



Special EDition

San Joaquin County
Special Education Local Plan Area

2017 - 2018 · VOLUME II

January 2018

5th Annual Festivale

The Junior League of San Joaquin County and their partner organization, the Ladybugs, hosted the fifth Annual Festivale on November 6, 2017 at the Brookside Country Club. The event, a prom like party, was attended by nearly 350 high school and young adult students with special needs, their teachers and paraprofessionals.

The theme for the event was Festivale Celebrates Superheroes, highlighting the students' superhero efforts as they strive towards independence and building lives as active participants in their communities. The Festivale is an interactive event with dancing to music provided by a local DJ, a photo booth, treat booths, as well as an opportunity to socialize and meet up with old friends and students from other classes and districts.



From left to right: Barbara Greene, Steve Taylor, SELPA Program Specialist Margaret St. George, County Superintendent of Schools James Mousalimas, Festivale Chairperson Daisy Plovnick, Festivale Chairperson Pat Delucchi and Robb Molnar.



Students enjoying the Festivale with James Mousalimas, County Superintendent of Schools.

Volunteers from the hosting organizations and invited community members provided another level of interaction. One of the community members in attendance was James Mousalimas, County Superintendent of Schools from the San Joaquin County Office of Education. Superintendent Mousalimas made his way around the party, stopping to chat, dance, shake hands and pose for some great pictures with students. He enjoyed interacting with the students and seeing the students, teachers and staff have a good time. He acknowledged the great work of the Junior League and Ladybugs, thanking them for the opportunities they provide to the students in San Joaquin County.

Workshops & Trainings

- Wednesday, March 7, 2018 — Dyslexia Training
- Thursday, March 22, 2018 — LSH Spring Symposium
- Tuesday, April 10, 2018 — Autism Forum

For more information on trainings and workshops offered, please contact Gail Brodigan-Dalton at (209) 468-4907. Email pabdollahzadeh@sjcoe.net to receive the monthly workshop/training calendar by email.

Interested in professional development opportunities? Information on upcoming San Joaquin County SELPA workshops and trainings can be found on our website at:

<http://www.sjcoe.org/SELPA>

From Our SELPA Director Kathleen Skeels

Happy New Year!

In this EDition you will find our amazing students and educators succeeding at our Sierra High School Deaf/Hard of Hearing programs, Manteca students in the K-1 Autism Transition class growing, everyone enjoying events like the United Cerebral Palsy Prom, Junior League Festivale and, of course, the Halloween Dance that allows everyone to be something different for just a moment. You will see students at the WorkAbility I Entrepreneurial Business Holiday Boutique working, selling their creative items; educators attending a 504 workshop; Language, Speech and Hearing professionals networking and learning about how they can integrate their skills in the area of social-emotional goals, and a great turnout to learn more about dyslexia assessment and intervention.



Kathleen Skeels
Assistant Superintendent,
Special Education/SELPA
Director

Although it is a new year, the quality of relationships and a growth mindset continues. I see educators that embrace challenges, persistence in the face of setbacks, learning from criticism, seeing effort as the path to mastery and finding lessons and inspiration in the success of others. Special education continues to grow and we are faced with a teacher and support staff shortage. Many new teachers need support, mentorship and positive attitudes from those who have served over time. We cannot afford to lose one good teacher who would have chosen to stay as an educator if they had a person to encourage them through the first couple of years.

The Governor has recognized the major shortage of teachers for special education. In his January budget proposal, he included money for a Teacher Residency Grant to go to local educational agencies (LEAs) to support recruitment and partnerships between colleges and LEAs. The teacher would work in a classroom of the sponsoring district for at least one year with continuing mentorship and professional development. The second is a Local Solutions Grant for creative ideas from LEAs to solve local needs. We also need good quality Instructional Assistants and have a special committee supported by our Superintendent, James Mousalimas. The goal of this committee is to further develop recruitment, retention and career ladders for our classified staff. Please reach out and become ambassadors to our profession and let your friends, neighbors and people in the community know that there is opportunity in the education field at many levels. It is a place to inspire young and old to pursue a career. Links are below for more information on career opportunities.

The new year brings many adventures. Even though the fog settles in many parts of San Joaquin County and seeing ahead on the road that you travel may be difficult, there is always the certainty that you are valued and needed. The students you serve make their way, sometimes on a foggy road as well, to your classrooms and smile. Be safe on your journey and Happy 2018! "Keep on... Keep on..."

