



CA Early Childhood Inclusion Support Spring 2025 Newsletter California Department of Education



Inspirational Video



[Placer County Office of Education \(PCOE\) Early Childhood Education Wellness Team](#) (Video; 3:26)

(video to go with bright spot program; see inclusion spotlight below)



Early Learning and Care Inclusion News

The updated and current California Department of Education (CDE) [Rightful Presence and Inclusive Early Education Programs letter](#) dated December 4, 2024, has been added to the CDE [Special Education Director's Official Letters](#) web page under "Laws, Regulations, and Policies."

WestEd has launched the [Inclusive Early Education Expansion Program \(IEEEP\)](#) (WestEd) web page which showcases the 2020–24 IEEEP grant independent evaluation.

The High Quality IEPs Project (HQ IEPs) is thrilled to assist families and local educational agencies (LEAs) throughout California by offering training and resources to enhance meaningful involvement in the Individualized Education Program (IEP) process.

HQ IEPs envisions a future where all LEAs, in collaboration with families, are equipped to create high-quality IEPs using best practices. This will lead to meaningful participation and educational benefits for students. The vision is grounded in equitable practices aimed at intentionally removing barriers for both students and families, ultimately fostering positive academic and social-emotional outcomes. Click on the links below to explore tools, resources, professional development, and services designed to build on the IEP journey. One resource to highlight is their IEP Toolkit for Educators. Have fun exploring!

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- [Technical Assistance](#) (High Quality IEPs)
 - [Universal Supports](#) (High Quality IEPs)
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Inclusion Spotlight



The PCOE has pioneered a groundbreaking Early Childhood Wellness Program designed to support young children and their families by addressing critical mental health, social-emotional, and behavioral needs. This innovative program focuses on creating an integrated approach to early childhood wellness, leveraging systems like the Interconnected Systems Framework, inclusive practices, and the Teaching Pyramid Model to foster an environment of care and development.

The PCOE's Early Childhood Education and Prevention Support Services departments collaborated to co-pilot this program beginning December 2021 utilizing a team-based model. The program brings together mental health specialists, behavior specialists, leadership, and early childhood educators from multiple departments within PCOE to ensure holistic support for children ages zero through five. The program initially launched with one part-time Mental Health Specialist and one full-time Behavior Support Specialist directly serving children in Placer County's California State Preschool sites. The PCOE has continued to intentionally foster a collaborative intra-agency approach connecting leadership from both the Prevention Supports and Services department and the Early Childhood Education department on a regular basis. This interdepartmental team is instrumental in driving the success of this program by utilizing data-informed decisions to propel the wellness work forward.

Since the initial launch of the program in December 2021, the PCOE has dedicated additional resources to expand and grow the team to two full-time Mental Health Specialists, and one full-time Behavior Support Specialist, along with developing a more robust supportive and invested leadership team consisting of administration from both departments. This team also expanded their abilities to serve childcare providers and centers that participate in the Family Childcare Homes Network, Family Friend and Neighbor Program, the Early Quality Matters Program, and children being served within the Foster-Bridge Program totaling to over 100 sites in Placer County. The PCOE Early Childhood Wellness Team emphasizes the importance of equity in early learning, providing tailored wellness services that focus on the child and family's strengths, interests, and needs of both the children and families served. These services range from individual direct mental health and behavioral supports to group or program wide social-emotional development supports, ensuring that children and families are given the tools they need to thrive. To date, the Early Childhood Wellness Team has received and supported a total of 230 wellness referrals from childcare providers, preschool teachers, and community partners within Placer County.

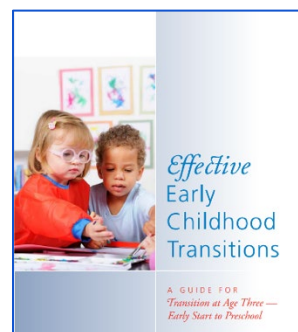
The Early Childhood Wellness Program emphasizes the importance of professional development for educators and providers. The Wellness Team offers regular training in trauma-informed care, developmentally appropriate practices, and behavior management, equipping early childhood

professionals in Placer County to better serve children facing behavioral challenges that may impact their success in learning environments. With evidence-based tools and data-driven decisions, the program's approach empowers early learning sites to address gaps in services and ensure that every child receives the support they need for a healthy start in life.

Through their comprehensive program, PCOE demonstrates the potential for early intervention, by providing a model that other communities could adapt to meet their unique needs.

Transitions

Transition is a key aspect of the Early Start experience, introduced to families as a vital program component from their first encounter with early intervention services. This process, which encompasses preparation, planning, and implementation, starts at the initial family visit. Service coordinators discuss the program's start and end with each family, including potential options for the child at age three, such as LEA-operated special education services, community-based preschool programs, or other community resources. It is essential for service coordinators to have a thorough understanding of the locally agreed-upon transition procedures and the community resources available to families.



