



SPOTLIGHT

ON ACCESS**NEWS THIS MONTH**

Month of December:

Persons with Disabilities Awareness Month

Dec. 1, 2025 World AIDS day

Dec. 3, 2025 International Day of Persons with Disabilities

UPCOMING FREE PDDec. 9, 2025 - SpEd for Gen Ed Teachers: [Link](#)Jan. 21, 2026 - Positive Reinforcement: [Link](#)Jan. 27, 2026 - Dyslexia and Dyscalculia: [Link](#)Feb. 10, 2026 - Intro to Transition IEPs: [Link](#)Feb. 24, 2026 - Transition Assessments: [Link](#)**LACOE Special Education Professional Development Calendar: [Link](#)**

The LACOE Division of Special Education has created its full year professional development calendar. Specialized sessions for special education directors, coordinators and charter school administrators are available. General sessions such as transition, behavior and accommodations are also available.

THE IRIS CENTER AT VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY

The IRIS Center, housed at Vanderbilt University's Peabody College and funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), is dedicated to improving educational outcomes for all children—especially those with disabilities from birth through age 21—by promoting evidence-based instructional and behavioral practices. Its free, high-quality online modules help pre-service and in-service educators apply research-based strategies in areas such as behavior management, differentiated instruction, and inclusive teaching to enhance classroom outcomes.

Free Training Modules: [Link](#)**LESS INTEREST IN EDUCATION DEGREES**

Data from the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) shows a sharp decline in people pursuing education degrees. Between 2012–13 and 2022–23, enrollment in teacher preparation programs dropped from about 611,000 to 407,000, and completions fell from 164,000 to 113,000. This trend threatens the educator pipeline and underscores the need for stronger efforts to attract and retain new teachers. For more information: [Link](#)

STATE TESTING CHALLENGES

California did not meet federal targets for participation rate for students with disabilities on the California Alternate Assessments (CAA). Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), states must ensure equitable access to instruction and appropriate assessment. California also continues to exceed the 1% federal threshold for the number of students taking alternate assessments, suggesting that some students may be inappropriately assigned to the CAA instead of the general assessment. This raises concerns about equitable access to grade-level curriculum and could prompt additional state and federal oversight.

For more information: [Link](#)**M.T.V., V. DEKALB SCHOOL DISTRICT**

In *M.T.V. v. DeKalb County School District* (11th Cir. 2006), the court ruled that parents do not have the right to choose their own assessor when a school district conducts an evaluation under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

The court upheld the district's right to use its chosen qualified evaluator for the student's reevaluation as part of the triennial review process. The decision emphasized that districts are entitled to select their own assessors when performing evaluations required under IDEA, as long as those assessments meet procedural safeguards and professional standards. This ensures consistency, accountability, and compliance with federal and state regulations governing special education evaluations.

For more information: [Link](#)