Edjoin:

<https://www.edjoin.org/Home/Jobs?districtId=699>

Teachers College of San Joaquin:

<http://www.teacherscollegesj.edu/>

Search & Serve

If you have a baby who was very small or sick at birth or a young child whose development worries you, a telephone call may put you in touch with someone who can answer your questions and help you get service for your child. Call your school district office or the San Joaquin County Office of Education at (209) 468-4925 for more information.

Si usted tiene un bebé, quien era muy pequeño o enfermo de nacimiento o un niño de quien su desarrollo le preocupa, una llamada telefónica puede ponerlo en contacto con alguien quien le puede contestar sus preguntas y ayudarlo a obtener servicios para su niño. Hable a la oficina de su distrito escolar o a la Oficina de Educación del Condado de San Joaquin al (209) 468-4925 para más información.

Community Advisory Committee (CAC)

Our recent Community Advisory Committee business meeting was held on December 11, 2017. This group advises the SELPA about the Special Education Local Plan and allows parents, school districts, the SELPA and related agencies the opportunity to build communication, share resources and improve knowledge about special education issues. Several presentations were made highlighting programs and services available within our SELPA districts and local agencies such as Family Resource Network, Valley Mountain Regional Center and El Concilio.

After lengthy discussion and research, the committee has also accepted a new logo. This version is a cleaner, more modern logo which will copy easier in printed materials. Our CAC flyer will be updated with this new logo. The last two CAC business meetings this year will be on February 9 and April 3, 2018 at 11:45 a.m. at the San Joaquin County Office of Education.



LSH Fall Symposium

On October 24, 2017 SJCOE was honored to host recognized leader on character education and communication skills, Ellen Pritchard Dodge, M. Ed CCC-SLP, for her presentation at the Language, Speech and Hearing Fall Symposium. Her presentation on social-emotional learning was designed to teach tangible, effective and easy to implement social-emotional tools to those working with young people.

Kimochis Keys to Communication, which connects feelings to behaviors, was one tool highlighted and numerous items were given away to participants. At the completion of this training, participants were well prepared to run social skills groups using a variety of social-emotional strategies to promote resiliency and social competency.



1. Kimochis products were raffled off to participants during the symposium.
2. Over 200 people attended the symposium.
3. Eager learners listening to the presenter.
4. Ellen Pritchard Dodge teaching participants how to connect feelings to behaviors.



"SJCOE, thanks so much for the delicious breakfast and lunch. I absolutely love attending the workshops here because of the excellent speakers, accommodations & food. Thank you!"

"The presenter was very talkative, energetic, fun, funny and very expressive!"
Verbally..."

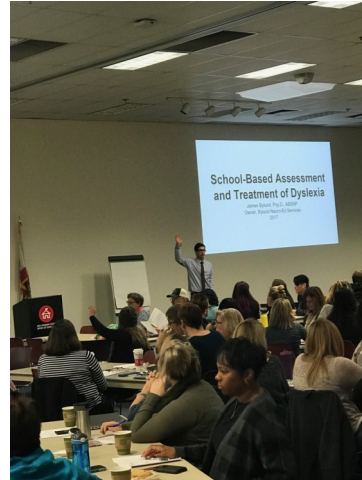
"Wonderful presentation, useful information, tools to utilize immediately."

"The hands on activities kept me engaged throughout the training."



Dyslexia Training

Dr. James Bylund presented “School Based Assessment and Treatment of Dyslexia” on December 12, 2017 at the San Joaquin County Office of Education’s Wentworth Education Center. Around 150 educators attended the workshop. Dr. Bylund gave a brief overview of the history of dyslexia and updated participants on the current legislation regarding dyslexia. Dr. Bylund has a unique perspective and he shared how he has also struggled with dyslexia in school. Click the link for a list of resources recommended by Dr. Bylund: <http://drjamesbylund.com/resources.html>



We had a great turnout for our first Dyslexia training!

3rd Annual Entrepreneurial Business Holiday Boutique

The San Joaquin County SELPA WorkAbility I program hosted its third annual Entrepreneurial Business Holiday Boutique on December 1, 2017 at the San Joaquin County Office of Education. This boutique engages the entrepreneurial spirit that is alive and well in our high school and young adult students in special education classes throughout our SELPA. Students, with assistance from teachers and staff, decide on what products are viable to sell during the holiday season. They discuss and decide upon product development, materials and supplies, and the cost of labor to put these products together. They then collect or shop for materials and get to work creating the chosen products.

The boutique is the culmination of their hard work and a way to learn and augment their skills in customer service, sales, and money management. The students and staff arrive with their merchandise, set up their displays, get out their cash boxes and begin selling! This year’s WorkAbility I Entrepreneurial Business Holiday Boutique resulted in sold out booths and students walking away from the morning with new skills, a greater sense of confidence and the first hand experience of seeing the relationship between work and making money.



