

# *California Early Childhood Special Education Network (CalECSE) Annual Report: 2024-2025*

**Funded by the California Department of Education**  
**CDE Agreement # CN240097**

Prepared by the  
**CalECSE Project Executive Team**

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*The California Early Childhood Special Education (CalECSE) Network's overarching mission is to improve outcomes for young children with disabilities and their families by identifying and addressing barriers to successful transitions, high-quality assessments, and access to inclusive educational programming. By fostering cross-agency collaboration throughout California, CalECSE supports systemic change at the local and related agency levels.*

*As a designated technical assistance provider within the Statewide System of Support (SSOS), CalECSE delivers a coordinated system of support to Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) identified for, or voluntarily seeking, assistance to improve performance and/or compliance with State Performance Plan (SPP) indicators and other priority practices.*



CONNECTING



ASSISTING



BUILDING CAPACITY



COLLABORATING



COORDINATING

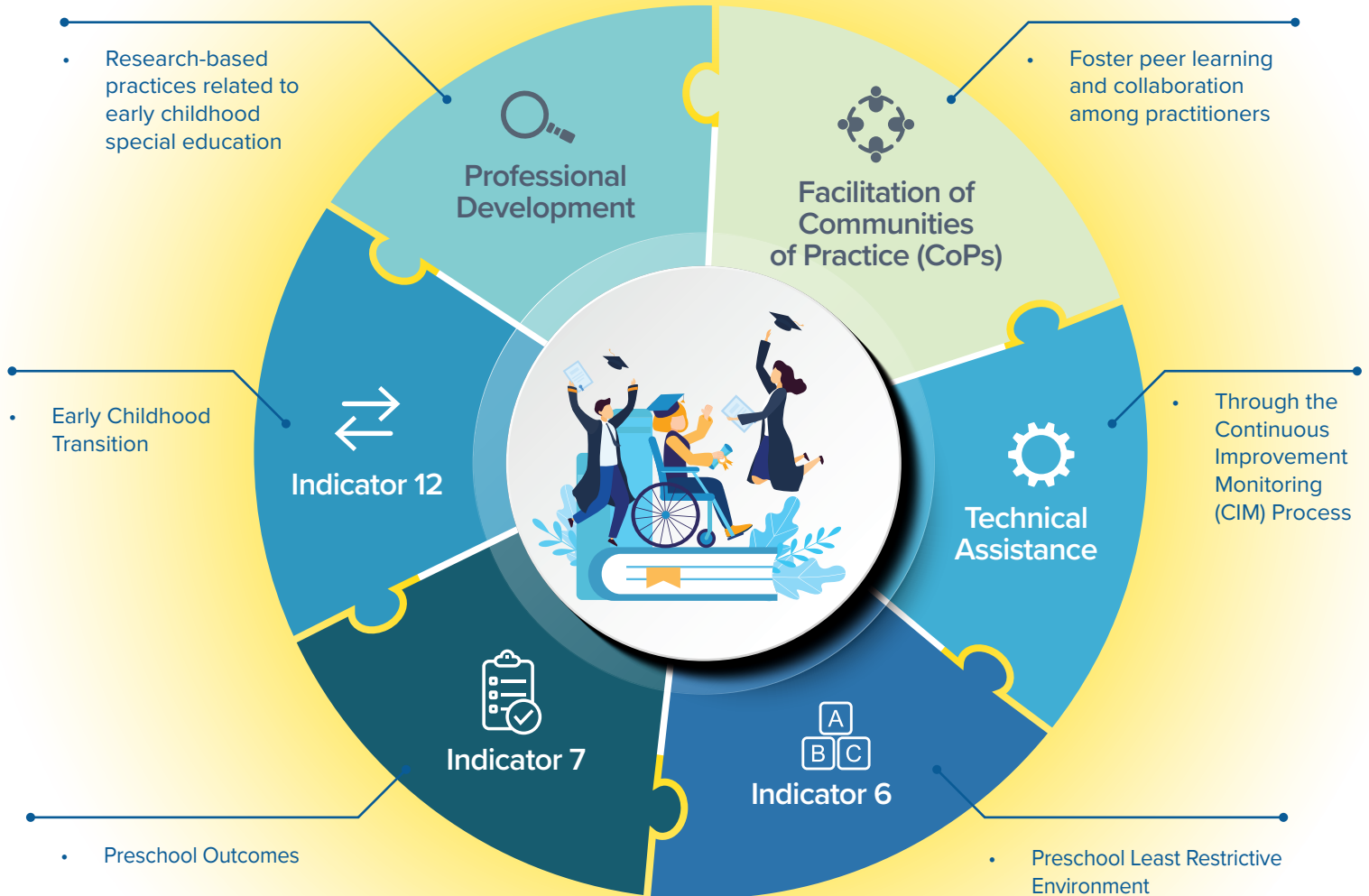


**CALECSE**  
California Early Childhood  
Special Education Network

# Core Components of CalECSE's Support:

Through targeted technical assistance and professional learning opportunities, CalECSE demonstrates effective, evidence-based practices that have been proven successful in supporting Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

(IDEA) Part C to Part B transitions. This includes strengthening Child Find efforts and promoting inclusive, developmentally appropriate instructional strategies for preschool children with disabilities.



CalECSE directly supports the California Department of Education (CDE) in monitoring and improving outcomes aligned with key SPP indicators:



# The CalECSE Commitment

## Our Values



### EQUITABLE ACCESS

The CalECSE Network is committed to breaking down systemic barriers to create a collaborative, inclusive educational community that supports all students.

We achieve this by:

- Leveraging interagency collaboration
- Disseminating accessible, high-quality resources
- Showcasing exemplar practices that promote the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

Through direct technical assistance and support, we help build the capacity, knowledge, and collaboration necessary to implement evidence-based practices across the state.



### INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS

We promote a comprehensive, forward-thinking approach to evaluating the effectiveness of early childhood special education programming.

The CalECSE Network champions creative and innovative strategies that address barriers to high-quality assessment and educational access, always centering the needs of children and families.



### SUPPORTIVE EXCELLENCE

Our team supports educators, LEAs, and partner agencies in developing:

- High-quality, effective early childhood assessment practices
- Seamless IDEA Part C to Part B transition processes
- Inclusive program continuum options that meet diverse learner needs

We strive for excellence in every aspect of support, ensuring that children and families receive services that are timely, meaningful, and effective.



### COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Collaboration is at the heart of our work.

The CalECSE Network partners with educational and community organizations to provide differentiated resources and support tailored to the unique needs of young children and their families across California.



### PROFESSIONAL INTEGRITY

We uphold the highest standards of integrity in all our work.

The CalECSE Network is guided by:

- Transparency
- Sound judgment
- Dependability
- Respect for confidentiality
- Honest, constructive communication

We are dedicated to serving children, families, and educational communities with professionalism and respect in every interaction.



# *The Approach We Take and Scope of Work*

The CalECSE Network is a statewide network of early childhood special education professionals, including project administrators, Exemplar Lead Agencies, and Geographic Technical Assistance Facilitators (GTAFs). Throughout the 2024–2025 contract year, the Network provided targeted technical assistance, professional learning opportunities, and real-world demonstrations of evidence-based practices.

These efforts focused on key exemplar areas that are foundational to improving outcomes for young children with disabilities. These areas include:



# Building Local Capacity Through Statewide Collaboration

By sharing successful models and strategies from across California, the CalECSE Network empowers LEAs to strengthen their local systems and build internal capacity to better support young children with disabilities and their families.

CalECSE works in close partnership with LEAs, Special Education Local Plan Areas (SELPA), County Offices of Education (COEs), and other agency partners. The Network provides targeted support in key focus areas, including:

- **IDEA Part C to Part B Transitions**
- **Preschool Assessment Practices**
- **Preschool Child Find Activities**

Through this work, CalECSE assists agencies in enhancing collaboration, expanding knowledge, and implementing evidence-based practices that lead to sustainable

improvements in early childhood special education services.

In addition to direct support, CalECSE coordinates a comprehensive system of technical assistance aimed at improving LEA performance on both compliance and results-based SPP indicators. The Network also offers:

- Professional development in research-based practices
- Opportunities to participate in CoPs
- Integration and alignment with the **Statewide System of Support (SSOS)**

By leveraging existing technical assistance initiatives and fostering collaboration across state agencies, CalECSE ensures that all offerings are accessible, relevant, and aligned with broader statewide goals.

