

#### Summary

During this certificate program, individuals will be required to complete three assistive technology assessments, as well as other assignments related to Assistive Technology using the Student, Environment, Tools, and Task (SETT) model and other assessment modules. Attendance at all seven full-day sessions and satisfactory completion of projects and assignments are required to receive the certificate.

Assessment for Assistive Technology is accomplished through a thorough assessment of skill areas and needs. Determinations of equipment or software needs are based on a feature match of equipment to areas of needs or student-specific skills. Assistive Technology recommendations and equipment needs are then utilized on a trial basis. Assistive Technology assessments should not be viewed as a one-time assessment but rather an ongoing process for determining appropriate equipment needs based on trial use.

#### Participants will be able to:

* demonstrate assessment techniques appropriate to address Assistive Technology
* demonstrate appropriate feature match for Assistive Technology needs
* understand IEP processes and legal implications in relationship to Assistive Technology
* utilize assessment techniques and a team approach to address specific student needs in relationship to assistive technology
* address a variety of options to assess and determine appropriate Assistive Technology

Please check the Diagnostic Center Central website for scheduled offerings to determine if there is one offered in your area or virtually.

[https://www.dcc-cde.ca.gov/professionaldev/overview/](https://www.dcc-cde.ca.gov/professionaldev/overview/" \o "Professional Development Overview )

### T-2 Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Assessment to Intervention – Certificate Program

#### Presenters

* Michelle Austin, M.A., CCC/SLP Speech-Language Pathologist/Assistive Technology Specialist
* Laura Lavery, M.A., Education Specialist/Assistive Technology Specialist

#### Intended Audience

Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs), Assistive Technology Teams

#### Time

7 full days (Scheduled one session per month)

#### Format

Virtual

#### Summary

This certificate program leads to a certificate verifying specific training in assessing Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) needs and promotes a decision-making process to make appropriate recommendations utilizing critical thinking. During this training, individuals will be required to complete three augmentative communication assessments, as well as other assignments related to augmentative communication. Attendance on all seven full day sessions and satisfactory completion of projects and assignments are required to receive the certificate.

Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Assessment is multifaceted. This dynamic assessment process encompasses current communication skills, overall language (receptive and expressive language), social/pragmatic language, speech/intelligibility, and communication device access. Each AAC system is unique, and each system has a different language base. The assessment process to determine the appropriate communication system needs to take into account the individual’s current communication mode, selecting a new method of communication, and determining the best way to implement the new communication system. For the communication system to be functional, often adaptations will need to be made within the environment (communication expectations - demands). The assessment should focus on four basic questions:

1. What are the child’s communication needs or goals?
2. What are the child’s strengths and abilities?
3. What barriers are preventing the child from achieving his or her full communication/ participation potential?
4. What aids and adaptations (e.g., AAC devices or systems, environmental modifications, policy changes, etc.) will best accomplish the child’s goals given his or her strengths and abilities, and current circumstances?

Assessment for AAC is an ongoing process which includes documentation of progress, trial therapy, and adaptations or modifications to the AAC system. The AAC device or system is selected based on a feature match. The feature match not only includes current features needed in communication but it will also need to address future needs as well.

#### Participants will be able to:

* demonstrate assessment techniques appropriate to address Augmentative and Alternative Communication.
* demonstrate appropriate feature match for AAC needs
* develop an understanding of the IEP process and legal implications in relationship to AAC
* utilize assessment techniques and a team approach to address specific students’ needs in relationship to communication
* develop an AAC intervention plan

Please check the Diagnostic Center Central website for scheduled offerings to determine if there is one offered in your area or virtually.

<https://www.dcc-cde.ca.gov/professionaldev/trainingcalendar/index.aspx>

### T-3 Augmentative and Alternative Communication – Building Literacy

#### Presenters

* Michelle Austin, M.A., CCC/SLP Speech-Language Pathologist/Assistive Technology Specialist
* Laura Lavery, M.A., Education Specialist/Assistive Technology Specialist

#### Intended Audience

Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs), Special and General Educators interested in supporting universal access and literacy instruction for all students

#### Time

3 hours

#### Format

Virtual

#### Summary

Children who utilize Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) can be at a disadvantage in learning literacy skills. Research has shown that many individuals who use AAC have less advanced literacy skills. Literacy is learned through interaction with all types of literacy experiences — listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Barriers for students with AAC can be related to restricted language participation, lack of experiences, decreased time spent on literacy activities, and difficulties with interactions in literacy experiences. The National Reading Panel recommends instruction in five areas to develop reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and text comprehension. Of particular importance during early instruction is the development of emergent literacy skills. Emergent literacy skills include written language awareness (phonics) and phonemic awareness. The purpose of this presentation is to highlight several evidence-based strategies for teaching literacy skills to children who use AAC.