Items for sale at the boutique.



From left to right: Steven Grubb, Tiffany Ducker, Jesus Martinez-Guerrero and Geovanni Monroy.



From left to right: Kylie Beach and Alyssa Ellison, Zaemora Toney and Jesse Clark selling items at the boutique.



Decorated plates for sale.



Manteca Unified School District

SDC K-1 Autism Transition Class

Manteca Unified School District developed the Special Day Class (SDC) Kindergarten K-1 Autism Transition class in 2011 to meet the needs of students on the Autism Spectrum who are academically prepared for the rigor of general education but who continue to have difficulty with social or sensory integration skills.

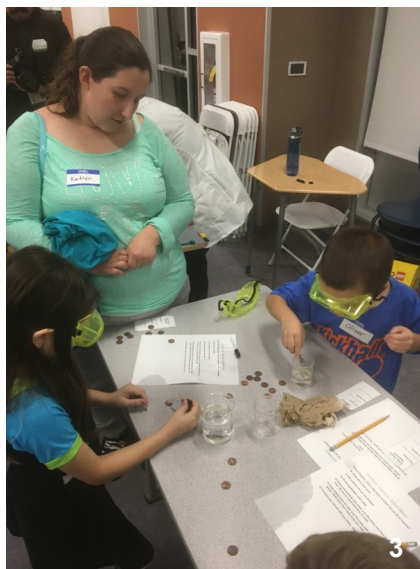
The SDC K-1 Autism Transition class pairs with a general education K-1 combination. This reverse mainstreaming allows typical general education peers to model appropriate behaviors which assist with skill acquisition within the special education environment. This allows for the kindergarten class to begin with fewer students and the first grade class to transition with fewer students. The objective is to have students in the transition class be fully included in general education by second grade. The goals are to develop social communication and peer relationships with grade level peers and to teach self-regulation and executive functioning skills to meet the social and academic expectations of general education.

The SDC K-1 Autism Transition class utilizes a team approach to services. The team consists of the program specialist, psychologist, general education teacher, special education teacher, classroom paraprofessionals (aides), occupational therapist, adapted physical education teacher, speech therapist, behaviorist, parents, special education students, and general education students. The general education and special education teachers and the paraprofessionals working with the students receive training specific to autism and current program needs.

The school professionals also meet regularly to discuss students and programming. The SDC K-1 Autism Transition class has support from all stakeholders. The Coordinator of Special Education visits the program and meets with the program specialist frequently to discuss student outcomes. The principal is actively involved in the program and knows each of the students. Each of the district service providers consult and collaborate regularly about services and discuss issues that arise and how best to intervene. The team works alongside the non-public agencies (NPAs). Many students can fade back the NPA services because of the coordinated effort by all.

Parents are an integral part of the program. The students come from all over the district. Prior to the start of the school year, the students and parents are invited to visit the school for a "Meet and Greet" with the staff to familiarize themselves with the campus and program. Parent reports are probably the most telling outcome data for the class. Parents see an increase in social language and verbal communication with their child with autism and often report observing their child actively engaged socially with age appropriate peers after years of the contrary.

This class has benefited many students who have transitioned successfully to general education. Manteca Unified saw a need and developed a program to meet those specific needs.



1. Students viewing the solar eclipse.
2. Students showing off their healthy food choices.
3. A parent watching over an activity on Science Night.

Deaf and Hard of Hearing at Sierra High School

The San Joaquin County Office of Education Special Education Programs class for high school students who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing (D/HH) is located at Sierra High School in the Manteca Unified School District. This County satellite program is taught by Rachel Hernandez along with one paraprofessional and six certified American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters who make up the team that supports these students through their high school day, mostly in general education classes.

The high school D/HH special education classroom is the students' English/Language Arts class as well as support for all of their other classes. The class is run as close to a general education format as possible with the support of interpreters and the paraprofessional. In many ways, the special education classroom is not just their English class but a resource for what is needed to help them be successful.

Students' needs are identified through their Individual Education Program (IEP) and the special education and general education classrooms are the venues where the students work on their established goals. They also receive needed services such as access to an interpreter.

There are many different supports set up for students' success which include interpreters, preferential seating, and note-takers which are available as addressed within the parameters of the students' IEPs. Students in Rachel's class in past semesters have been on the honor roll with the expectation that 10 out of 11 students will be on the honor roll this semester. This is a true sign of the success that these students have achieved.

The students in the class are out and about on campus making friends and interacting with other students utilizing the communication style that is most convenient for them. Students are involved in extracurricular activities such as clubs, sports, etc. with an interpreter provided for these activities.