## Summary of Contract Task Performance and Results

### Task 1: Project Coordination

The California Early Childhood Special Education (CalECSE) Network successfully completed all **Task 1: Project Coordination** tasks for the 2024–2025 year. Frequent and effective collaboration between CalECSE and the California Department of Education (CDE) played a key role in achieving this outcome and ensuring the successful completion of the tasks outlined below.

**1.1:** Ongoing monthly communication with the CDE was successfully achieved through email, in person meetings, virtual meetings, and phone, as needed and to support other identified tasks.

**1.2:** All statewide training slides and related resources produced under the terms of the contract are branded to indicate they are funded by and the property of the California Department of Education (CDE).

**1.3:** CalECSE maintained active communication and collaborated closely with the CDE when staffing changes were necessary, ensuring joint efforts on the development and submission of the formal amendment.

**1.4:** The Contractor has followed the CDE correspondence and style guides, as well as adhering to Federal Final Rule Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Part 1194, subsection E205 for electronic content (Section 508), in the production of written products and Web content, with review and approval by the CDE Contract Monitor.

**1.5:** Quarterly progress reports were submitted to the CDE along with corresponding invoices, each outlining the activities completed for the relevant tasks during the reporting period.

### Task 2: Community of Practice and Professional Development Training

The California Early Childhood Special Education (CalECSE) Network successfully completed all of **Task 2: Community of Practice and Professional Development Training** deliverables for the 2024–2025 year. The CalECSE Network Leadership Team—comprised of the Co-Executive Directors from Covina-Valley USD and Irvine USD, along with CalECSE Program Specialists, Exemplar Lead Agencies, and Geographic Technical Assistance Facilitator Agencies (GTAFs)—successfully provided technical assistance, professional learning, and demonstrated effective, evidence-based practices in key areas aligned with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). This included Child Find, IDEA Part C to B transitions, evaluations, innovative and inclusive practices, and the use of evidence-based instructional strategies for preschool-aged children with disabilities. These supports reached a diverse range of agencies across California seeking or required to receive technical assistance.

Specifically, the team:

- Developed and disseminated best-practice videos
- Delivered both virtual and in-person professional development events
- Conducted a statewide needs assessment survey, initiated a social media and advertising campaign for, launched, and hosted regional Communities of Practice (CoPs) to increase local collaboration of Early Childhood Special Education administrators and practitioners throughout California
- Created and curated high-quality resources
- Planned and hosted the annual, in-person, two-day CalECSE Symposium



Throughout the year, the CalECSE Network remained actively informed on federal, state, and local research and policy developments. The team also offered guidance to support the implementation of inclusive practices and highly effective program models for preschool-aged children with disabilities.

**2.1: Exemplar Lead Agencies:** The CalECSE Network has identified seven (7) primary areas of targeted support to structure and guide the implementation of best practices for preschool-aged students with disabilities. These areas were determined through a statewide survey that included responses from LEAs, other agencies, and parents. The identified areas of need included:

1. Interagency Collaboration
2. Assessment Practices
3. Assessment Team Leadership
4. Child Find
5. Parent Outreach and Support
6. Data Governance
7. Innovative and Inclusive Practices

The CalECSE Network Leadership Team has selected nine (9) Exemplar Lead Agencies to serve across the seven identified practice areas. These agencies formally entered into Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) or Agreements with the C-VUSD/ESGV SELPA. Ongoing participation as Exemplar Leads is reviewed annually, ensuring accountability and alignment with network goals.

Over the course of 2024–2025, Exemplar Lead Agencies:

- Planned and provided two to five statewide trainings and offered in-person sessions at our annual symposium in their areas of expertise
- Provided direct consultation both in-person and virtually to LEAs, SELPAs, COEs, Regional Centers, Statewide System of Support (SSOS) partners, educator credentialing programs, and/or other entities in their area of expertise
- Shared tools and resources in their area of expertise with LEAs and other educational partners
- Supported LEAs identified through the CIM process, reviewing and helping to implement CIM plans
- Led sub-committees with at least two GTAFs to develop, review, and compile resources and statewide training materials for dissemination

Statewide training materials and resources were submitted to the CalECSE Network Leadership Team and shared with the CDE Contract Monitor no fewer than 14 days prior to distribution. Exemplar Lead Agencies received funding to support their participation and were reimbursed for travel and event-related activities throughout the year.

Through this coordinated effort, the CalECSE Network successfully built statewide capacity, enhanced early childhood special education practices to improve outcomes for young learners with disabilities, and delivered meaningful, targeted technical assistance

## **2.2: Geographic Technical Assistance Facilitators (GTAFs):**

During the 2024–2025 program year, the CalECSE Network successfully engaged GTAFs across all 11 California County Superintendents' regions, with additional GTAF support allocated to regions serving higher populations of preschool-aged children with disabilities. Each participating agency formalized its role through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the C-VUSD/ESGV SELPA, with annual participation reviewed to ensure alignment with CalECSE Network priorities and accountability for deliverables.

GTAFs played a critical role in advancing regional capacity and ensuring local access to high-quality technical assistance. Key accomplishments included:

- Providing direct linkage between LEAs and the broader CalECSE Network supports
- Delivering technical assistance on evidence-based practices that address barriers in identification, assessment, instruction, and transition for preschool-aged children with disabilities
- Supporting LEAs identified through the California Department of Education's (CDE) Continuous Improvement Monitoring (CIM) process, including active involvement in reviewing, guiding, and assisting with the implementation of CIM plans
- Collaborating with Exemplar Lead Agencies as part of sub-committees to develop, review, and compile high-quality resources and statewide training materials
- Submitting finalized resources to the CalECSE Network Leadership Team for CDE review no fewer than 14 days prior to dissemination

To support these efforts, GTAF agencies received dedicated funding, including compensation for technical assistance activities and reimbursement for travel related to participation in CalECSE events.



# Regional Communities of Practice (CoPs)

A major achievement of the year was the successful launch of Regional Communities of Practice (CoPs) in January 2025. These forums were designed to bring together LEA-based practitioners in collaborative spaces to share effective practices, address problems of practice, and improve outcomes for children with disabilities.

Planning for the CoPs began in summer 2024, when a small group of CalECSE team members participated in the Systems Improvement Leads (SIL) "Information Basics Science" course, where they defined a shared Problem of Practice related to CoP participation and developed a comprehensive statewide Needs Assessment Survey. The survey gathered input from over 350 educational partners across the state, including district administrators, special education teachers, SELPA directors, school psychologists, speech pathologists, low incidence providers, occupational therapists, physical therapists, nurses, and more.

From January to May 2025, the CalECSE Network facilitated 28 Communities of Practice across California—with a

minimum of two CoPs held in each of the 11 regions, as well as one statewide CoP focused on supporting rural districts.

Over this five-month period

- 747 early childhood special education stakeholders participated in CoPs;
- sessions were held virtually and tailored to regional needs with a combination of SSOS and local presenters and time for local collaboration in small groups; and
- participants engaged in sharing resources both via a shared doc and live conversations, discussing real-time challenges, and co-constructing solutions to improve practice and student outcomes.

This coordinated, data-driven approach has helped lay the groundwork for a sustainable and responsive CoP for early childhood special education professionals, with GTAFs serving as pivotal partners in this growing network.