#### Participants will be able to:

* discuss literacy principles that impact literacy acquisition in AAC users
* describe the main components of literacy and implications for AAC users
* explain three evidence-based therapeutic interventions that target language and literacy development for AAC users

### T-4 Assistive Technology Supports for Organization and Executive Functioning

#### Presenters

* Michelle Austin, M.A., CCC/SLP Speech-Language Pathologist/Assistive Technology Specialist
* Laura Lavery, M.A., Education Specialist/Assistive Technology Specialist

#### Intended Audience

Special and General Education Teachers, Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs), School Psychologists, General Education Administrators, Parents, School Nurses, Adapted Physical Education Specialists, Special Education Administrators, Program Specialists, and Paraprofessionals

#### Time

3 hours

#### Format

Virtual

#### Summary

Assistive Technology is an item, program, or piece of equipment used to improve instruction as well as the functional capabilities of students. For self-monitoring and organization skills, the majority of assistive technology used is low tech, although a couple high tech options are available.

* Low tech options do not require much training, are not mechanically complex, and are most commonly used in the classroom
* High tech options require training, are mechanically complex, and are typically used by or with the teacher

Many students are expected to use the following components of the organization process: self-organization; information management; time management; or materials management. Many students struggle with organization. Assistive technology tools can help a student plan, organize, and keep track of his calendar, schedule, task list, contact information, etc.

#### Participants will be able to:

* describe the components of organization
* list strategies to support areas of organization
* differentiate the components of organization and strategies to support them

### T-5 Assistive Technology Supports for Mathematics

#### Presenters

* Michelle Austin, M.A., CCC/SLP Speech-Language Pathologist/Assistive Technology Specialist
* Laura Lavery, M.A., Education Specialist/Assistive Technology Specialist

#### Intended Audience

Special and General Education Teachers, Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs), School Psychologists, General Education Administrators, Parents, Special Education Administrators, Program Specialists, and Paraprofessionals

#### Time

3 hours

#### Format

Virtual

#### Summary

Assistive Technology can be very helpful for individuals who struggle with math (dyscalculia). Students with disabilities face a particular challenge as they attempt to attain proficiency in mathematics. Assistive Technology tools for math are designed to help with computing, organizing, aligning, and copying math problems down on paper. Assistive Technology can support the increase in math accessibility for students of all ability levels and can assist students with achieving fluency and automaticity with important mathematical information.

Assistive Technology can increase a child’s self-reliance and sense of independence. Students who struggle in school are often overly dependent on parents, siblings, friends and teachers for help with assignments.

#### Participants will be able to:

* describe difficulties of students who struggle with math
* list assistive technology for students with difficulties in mathematics
* create a list of assistive technology tools that may benefit students who struggle with the components of math: writing, listening, memory, reading, and motor

### T-6 Assistive Technology Assessment to Intervention: Building Supports for Written Language

* Assessment: Part 1
* Assessment to Selection of Assistive Technology (AT) Tools: Part 2
* Problem Solving AT Supports: Part 3

#### Presenters

* Michelle Austin, M.A., CCC/SLP Speech-Language Pathologist/Assistive Technology Specialist
* Laura Lavery, M.A., Education Specialist/Assistive Technology Specialist

#### Intended Audience

Special and General Education Teachers, Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs), School Psychologists, General and Special Education Administrators, Program Specialists, Assistive Technology (AT) Specialists, Occupational Therapists, Paraprofessionals, and Parents

#### Time

Each session is 2 hours

#### Format

Virtual

#### Summary

What is Assistive Technology (AT) and who can benefit? Assistive Technology is any item, piece of equipment, software program, or product system that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of persons with disabilities. Does a student need an Individualized Educational Program (IEP) to be able to access AT? No! Many students who struggle with written language are not eligible for an IEP or 504 plan. They can still benefit from Assistive Technology to support their ability to keep up and thrive in the classroom.

Isn’t Assistive Technology cheating? Any tool that levels the playing field for students can be viewed by some as cheating, but, in fact, AT allows students to demonstrate their knowledge in different ways, supporting their ability to keep up with content and stay engaged. Is this super high tech stuff? Not really. Many Assistive Technologies are as simple as the predictive text you use on your smart phone app for texting. Assistive Technologies are everywhere. With support we can learn how to help students use them for their own benefit.

#### Participants will be able to:

* assess a student’s needs for Assistive Technology in the area of written language
* utilize new easy-to-use tools to support writing
* ask questions and put it all together in a live session with others in this cohort

#### How to Request:

Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) can request this training series by completing the Training Request Form available on our website. Part 1 and Part 2 are pre-recorded sessions meant to be accessed via on-demand by participants during a limited span of time, e.g., one week, two weeks. Please specify the beginning date and the ending date you want the recorded trainings to be available for each session. The LEA contact/training coordinator will receive links to access each session at least 24 hours in advance and can share these links with the participants. Part 3 will be conducted as an interactive virtual training session with Q & A included as a component. Participants are required to participate in all three sessions of this series to obtain a certificate of completion.

