

The Division of Special Education
Presents

Spotlight on Access

Spotlight on Access is a monthly newsletter from the LACOE Division of Special Education bringing you the latest news, inclusive resources, and professional learning opportunities to support educators and students across Los Angeles County.

Coalition 4 Access — School Site Visits: Inclusion Learning Series

This Countywide observation and learning series provides educators the opportunity to observe effective inclusive practices across pre - k – 12 classrooms. Through site visits, classroom observations, collaborative debriefs, and action planning, participants will identify high-impact practices and develop strategies to strengthen inclusive education in their own schools.

Coalition 4 Access

EmbraceAbilities

EmbraceAbilities is a Special Education Resource Lead focused on supporting County offices of education and local education agencies in the continuous improvement of their services for students with extensive support needs.

As part of California's Statewide System of Support, EmbraceAbilities offers technical assistance through free professional development opportunities and resources.

EmbraceAbilities Website



California Center for Inclusive Colleges

Established by the 2024 State Budget, the California Center for Inclusive College (CCIC) is the state's technical assistance center dedicated to building and expanding



Access PD Calendar

Inclusion Symposium 2027

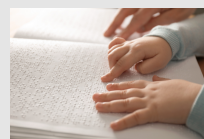
We are stronger together through partnership!

Join us for a free celebration dedicated to inclusion.

Directors, Coordinators, Program Specialists, Teachers, Related Service Providers join us on **March 8, 2027, 8 - 3 p.m. at the California Endowment Center.**

Breakfast and Lunch will be provided!

Register for Symposium



Visual Impairment Services

We partner with LEAs to provide specialized support for students with visual impairments.

Inclusive College Programs (ICPs). Co-led by LACOE and the Sacramento County Office of Education (SCOE), the CCIC works to:

- Expand four-year inclusive college opportunities for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD).
- Provide vital resources and support to colleges, local education agencies, students and families.
- Partner with regional centers and community-based organizations to build a sustainable approach to inclusive higher education.

[Visit the CCIC Website](#)

Our services include direct and consultative Vision Services and Orientation and Mobility from credentialed teachers, alongside Braille and Large Print production by qualified transcribers. Contact us today to see how we can support your students!

[Contact VI Services](#)

Don't miss out on the incredible tools available to you! Dive into our [Resource Guide for Inclusive Practices](#) for a complete collection of special education resources.

September Professional Learning Opportunities

Date/Time	Topic	Registration Link	Format
Wednesday, September 9, 2026 9 - 11 a.m.	Understanding and Addressing Student Behavior (AB 1172) Reserved for Non - Public Schools & Agencies	Register	Virtual
Tuesday, September 15, 2026 8 : 30 a.m. - noon	Directors' Collaborative	Register	In Person
Wednesday, September 16, 2026 3 - 3 : 45 p.m.	Paraprofessional Practices: The Art of Support	Register	Virtual
Monday, September 21, 2026 3 - 4 p.m.	New Special Education Teachers Session 1	Register	Virtual
Tuesday, September 22, 2026 3 - 3 : 45 p.m.	Planning for Instruction	Register	Virtual
Wednesday, September 23, 2026 3 : 30 - 5 p.m.	Accessibility Supports for All: A Two-Part Workshop 2026	Register	Virtual
Tuesday, September 29, 2026	Understanding and Addressing Student	Register	Virtual

9 - 11 a.m.	Behavior (AB 1172) Reserved for Non - Public Schools & Agencies		
Tuesday, September 29, 2026 3 - 3 : 45 p.m.	Inclusive by Design (Elementary Classroom Focus)	Register	Virtual
Wednesday, September 30, 2026 3 : 30 - 5 p.m.	Accessibility Supports for All: A Two-Part Workshop 2026	Register	Virtual

Special Education in the News

Funding & Budget Wins

Record \$2.4 Billion Special Education Boost: The 2026 – 27 state budget provides a historic \$2.4 billion ongoing increase for special education, equalizing funding and raising the base per - student rate to \$1,340. [CDE Special Education Funding Apportionments](#)

Why It Matters: This provides much - needed, stable financial relief for local programs to expand services, retain staff, and support inclusive practices.