## Number of Regional Communities of Practice Hosted by CalECSE Between January 2025–May 2025

| Regions                                                                           | Total CoPs Hosted |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Del Norte, Humboldt, Lake, Mendocino, Sonoma                                      | 2                 |
| Butte, Glen, Lassen, Modoc, Plumas, Shasta, Siskiyou, Tehama, Trinity             | 2                 |
| Alpine, Colusa, El Dorado, Nevada, Placer, Sacramento, Sierra, Sutter, Yolo, Yuba | 3                 |
| Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Solano              | 4                 |
| Monterey, San Benito, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz                                     | 2                 |
| Amador, Calaveras, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Tuolumne                              | 2                 |
| Fresno, Kings, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, Tulare                                   | 2                 |
| Kern, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Ventura                                     | 2                 |
| Imperial, Orange, San Diego                                                       | 3                 |
| Inyo, Mono, Riverside, San Bernardino                                             | 3                 |
| Los Angeles                                                                       | 3                 |
| Total Communities of Practice Meetings Held                                       | 28                |



## Total Number of Participants Attending CoPs and Topics Discussed in Each Region Between January 2025–May 2025

| Regions                                                                           | Total Participants | Topic Areas                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Del Norte, Humboldt, Lake, Mendocino, Sonoma                                      | 38                 | Transition to Transitional Kindergarten/ Kindergarten, Inclusion, Problem Solving for Rural Districts, Assessment                                                                                           |
| Butte, Glen, Lassen, Modoc, Plumas, Shasta, Siskiyou, Tehama, Trinity             | 48                 | Part C to B Transition, Summer assessments, Problem Solving for Rural Districts                                                                                                                             |
| Alpine, Colusa, El Dorado, Nevada, Placer, Sacramento, Sierra, Sutter, Yolo, Yuba | 82                 | Inclusion, Resources, Social Emotional Learning, Pyramid Training, Multi-Tiered System of Support, Transition to Transitional Kindergarten/ Kindergarten                                                    |
| Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Solano              | 108                | Indicator 6/LRE, Assessment, Transition Assessments, California State Preschool Programs (CCSP)                                                                                                             |
| Monterey, San Benito, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz                                     | 52                 | Kindergarten Transition Assessment Measures, Headstart Uncertainty, Staffing Shortages, Full-Day Inclusion Preschool Opportunities that Work for Families, diagnostic assessment models                     |
| Amador, Calaveras, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Tuolumne                              | 46                 | Problem solving for Rural Districts, Staffing, Inclusion                                                                                                                                                    |
| Fresno, Kings, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, Tulare                                   | 48                 | Progress monitoring, coaching support, staffing, Individualized Family Service Plans, Regional Centers, transition, placement, inclusion, co-teaching                                                       |
| Kern, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Ventura                                     | 38                 | Assessment, Transition protocols, AI for Reports, General Education Participation, Related Services, Response to Intervention, Funding, Teacher Supports                                                    |
| Imperial, Orange, San Diego                                                       | 134                | Summer Staffing, Placement, Assessment, Diagnostic Placements, Parent Consent, Transition, Extended School Year; CSPP; Language and Literacy; Universal Design for Learning, and Pyramid Model; Co-Teaching |
| Inyo, Mono, Riverside, San Bernardino                                             | 84                 | Prereferral; Placement; Staffing; Part C to B Transitions; CSPP; Job Descriptions; Collaborating with Job-Alike Professionals; Addressing the Transitional Kindergarten Increase in Numbers                 |
| Los Angeles                                                                       | 69                 | Behavior, Programming; Barriers and Supports for Families; Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSPs); Assessment; Transition; Inclusion; Support for General Education Teachers                           |
| Total Participants in CalECSE CoPs                                                | 747                |                                                                                                                                                                                                             |



# Data Review

Data was collected through a survey that was sent to 2,377 subscribers to the CalECSE Network contact list in May. According to those who responded to the survey, over 86% found participation in CalECSE CoP useful to their professional practice. One respondent noted, “I really enjoyed hearing how other programs work.” Over 82% of the respondents indicated that they learned something new to improve their practice. A respondent commented, “Having these has been useful.” Most encouraging, over 94% shared that they would recommend attendance at a CalECSE CoP to a colleague. One of the respondents shared, “I am looking forward to attending next year!”

Respondents to the survey were asked to share their suggestions, which was quite helpful in understanding their responses to the previous questions as well as supporting the team's work in determining next steps. For example, a respondent shared, “Loved the meetings and the only reason I put ‘3’ for the info usefulness was because I only do birth to three and the meetings were really discussing pre-k. It would be great if it was divided into early start (zero to three) and pre-k. Thank you so much for this community. It is greatly appreciated!”

## Qualitative Data

The following is a sample of some of the comments that were made by survey respondents:



*“It is so important that we have consistent quality education and services for our young children. I appreciate the communities of practice where we can share our practices in doing this. I always pick up several little nuggets that I can use.”*



*“Very good meetings, I wasn't aware until part way through the year, so my schedule was already impacted. I am hoping to have them built in my calendar for a better opportunity to attend.”*



*“I look forward to next year when rural areas will be addressed. Funding is something we would like to learn more about. Also, how different areas are addressing trauma, especially areas with high [Adverse Childhood Experiences] ACEs scores.”*

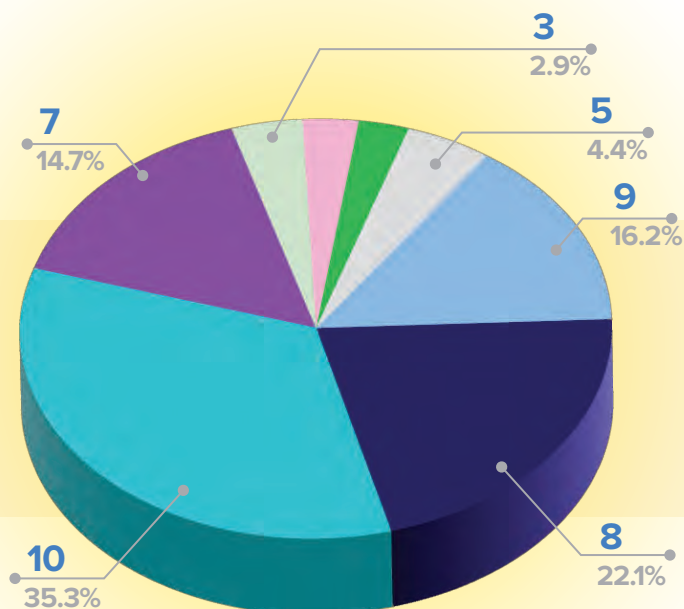


*“Breakout rooms were great, I think presentations were cool to hear about as well. Continuing this would be my recommendation”*

## Quantitative Data

If you attended any CoP: Please rate your overall experience with these meetings in terms of **usefulness** to your daily work with children and/or families.

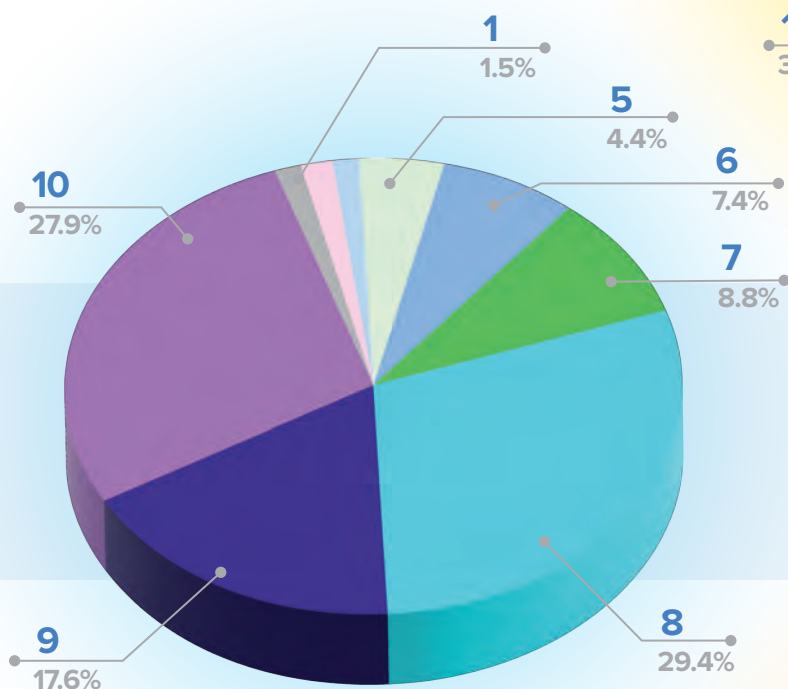
**Ratings 1-10, 10 being most useful for their practice:**



Usefulness

If you attended any CoP: Please rate your overall experience with these meetings in terms of learning something **new** to improve your practice.