### T-7 Aided Language Stimulation and Data Collection for Trials in Augmentative Alternative Communication (AAC)

#### Presenters

* Michelle Austin, M.A., CCC/SLP Speech-Language Pathologist/Assistive Technology Specialist
* Laura Lavery, M.A., Education Specialist/Assistive Technology Specialist

#### Intended Audience

Special and General Education Teachers, Speech-Language Pathologists (SLP’s), Parents, Paraprofessionals

#### Time

3 hours

#### Format

Virtual

#### Summary

All children deserve the right to communicate with those around them. But our children who are not speaking yet sometimes struggle with basic communication. Augmentative Alternative Communication devices and systems can be a great way to help a child who isn’t speaking be able to communicate better with those around him.  Aided Language can be implemented within the natural context and within natural routines. There are lots of ways we can support better learning in our beginning communicators, and data collection can play an important role. Data lets you see how the child is doing with using Augmentative and Alternative Communication and helps guide your decision on what next steps will be.

#### Participants will be able to:

* define aided language stimulation and how it supports language acquisition
* demonstrate the use of core words to develop a functional communcation system
* develop Data Collection systems for Trials in Augmentative Alternative Communication (AAC)

### T-8 Using Technology to Support the Essential Elements of Literacy Including Reading, Writing, Speaking, and Language Skills

#### Presenters

* Michelle Austin, M.A., CCC/SLP Speech-Language Pathologist/Assistive Technology Specialist
* Laura Lavery, M.A., Education Specialist/Assistive Technology Specialist

#### Intended Audience

Special and General Education Teachers, Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs), School Psychologists, General Education Administrators, Parents, Special Education Administrators, Program Specialists, and Paraprofessionals

#### Time

3 hours

#### Format

Virtual

#### Summary

Literacy is learned through interaction with all types of literacy experiences (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). Children who have learning disabilities can be at a disadvantage to learning literacy skills. Research has shown that 39.8 percent of children in special education have been diagnosed with a specific learning disability. Given the passage of Assembly Bill 1369, California is required to improve dyslexia identification, strategies for remediation, and educational services for students. Educational services are defined as being evidence-based, multi-sensory, direct, explicit, structured, and sequential. Assistive technology is an evidence-based practice to support individuals with learning disabilities while increasing their independence and improving their literacy skills. Assistive technology can offer powerful tools to students with learning disabilities by providing a wide range of supports.

#### Participants will be able to:

* discuss assistive technology tools to support literacy
* describe the main components of literacy and the implication for assistive technology use
* discuss assistive technology tools in relationship to literacy acquisition

## Specialized Topics

### Z-1 Concussions: More than Just a Bump on the Head! (Traumatic Brain Injury)

#### Presenter

* Michelle Austin, M.A., CCC/SLP Speech-Language Pathologist/Assistive Technology Specialist

#### Intended Audience

Administrators, Educational Professionals, Service Providers, Parents, Nurses

#### Time

2 hours

#### Format

Virtual

#### Summary

Sports-related head injury is receiving significantly more attention recently, and multiple research studies indicate that there are long-term effects of repeated concussions. Concussions are not just sports injuries. They occur within a variety of environments and impact adults and children alike. Educational systems often are not equipped to address the complex transitory and long-term needs of students with concussions (Mild Traumatic Brain Injury). Mild Traumatic Brain injuries exacerbate underlying cognitive and psychosocial weaknesses, yet educators often do not know how to provide instructional support to a student that was academically successful prior to the injury.

This presentation will create awareness of the challenges and support that both the child and family may need to move toward recovery and acceptance. Research-based strategies and the presenter’s personal experiences highlight the unresolved issues that impact learning when the student is medically cleared to return to school.

#### At the conclusion of this course, participants will be able to:

* describe a variety of teaching tools to support mild traumatic brain injury
* identify symptoms of mild traumatic brain injury
* develop tools to help support individual teams in addressing the needs of individuals with mild traumatic brain injuries
* describe a variety of teaching tools to support mild traumatic brain injury

### Z-2 Secondary Transition Planning 101: IEP Mandates and Compliance

#### Presenter

* Gwen Deeter, M.A., Education Specialist

#### Intended Audience

Special Education Teachers

#### Time

1, 2, or 2.5 hours

#### Format

Virtual

#### Summary

This training will provide information regarding the essential elements of secondary transition planning services as defined in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the State Performance Plan (Indicator 13). Any updates on current legislation at the state and federal levels for youth with disabilities regarding transition to post-secondary and training and employment will be presented.