Extraordinary Cost Pool Expansion: The budget allocates \$80 million ongoing for the special education extraordinary cost pool and low-incidence disabilities add-on. [CDE Extraordinary Cost Pool & Low Incidence Funding](#)

Why It Matters: Special Education Local Plan Areas (SELPAs) will have greater reimbursement support for students who require highly specialized, high-cost services and equipment.

Capitol to Classroom Mandates

Resource Specialist Assessment Workloads (AB 560): Local educational agencies are required to take all reasonable steps to distribute initial special education assessment workloads equally among Resource Specialists (RSPs), unless governed by local collective bargaining agreements. [AB 560](#)

Why It Matters: Initial assessments require significant time and documentation. LEAs should review RSP assignments and bargaining language to ensure assessment duties are balanced fairly across staff without exceeding caseload limits.

New Smartphone Policies (AB 3216): By July 1, 2026, all school districts, charter schools, and County offices of education were required to officially adopt policies limiting or prohibiting smartphone use during school hours. [AB 3216](#)

Why It Matters: IEP and Section 504 teams must ensure that if a student requires smartphone access for any reason, it is explicitly documented in their IEP or 504 plan to qualify for the state statutory exemption.

Regional Center Transparency (AB 1147): As of January 1, 2026, Regional Centers are officially subject to the California Public Records Act. [AB 1147](#)

Why It Matters: This gives parents and recipients of Regional Center services much stronger rights to access their records and increases oversight, which is great news to share with families during transition meetings.

The New Standardized IEP Deadlines (SB 445): The state is nearing its January 1, 2027 deadline to digitally roll out the new, standardized statewide IEP template and its translations into the top 10 most commonly spoken languages. [SB 445](#)

Why It Matters: [High Quality IEPs](#) will be providing specific training on the new CA IEP forms.

Reminders: Active Mandates

Early Transition Planning (AB 438): As a reminder to our new secondary staff, transition planning and post-secondary goals must begin when a student enters grade 9 (starts high school) or no later than age 16. [AB 438](#)

Neurodiversity Resources (SB 939): Last year, all schools were required to post neurodiversity resources on their websites. As we start the 2026–27 year, please ensure your site's links are still active and visible to parents! [SB 939](#)

Prone Restraints are Banned (SB 483): A reminder to all site administrators reviewing emergency plans this fall: prone (face-down) restraints remain completely prohibited in all educational settings. [SB 483](#)

Join a Collaborative!



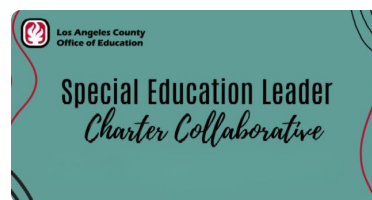
Directors' Collaborative:

Meetings are offered both in-person and virtually, with the first in-person session kicking off on September 15, 2026. Future dates include virtual sessions on November 10, January 19, and May 11 and a final in-person meeting on March 16, 2027.



Coordinators' Collaborative:

This series is designed for special education coordinators, program specialists, and teacher leaders. These virtual sessions are scheduled for October 6, December 8, February 9 and March 13.



Charter Collaborative: Geared toward special education directors, coordinators, program specialists and emerging leaders in charter schools. Virtual meetings will take place on October 13, December 1 and March 2.

September Awareness & Inclusion Spotlight

This month, we recognize several important observances that highlight accessibility, student wellness and inclusive practices across our school communities.

Attendance Awareness Month

- Chronic absenteeism disproportionately impacts students with disabilities.
- Work with your site teams to build welcoming routines, clear accessibility barriers and ensure every student feels supported from day one.

Deaf Awareness Month

- **Sept 22 – 28: International Week of Deaf People**
- **Sept 23: International Day of Sign Languages**
- Center DHH (Deaf and Hard of Hearing) culture, language access and inclusive communication across all school environments.

National Suicide Prevention Month

- **Sept 6 – 12: California Suicide Prevention Week**

- **Sept 10: World Suicide Prevention Day**
- Let's elevate student mental health, suicide prevention protocols and social-emotional learning (SEL) resources across campuses.



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