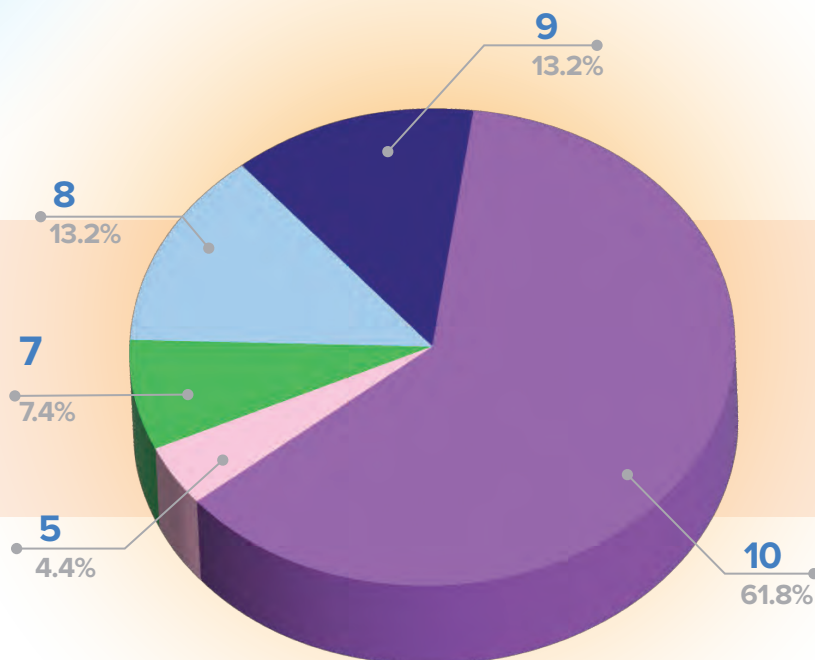
**Ratings 1-10, 10 being learned a maximum amount:**



Learning

If you attended any CoP: Please rate your experience in terms of how likely you are to **recommend** these meetings to a colleague.

**Ratings 1-10, 10 being most likely to recommend to a colleague:**



Recommendation

# Next Steps for Communities of Practice:

- Increase CoPs to four per year per region
- Creation of a Statewide Rural CoP
- Creation of zero to three Statewide School Provider Services Legacy/Low Incidence CoP
- Focus on impact to students and moving practice for practitioners with ongoing data collection to measure impact
- Build in structures with a focus on process for Regional CoP to support ongoing and robust collaboration

**2.3: Communities of Practice (COP):** With the inception of Regional Communities of Practice (CoPs) described in section 2.2 above, to better distinguish between large statewide professional development offerings and the new local CoPs, the CalECSE Network will refer to the Exemplar Lead professional development offerings as “statewide trainings” in this report. Over the course of 2024–2025 contract period, the CalECSE Network successfully surpassed its goal and delivered 17 statewide trainings to 2,679 attendees, fulfilling its commitment to statewide technical assistance and capacity-building for ECSE professionals. Each Exemplar Lead area, in collaboration with assigned GTAFs, hosted between two to five virtual workshops during 2024–2025. These sessions targeted a broad audience including district administrators, school psychologists, preschool special education specialists, speech pathologists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) specialists, Teachers of the Visually Impaired (TVI), parents/caregivers, representatives from Regional Centers and Family Empowerment Centers, nurses, and more.

The workshops provided not only technical assistance but also models of effective systems, highlighting successful practices in Part C to B transitions and high-quality preschool programming. Topics included:

- Exemplary interagency collaboration
- Best practices in assessment and assessment team leadership
- Effective Child Find models
- Parent education on child development and early intervention and Family Resource Network support available
- Data governance for Indicators 6 and 12
- Innovative and inclusive educational practices

All presentations and materials were submitted to the California Department of Education (CDE) at least two weeks prior to each event, meeting all contract requirements.

Throughout the year, the CalECSE Network also provided focused offerings on assessment tools, strategies, and eligibility practices for preschool-aged children.

These sessions included training on Rural Assessment Teams and Diagnostic Assessment Team models, comprehensive overview of Early Childhood assessment practices, a focused workshop on speech and language assessments, a targeted session on Kindergarten Transition assessments, and a session on Play-Based assessments as well as resources created by the CalECSE Network to support comprehensive and high-quality special education assessments.

### Flowchart Section A, Page 2 - Functioning Levels of a Collaborative

**YES**

Has your collaborative determined its functioning level (cooperation, coordination, or collaboration) in each of the following areas: Vision and Relationship; Structure, Responsibilities and Communication; Authority and Responsibility; and Resources and Rewards?

**NO**

Use this rubric, *Elements of Cooperation, Coordination and Collaboration* to determine your Collaborative's functioning level in each area.

Linked Resources:

- Elements of Cooperation, Coordination and Collaboration  
<https://calecse.org/uploads/compliance/Elements%20of%20Cooperation.%20Coordination%20and%20Collaboration%2001.pdf>

Flowchart PDF available at: [https://calecse.org/uploads/blogs/files/1736884253\\_Collaborative%20Flowchart%2003.pdf](https://calecse.org/uploads/blogs/files/1736884253_Collaborative%20Flowchart%2003.pdf)

Driencia Jorgin

Lisa Ostry



To support improved accuracy in Individualized Education Program (IEP) coding for California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS) reporting, the CalECSE Network provided several well-attended and highly informative professional development sessions focused on data governance, with particular emphasis on compliance with Indicators 6 and 12.

In the area of Child Find, the CalECSE Network delivered technical assistance sessions grounded in models and practices proven effective in identifying children eligible for special education services. These sessions highlighted parent outreach, education, and support strategies, particularly those that considered language diversity, cultural responsiveness, technology access, and family needs.

Workshops on inclusive and innovative program models presented best practices in creating and maintaining a continuum of preschool placement options that promote access to the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) for all students.

To ensure continuous improvement and responsiveness to field needs, feedback was collected post sessions on a voluntary basis and is summarized below. This data will also inform the planning of future sessions and will be published on the CalECSE Network website for transparency.

Statewide training events were held live via the Zoom platform, with American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation, captioning available, and session recordings made available to ensure accessibility and future use. Events specifically designed for families were offered in Spanish and English, based on community needs and planning by the Exemplar Leads.

Some sessions drew over 300 attendees, demonstrating the significant statewide impact of this work.