Effective Early Childhood Transitions: A Guide for Transition at Age Three — Early Start to Preschool is intended for the Early Start community that includes regional center and LEA service coordinators, service providers, family resource centers, and receiving LEA providers. Service providers may include LEA infant programs and specialists, Early Head Start and Head Start programs, vendored infant development programs and individual providers, and community-based public and private preschool programs.

The guide identifies both required elements for transition and recommended practices to support families and their children as they successfully navigate transition from Early Start to other services at age three. The guide is organized by transition activities that occur from initial intake until a child and family leave Early Start services at age three. Additional resources, including references and tools for professionals involved in the transition process, are provided in the Resources section at the end of this document.

[Effective Early Childhood Transitions: A Guide for Transition at Age Three - Early Start to Preschool](#)
(Department of Developmental Services)

Social Emotional Resource Highlight

Classroom Assessment Scoring System, or CLASS, focuses on measuring and improving teacher-child interactions to enhance children’s outcomes. Educators are provided with resources to support high-quality learning experiences for all children, including those with disabilities, focusing on emotionally supportive relationships, engaging learners, and tailored instructional support.

CLASS has a dedicated space on their website to support educators who work with children with disabilities. Some of the highlights include various downloadable resources, videos of effective educator-child interactions when working with children with disabilities.

Click the link below to access the CLASS supports for Children with Disabilities and to learn more about CLASS.

[Children with Disabilities](#) (Teachstone)



Upcoming Events and Learning Opportunities

California Association for the Education of Young Children (CAAEYC) annual conference (April 11–13, 2025)

[Diverse Voices: Joyful Choices](#) (CAAEYC), Santa Clara, California

Supporting Inclusive Practices (SIPs) Annual Inclusion Conference (May 8–9, 2025)

[SIP Events](#) (Supporting Inclusive Practices), Virtual event

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) International (July 22–23, 2025)

[Innovating for Inclusive Education](#) (UDL-Con: International), Washington D.C.

Division for Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children (DEC) Annual Conference (October 7–10, 2025)

[DEC Annual Conference](#) (Division for Early Childhood), Portland, Oregon

Santa Clara County Office of Education (SCCOE) Inclusion Collaborative Annual Conference (October 20–22, 2025)

[Inclusioners Will Return!](#) (SCCOE), Hybrid event

California Multi-Tiered System of Support (CAMTSS) Professional Learning Institute (July 22–24, 2025)

[CAMTSS Professional Learning Institute](#) (Orange County Department of Education), Anaheim, California

California Early Childhood Special Education Network (CaIECSE) 2024–25 Virtual No-Cost Trainings

[Virtual Training at No Cost](#) (California Early Childhood Special Education Network)



In case you missed it

CalECSE Assessment Practices Resources

Would you like to learn more about early childhood assessments? Please visit the CalECSE “Resources” page and click on the “Assessment Practices” link. There you will find videos of highly reviewed trainings including Early Childhood Autism Assessments, as well as downloadable training portable document formats (PDFs) on a wide range of topics. For more information, please visit the [CalECSE](#) web page.

Resource: Making Sound Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) Decisions in Preschool

Included in this document are Guiding Questions for Discussing Services in the LRE to make sound placement decisions for each young child with a disability. [Making Sound LRE Decisions in Preschool](#) (California Making Access Possible [MAP] to Inclusion & Belonging).

The MAP to Inclusion and Belonging website provides quarterly newsletters. The Spring MAP Newsletter was released in late May and includes some fantastic resources and information. Visit [MAP Newsletters](#) (California MAP) for more information and to view the most recent and past newsletters.

Using the Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP) to Measure Child Progress, teachers can use Desired Results (DR) Access Reports at [DR Access Reports](#) (Desired Results Access Project) for individual children with Individual Family Services Plans and IEPs to help plan intervention and instruction. View this recorded webinar, “Using the DRDP to Measure Child Progress,” for more information and strategies at Learn Lab: [Using the DRDP to Measure Child Progress](#) (Desired Results Access Project)

CalECSE

[Virtual Training Calendar](#) (CalECSE)

The CDE, in consultation with the California Department of Social Services and the State Board of Education, was required to submit a report to the Legislature and the Department of Finance with recommendations for preschool quality standards, recommendations for preschool access, and recommendations at the intersection of both quality and access, as well as other considerations.

- The Universal Prekindergarten (UPK) Workgroup Legislative Report, is posted on the CDE website at [UPK Mixed Delivery Quality and Access Workgroup](#)
- Additionally, a graphically designed version of the UPK Workgroup Report, along with additional supplemental materials, are posted on the California Educators Together website and can be viewed at [UPK Mixed Delivery Quality and Access Workgroup](#) (California Educators Together)



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