This training will discuss the components of an Individualized Education Program (IEP) with a transition plan and how to ensure the IEP complies with federal guidelines. This includes the mandates of appropriate, measurable post-secondary goals; age-appropriate assessments; transition services; course of study; annual IEP goals; student participation in the IEP; participating agencies’ invitation to attend an IEP; and summary of performance.

This training will also provide evidence-based practices to assist in supporting youth in acquiring transition-related skills and resources to assist with effective transition planning.

#### Participants will be able to:

* develop an IEP with a secondary transition plan that meets federal and state mandates
* utilize evidence-based practices and resources for effective transition planning

## Comprehensive Professional Development Projects

The Diagnostic Center provides a variety of Technical Assistance opportunities to Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) and Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPAs). Comprehensive Professional Development Projects are individually tailored through a collaborative effort to meet specific LEA or SELPA needs. Projects typically involve multiple service days interspersed over a period of time and could include weeks, months, a year, or multiple years. Projects can be implemented at individual school sites and multiple school sites within a district. Projects are designed to provide services in various formats:

* In-depth content training followed by multiple levels of consultations
* On-site consultation
* Demonstration teaching—including videorecording for future staff development and reference
* Lesson observations with session feedback, recommendations, and
* Collaborative problem-solving and coaching with teachers and administrative support teams
* Data analysis including summative and formative evaluation
* Other technical assistance as needed

##### Project topics could include: Evidence-Based Practices, Differentiated Instruction, Science of Reading, Assistive Technology (AT)/Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Assessment to Intervention, AT/AAC Implementation and Capacity Building, Multi-tiered Systems of Support, Student Engagement, Moderate to Severe Disabilities

If your LEA, SELPA, or school district is interested in discussing possibilities for a project, please contact Melanie Johnson, Director at 559-243-4047 or by email: [mjohnson@dcc-cd.ca.gov](mailto:mjohnson@dcc-cd.ca.gov)

## Examples of Professional Development Projects—2022-23

Tech Tuesday

Tech Tuesday project was **a** series of learning opportunities which concentrated on assistive technology to support individuals in the areas of organization/engagement, learning, reading, writing, mathematics, and communication for the 2022-2023 school year. Participants were introduced to assessment tools, extensions, and applications. The tools presented work for ALL students; those with specific learning disabilities, as well as those students who struggle in school.

Preschool AAC Project

The Preschool augmentative alternative communication (AAC) project focused on developing an AAC language enriched program. The project developed AAC integration within the classroom based on the MTSS model. A team approach was utilized to integrate AAC into the curriculum. The project began with the team reviewing the classroom structure, academic and communication levels as well as the needs of the student.

Assistive Technology (AT) Assessment to Intervention Project and Augmentative Alternative Communication (AAC) Assessment to Intervention Project

These projects were designed to promote the use of evidence-based assessment procedures in assistive technology (AT) and augmentative alternative communication (AAC) with a focus on assessment procedures in the area of AT and AAC. AT assessments are an ongoing process which includes the initial assessment, selection of AT or AAC tools, trial equipment use, documentation of use, and final selection. When selecting AT or AAC, it is important to determine if the AT or AAC system meets the student’s needs. A trial period is recommended prior to purchasing a system to help determine if the features of that AT or AAC are beneficial to the student. This process included not only the selection, trial use, and documentation but, additionally, staff training and overall use of the equipment.

Science of Reading

The Diagnostic Center team provided the Science of Reading Academy as a training series and offered additional support and resources to participants as follows:

* Created a repository of resources for participants using an online notice board platform known as a padlet
* Extended access to the series by providing time-limited recordings of training sessions for asynchronous participation and professional development
* Collaborated with Greenfield Unified School District (GUSD) to customize the delivery of the Science of Reading Academy series into a hybrid format which combined virtual, in-person, and pre-recorded delivery of presentations
* Provided a unique online notice board to support the GUSD project
* Provided in-person and virtual consultation sessions to support district implementation of effective reading instruction practices, by request
* Provided consultation support for district leaders interested in bringing science of reading knowledge to their staff and students

Atascadero Literacy Intervention Project

The Atascadero Literacy Intervention Project was a short-term and focused collaborative effort between the Diagnostic Center and San Gabriel Elementary School principal, Resource Specialist Program (RSP) teacher, and the Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) tier two intervention teacher. The focus of the project was related to interventions for struggling readers and enhancement of implementation. Components included meetings, observations, and staff consultations and recommendations. This projected resulted in the following actions:

* Considerations of evidence-based curricula, and instructional practices instruction
* Organizational considerations of evidence-based practice in screening, instruction, and overall implementation
* Three individual student reading record reviews and observation to discuss IEP and intervention considerations.
* Zoom conversations and consultations (upon request)
* Post Project meeting with the participants to answer questions and/or provide resources for future individual, programmatic or schoolwide implementation

California Department of Education Seal


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