## Child Find Referrals



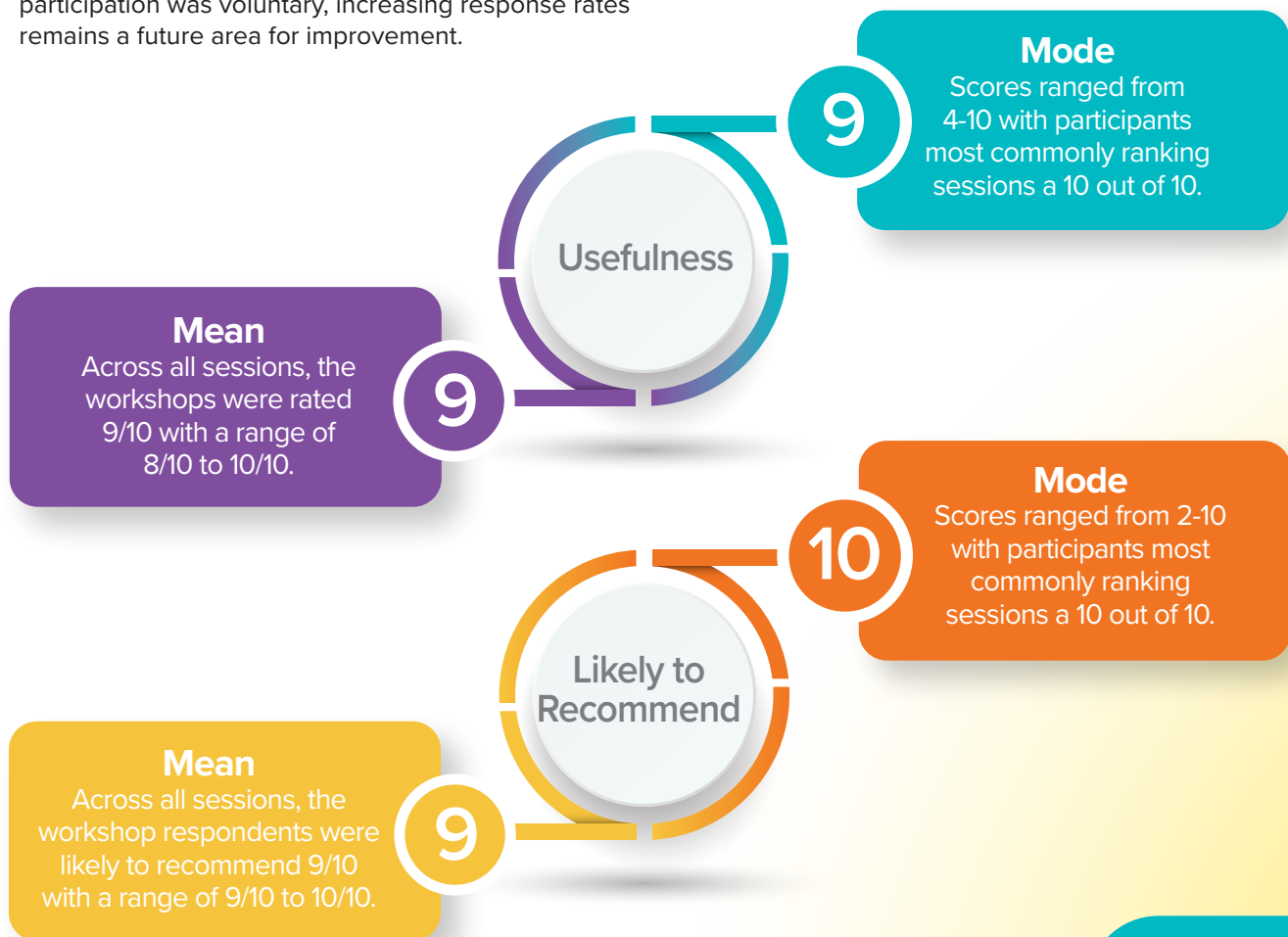
# 2024–2025 CalECSE Statewide Trainings



| Date                   | Exemplar Area                      | Title                                                                                                                                                        | Number of Attendees |
|------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| 8/29/2024              | Interagency Collaboration          | Back to Basics: Reviewing Regional Center/LEA Transition Timelines                                                                                           | 267                 |
| 9/3/2024               | Child Find                         | Tools for Improving Child Find                                                                                                                               | 150                 |
| 9/24/2024              | Data Governance                    | Preschool Data Governance: Overview of CALPADS Reporting                                                                                                     | 148                 |
| 11/6/2024              | Assessment Practices               | ABCs of Early Childhood Assessments                                                                                                                          | 208                 |
| 11/19/2024             | Assessment Team Leadership         | Setting Up For Success: Developing an Assessment Team for Early Childhood Special Education, Part 1                                                          | 105                 |
| 1/14/2025              | Assessment Practices               | Early Childhood Speech and Language Assessment Best Practices                                                                                                | 221                 |
| 1/16/2025              | Innovative and Inclusive Practices | How to Build an Inclusive Program                                                                                                                            | 140                 |
| 1/21/2025              | Interagency Collaboration          | Providing resources and support to establish and maintain effective interagency collaboration as children and families transition from IDEA Part C to Part B | 47                  |
| 1/27/2025              | Data Governance                    | Indicator 12                                                                                                                                                 | 78                  |
| 1/30/2025              | Assessment Practices               | Kindergarten Transition Assessments                                                                                                                          | 341                 |
| 2/20/2025              | Parent Outreach                    | Milestones and Abilities 0-5                                                                                                                                 | 165                 |
| 2/25/2025              | Assessment Team Leadership         | Setting Up For Success: Developing an Assessment Team for Early Childhood Special Education, Part 2                                                          | 133                 |
| 3/10/2025              | Data Governance                    | Preschool Data Governance: Overview of Indicator Six                                                                                                         | 105                 |
| 3/11/2025              | Child Find                         | Empowering Preschool Teachers to Identify Potential Needs and Make Effective Referrals                                                                       | 87                  |
| 3/19/2025              | Assessment Practices               | Beyond Compliance: Using the DRDP to Support Your Work                                                                                                       | 106                 |
| 4/22/2025              | Innovative and Inclusive Practices | Inclusive Program Overviews & Panel                                                                                                                          | 121                 |
| 4/29/2025              | Assessment Practices               | Play-Based Assessments                                                                                                                                       | 257                 |
| <b>Total Attendees</b> |                                    |                                                                                                                                                              | <b>2,679</b>        |

# Overview of Data Review

- A total of 674 participants voluntarily completed post-session surveys following 12 CalECSE statewide professional development trainings. While survey participation was voluntary, increasing response rates remains a future area for improvement.



## Overall Highlights

- High Approval Ratings: Most sessions received 60–75 percent "10 out of 10" ratings for both:
  - Usefulness in daily work with children and families
  - Likelihood to recommend the training to a colleague
- Strong Learning Impact: 85.2 percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they "learned something new to improve my practice today."





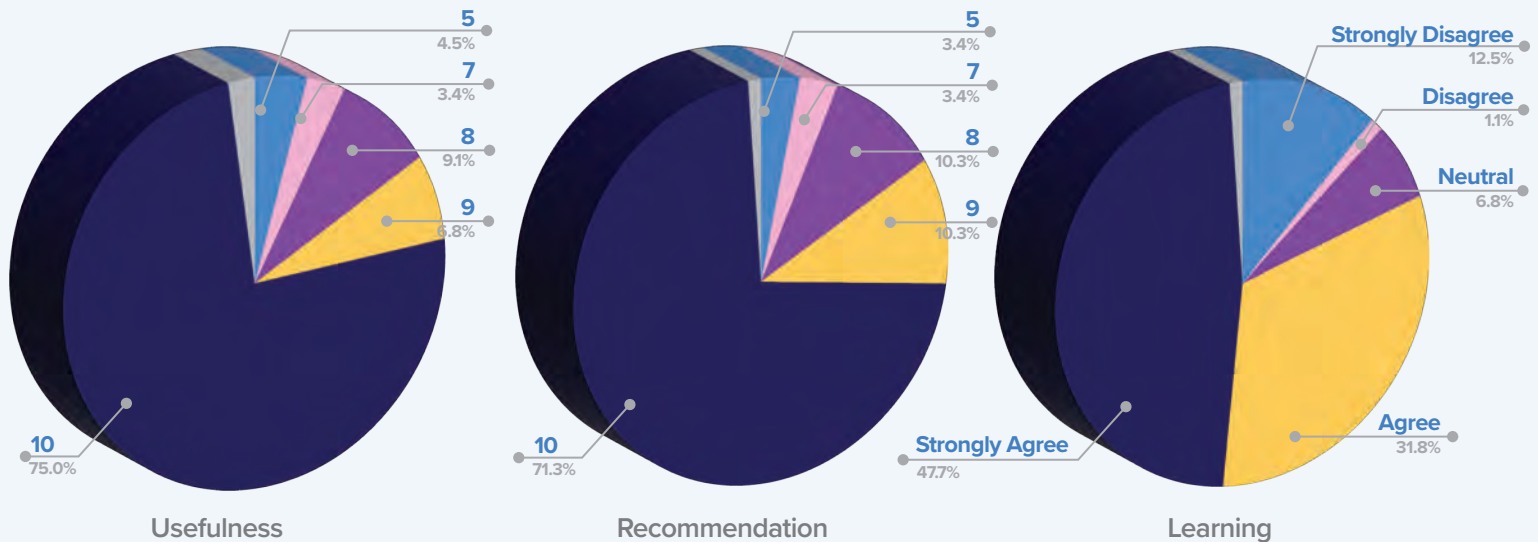
## Top-Rated Sessions:

### Most Useful in Daily Work:

- Assessment Practices: ABCs of Early Childhood Assessments (75 percent rated 10/10)

*"I would love to just have some open discussion time to hear what has worked for other colleagues and just have some processing time. This was the most helpful training I have attended in a very long time. Most of the assessment trainings I have gone to are out of date, rudimentary, or too general. Thank you for giving me actual tools."*

### Nov 6: Assessment ABCs

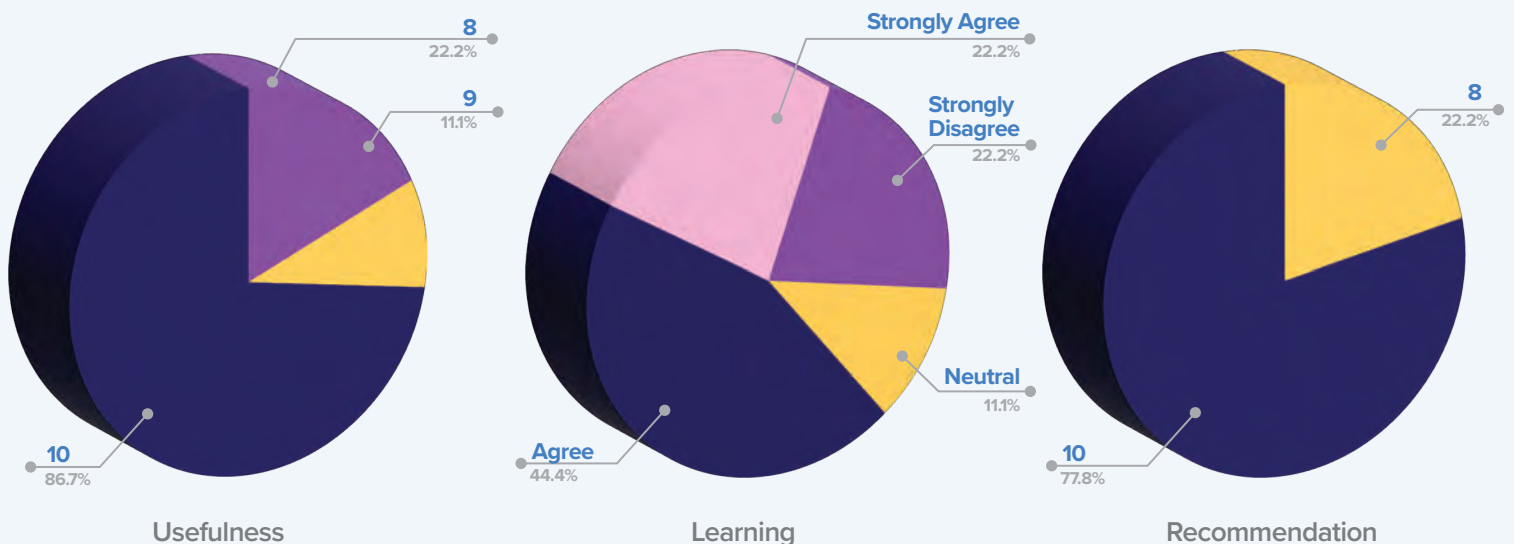


### Most Recommended to Colleagues:

- Assessment Practices: ABCs of Early Childhood Assessments
- Interagency Collaboration: Providing Resources and Support for Part C to Part B Transitions (Both received over 70 percent 10/10 ratings)

*"Please include deaf professionals in systems work. Expanding upon activities SELPAs can provide and collaborate on to support assessment teams and service coordinators."*

### Jan 21: Developing and Sustaining



## Most Valuable for Practice Improvement:

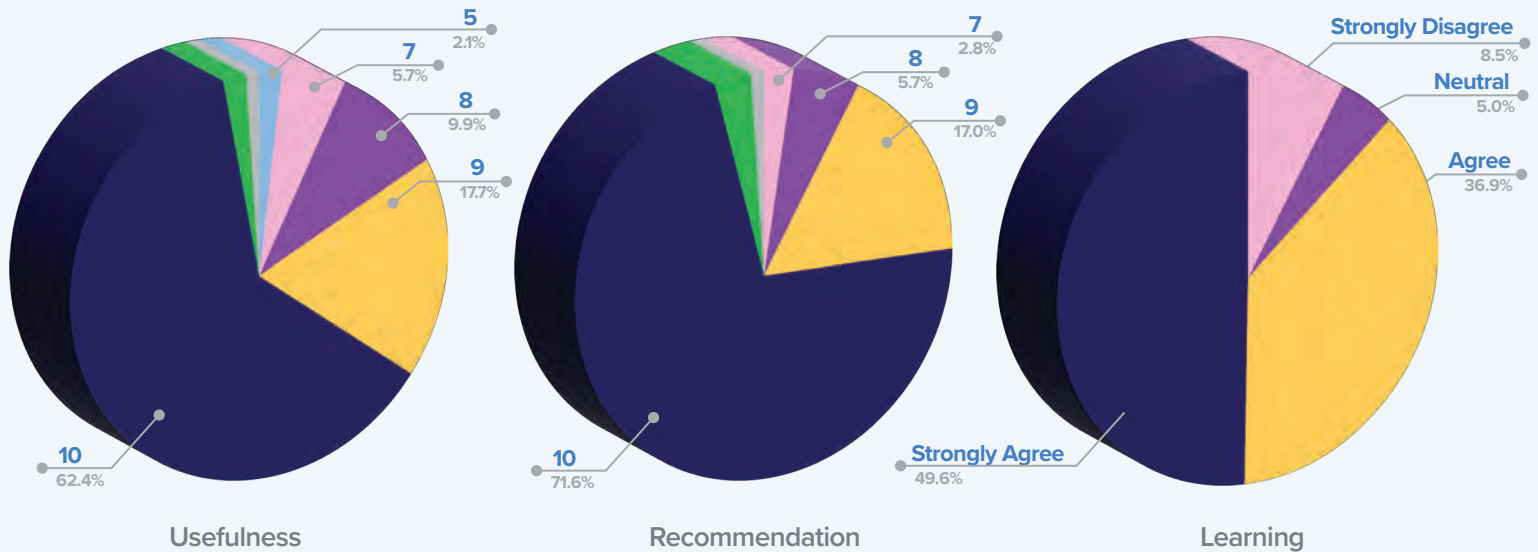
- *Assessment Practices: Kindergarten Transition Assessments* (90 percent agreement or strong agreement)
- *Assessment Practices: Play-Based Assessments* (90% agreement or strong agreement)



*"I really appreciate the very detailed focus on transitions and the sample docs and videos. It makes it easier to make a change with a procedure when we don't have to spend time reinventing the wheel."*

*This training felt more like it was covering the legal requirements as opposed to the actual assessment process and best practices. There was useful information, but not what I was expecting."*

## Jan 30: Assessment Practice Transition



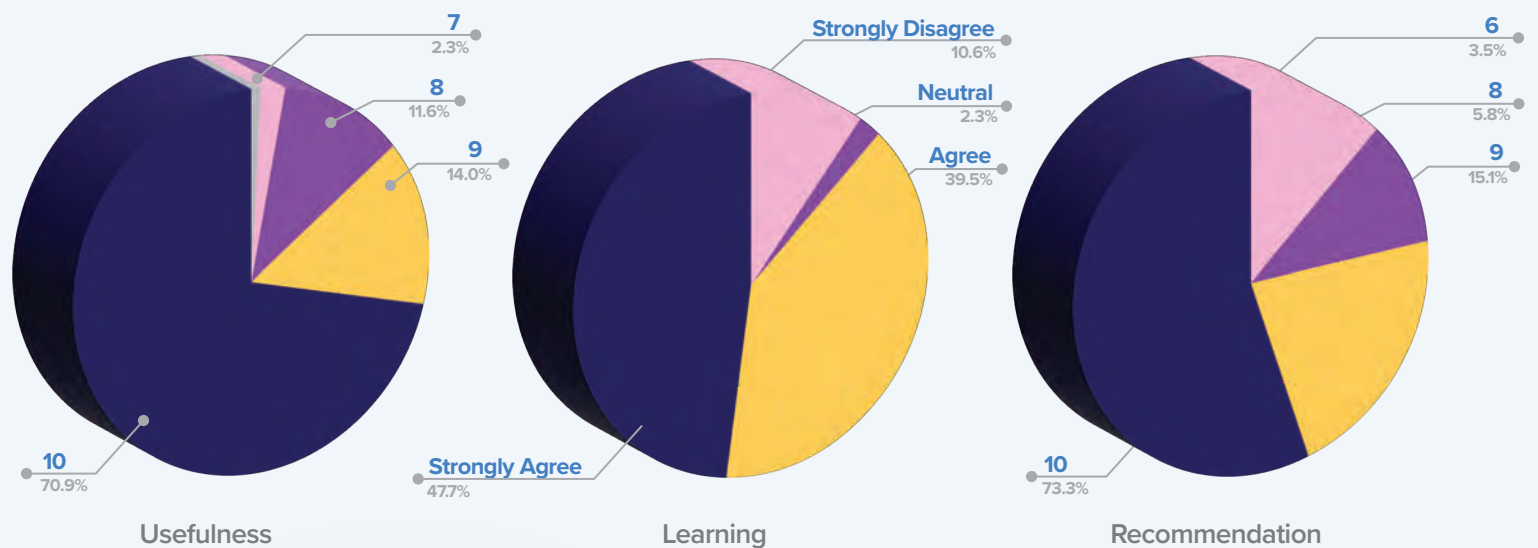
These results reflect strong participant satisfaction and clear evidence of practical, applicable learning across the CalECSE professional development offerings.



*"Creative ideas to implement at least part of this play-based assessment strategy within districts with limited resources."*

*I look forward to collaborative work to show what autism looks like when it comes to deaf children."*

## April 29: Assessment Practice Play Based



**2.4 Professional Learning Annual Symposium:** The California Early Childhood Special Education (CalECSE) Network successfully held its second annual Symposium “Building Bridges” on October 22–23, 2024, in San Diego, California, bringing together more than 700 participants from across the state. This in-person event provided approximately 12 hours of high-quality professional learning per participant, featuring two powerful keynote speakers, 104 expert speakers, 50 breakout sessions to choose from designed to build capacity and support best practices in the field of Early Childhood Special Education, and a networking social on the first evening with education related exhibitors and SSOS partners featured.

## The Symposium sessions focused on a wide range of critical topics, including but not limited to:

- Part C to B transitions
- Interagency collaboration and technical assistance for developing interagency agreements
- Preschool assessment models
- Inclusive practices supporting Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)
- Evidence-based teaching and therapy techniques
- Legal and policy updates in early childhood special education
- Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)
- Family engagement and parent empowerment
- Data governance
- Supports for multilingual learners
- Assistive technology, augmentative and alternative communication (AAC), and low incidence disabilities

Attendees included a broad spectrum of Early Childhood partners such as preschool special education administrators, education specialists, psychologists, speech-language pathologists, parents, and representatives from Regional Centers and Family Empowerment Centers.

## The most highly attended and well-received sessions included:

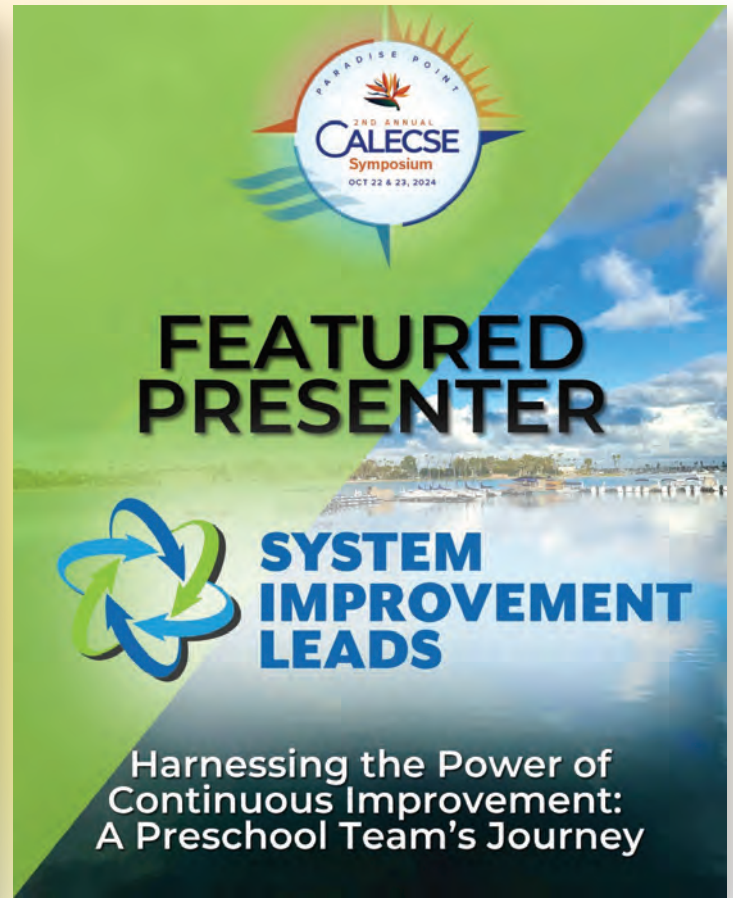
- *Preschool LRE: Inclusive Models and Legal Obligations*
- *Assessment Preschool Model: A Child-Centered Comprehensive Team Approach Within a Classroom/Playgroup Setting*
- *Unseen Challenges: The Impact of Inattention and Emotional Dysregulation in Early Childhood*
- *Understanding the Sensory System and Building a Sensory Inclusive Classroom*
- *Conducting Autism & Intellectual Disability Assessments*
- *Updates from the California Department of Education*



## Content was organized into key thematic strands, including:

- Alternative Dispute Resolution
- Assessment Practices
- Augmentative and Alternative Communication
- Innovative and Inclusive Practices
- Instructional Strategies
- Interagency Collaboration
- Legal Updates
- Parent Outreach

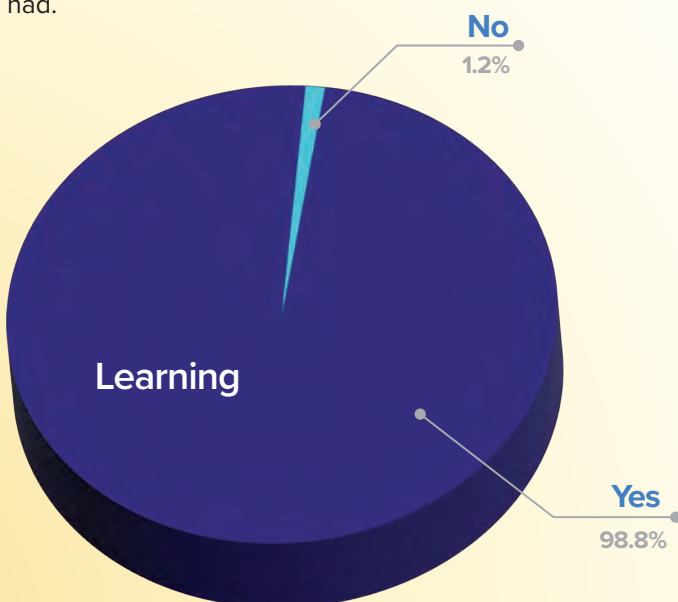




The October 2024 symposium successfully advanced the CalECSE Network's mission by strengthening statewide collaboration, disseminating evidence-based practices, and providing high-impact learning opportunities to support preschool-aged children with disabilities.

## Symposium Survey Results

When asked if they had learned something new to improve their practice in the field of Early Childhood Special Education, 98.8 percent of respondents indicated that they had.



## What Did You Like Best About the CalECSE Symposium?

"The keynote speakers were incredible! And I love that they also had breakout sessions to hear more in-depth info."

"A chance to collaborate with fellow educators!"

This conference was amazing and I'm so thankful for the opportunity to attend! I will be taking all this information back to my district!"

"This was incredible learning!"

"Location and speakers with strategies and ideas to bring back."

"Totally geared towards the zero to five population."

"Great variety of sessions and topics to choose from."

"I enjoyed having the opportunity to attend sessions that were meaningful and related to my job. Having the opportunity to listen to the new research and trends in special education."

"Everything! It was fantastic."

"The keynote speakers were wonderful, everything was very organized and the location was beautiful!"

**2.5 Resources for the Special Education Early Childhood Field:** Over the course of the 2024–2025 program year, the CalECSE Network monitored, maintained, and regularly updated its website ([www.CalECSE.org](http://www.CalECSE.org)) to ensure that Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) providers across California had consistent access to high-quality, evidence-based resources. These updates supported the field in implementing tangible best practices and aligned guidance documents.

Several aspects of the website were identified this year as needing additional redevelopment and revision, in order to increase access for the user, improve engagement and ensure accuracy. This work included modifying the way resources are organized, creating additional access points, adding helpful graphics, replacing outdated documents, updating information and clarifying text. These changes resulted in increased accessibility, improved user webpage experience and ease of management for future resources. See example below:

### Assessment Practices Resources

#### Events

Events
Virtual Training: Assessment Practices-Using the DRDP to Support Your Work

Join CalECSE and our special guests Elizabeth Schroeder Project Director and Shawn Kaplan Training Manager from the Desired Results Access Project for a no-cost virtual

[View »](#)

Events
Virtual Training at No Cost

CalECSE offers Virtual Training Sessions on a variety of topics available at no cost.

[View »](#)

#### Tools

Tools
Assessment Practices - Medical Diagnosis of Autism vs. Educational Eligibility of Autism

This one page resource provides a quick at-a-glance look at the difference between a medical diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder and an educational eligibility of

[View »](#)

Tools
Preschool Initial Referral Intake Form

A writable tool - Preschool Initial Referral Intake Form

[View »](#)

Tools
Assessment Practices - Play Based Assessment Observation Notes

Use this downloadable fillable PDF during your assessments in order to capture play-based child observations

[View »](#)

### Timeline of Preschool to Transitional Kindergarten (TK) or Kindergarten (K) Transition Planning

| Month                | Activity                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Person(s) Responsible                                                                                      |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| August to September  | 1. Create a <a href="#">spreadsheet</a> with children who are age eligible for TK and K for the following school year and begin gathering information (e.g., residence school, eligibility categories).                                                                         | Preschool Administrator                                                                                    |
| October              | 1. Discuss with parents/guardians transition process and timelines for registering for TK or K.<br><br>2. If concerns are anticipated with transition or placement, refer to preschool administrator or call an Individualized Education Program (IEP) team meeting to discuss. | Case Manager<br><br>Case Manager                                                                           |
| November to December | 1. Review records and discuss students to determine if:<br>a. TK age-eligible students will be assessed now or after their TK year?<br>b. Transition/Records Review or Full Reevaluation assessment will be needed for each student?                                            | Case Managers, Preschool Administrators, Parent/Guardians, and Receiving Team Administrators/Case Managers |
| January              | 1. Schedule transition IEP meetings, including receiving team and general education TK/K teacher<br>2. Inform parent/guardian of TK and K informational evenings/events and TK and K registration information                                                                   | Preschool Administrator/Case Managers<br>Case Manager                                                      |



Resources posted and shared included:

- Checklists supporting effective transitions from Part C to Part B, including the release of seven new supportive resources to support Interagency Collaboration
- Best practices in preschool assessment procedures, including the development of a Play-Based Assessment Observed Developmental Skill Checklist to support assessors in recognizing developmental milestones during informal assessments and observations
- Fact sheets for LEAs detailing IDEA mandates
- Tools to guide appropriate administrative decisions related to preschool assessments and transitions, including a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document for Kindergarten (K) Transition assessments and a Timeline for Planning for Transitional Kindergarten (TK) and (K) Assessments for LEAs
- A new video was released for private child care and preschools, Head Start preschool, and California State Preschool Programs (CCSP) teachers and administrators explaining how to start conversations with families when staff are concerned about a child's development and where early intervention and assessment can be accessed.



- Data system resources, including guidance on accurate IEP coding for California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS) reporting

The website also showcased high-quality, pre-existing video vignettes in each exemplar area, highlighting effective practices and professionals from the field. These videos served as real-world illustrations of exemplary implementation in early childhood special education.

In addition to the website, the CalECSE Network amplified visibility and engagement by promoting Communities of Practice (CoPs) offerings, the annual symposium, and newly developed resources through its social media platforms, expanding outreach to a broader audience of practitioners and stakeholders.

All resources were developed and disseminated in collaboration with other California Department of Education (CDE) Statewide System of Support Leads and affiliated initiatives, including the California Technical Assistance Network (CalTAN) and the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence (CCEE) Statewide System of Support Resources Hub.

This coordinated effort ensured alignment with state priorities and expanded access to critical technical assistance for educators and administrators supporting California's youngest learners with disabilities.

## Task 3: Technical Assistance Facilitation

During the 2024–2025 program year, the California Early Childhood Special Education (CalECSE) Network successfully delivered targeted technical assistance (TA) to Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) identified as needing support with implementing their Continuous Improvement Monitoring (CIM) plans. These supports focused on addressing problems of practice related to **Preschool Indicators 6 (Least Restrictive Environment), 7 (Preschool Outcomes), and 12 (Early Childhood Transition)**.

To ensure alignment with state priorities and maintain a high standard of service delivery, the CalECSE Network actively participated in all California Department of Education (CDE)-required meetings for TA providers. This engagement strengthened the Network's readiness and capacity to provide high-quality, responsive technical assistance throughout each phase of the CIM process.

**3.1: CIM technical assistance assignments:** During the 2024–2025 contract year, the CalECSE Network was assigned to support four Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) as a designated Compliance Improvement Monitoring (CIM) Plan Step 4 technical assistance provider.

In this role, CalECSE delivered both administrative and regional support by assigning a Geographic Technical Assistance Facilitator (GTAF) to each LEA. All technical assistance activities aligned with the structure and organization established by the Step 1–3 Technical Assistance Provider, System Improvement Leads (SILs).

Key elements of the support included:

- **Monthly CIM Implementation Meetings:** Conducted primarily via Zoom, with in-person options available at the LEA's discretion
- **Customized Support:** Meetings were tailored to each LEA's individual CIM plan, ensuring targeted and responsive assistance
- **Ongoing Accessibility:** CalECSE Co-Executive Directors and team members were available by phone and email to provide continuous guidance and support throughout the CIM process



This individualized, multi-modal approach ensured LEAs received high-quality, consistent, and context-specific technical assistance to support their improvement efforts.

**3.2 CIM Meetings/Technical Assistance:** The CalECSE Network provided sustained, individualized support to each assigned Local Educational Agency (LEA) through its designated Technical Assistance Provider and CalECSE project administrator. These team members were responsible for maintaining and reviewing each LEA's Compliance Improvement Monitoring (CIM) Plan, tracking progress reports, and developing monthly meeting agendas to guide implementation efforts.

As part of its comprehensive support strategy, the project offered:

- **Monthly Huddles and Coaching Sessions:** CalECSE facilitated regular virtual coaching to review progress, address challenges, and provide targeted guidance.
- **Customized Support Aligned to CIM Plans:**
  - Shared existing CalECSE resource documents developed to support each LEA's identified CIM Indicator area
  - Recommended participation in CalECSE virtual trainings aligned with each LEA's problem of practice
  - Monitored and advised on progress toward CIM milestones
  - Supported data collection strategies and analysis to inform decision-making
  - Facilitated observations of model programs to inspire and inform best practices
  - Encouraged LEA CIM teams to engage in regional Community of Practice (CoP) meetings for peer learning and collaboration
  - Facilitated observations of model programs to inspire and inform best practices
  - Encouraged LEA CIM teams to engage in regional CoP meetings for peer learning and collaboration
  - This responsive and strategic approach ensured that each LEA received the tools, coaching, and professional learning opportunities needed to advance their early childhood special education initiatives in alignment with state performance goals.

## Closing Statement

As we conclude the 2024–2025 program year, the CalECSE Network remains steadfast in its commitment to advancing equity, collaboration, and innovation in early childhood special education across California. Through strong partnerships, responsive technical assistance, and a shared vision for inclusive practices, we have supported Local Educational Agencies in making meaningful progress toward improving outcomes for our youngest learners with disabilities.

Looking ahead, we will continue to build on this foundation—expanding access to high-quality professional development, fostering cross-agency collaboration, and promoting evidence-based strategies that support every child's right to a strong start. Together, we are shaping systems that empower educators, engage families, and ensure that all children have the opportunity to thrive.

Follow us for updates  
on training opportunities:



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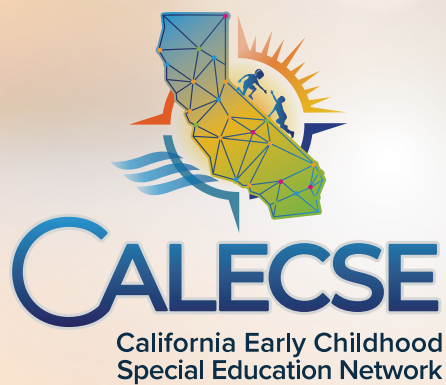
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