Rachel Hernandez has this to say about her class, "There is not just educational growth that can be seen in my program, but maturity, a desire to learn and to set goals for the future. This makes my job even more special. The class is a part of County Programs as the students have a Low Incidence disability. However, in all honesty, I run a general education program. My students have the same requirements to earn a diploma as general education hearing students. I know we are a special education program but in so many ways we are a general education program as well. My students can do everything everyone else can but hear."



Rachel Hernandez teaching her students.



From left to right: Students continuing their education in Rachel Hernandez's class.

504 Workshop

The San Joaquin County SELPA hosted the training, "What Educators Need to Know About Section 504" on November 16, 2017. Section 504 is a part of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 that prohibits discrimination based upon disability.

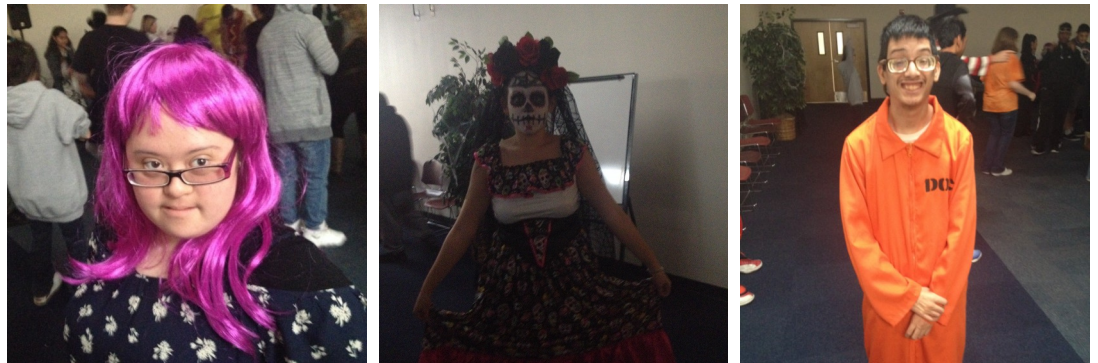
Jennifer Fain, partner with the Law Offices of Atkinson, Andelson, Loya, Ruud and Romo, reviewed components of Section 504 requirements, inclusive of accessibility and compliance issues for school districts. This training followed a previous training, "Section 504" in February 2017, also presented by Ms. Fain, which provided a general overview of Section 504 and discussion of the Americans with Disability Act (ADA) Amendments Act. Well over 120 participants attended the most recent informative presentation.

During the workshop, Ms. Fain explored recent case studies and trends with the respective implications on public school entities. These discussions were appreciated by the participants, especially as school districts try to insure equal access and protections for students with disabilities.

Most participants noted their appreciation for the in-depth question and answer session which offered the attendees an opportunity to present scenarios and to receive feedback to ensure that qualifying students are provided the supports and protections needed to access their education. The session also provided important information and useful tips to employ when working with this population of students.

Annual Halloween Dance

Students from young adult special education classes put on their yearly Halloween dance.



[From left to right: Alia Calderon, Camilla Salcedo and Michael Jager showing off their costumes at the Halloween Dance.](#)

Tips for Special Education — The Power of Smiling

Mirror neurons fire when another person acts; thus, the neuron "mirrors" the behavior of the other. Implications for educators are that students learn a lot more than we intend via modeling, from both



educators and peers. According to Ron Gutman, smiling is evolutionarily contagious, and it suppresses the control we usually have on our facial muscles. The average adult only smiles about 20 times per day. And yet, smiling can actually make you healthier. "Smiling can help reduce the level of stress-enhancing hormones like cortisol, adrenaline and dopamine, increase the level of mood-enhancing hormones like endorphins." So if you want to increase the positive culture in your class, you may want to activate those mirror neurons to cause smiles. Students will treat us how we treat them.

For more information, visit this link: https://www.ted.com/talks/ron_gutman_the_hidden_power_of_smiling

UCP Prom

On Saturday, October 29, 2017 United Cerebral Palsy (UCP) and Xi Chi Sigma hosted the 2nd Annual Spark of Night Prom. The organization hosts this prom to provide a memorable experience for people with disabilities where they can socialize with others and enjoy a night of dancing.

Hundreds of people in elegant suits and dresses filled the DeRosa University Center Ballroom at University of the Pacific in Stockton. DJ Drew Fuentes played a variety of music to match the energy of the crowd who danced non-stop during the three hour prom. Xi Chi Sigma brothers performed a step routine that caused everyone to erupt in cheers. Prom attendees enjoyed delicious appetizers, including an assortment of bundtinis. Ulmer Photography captured and printed photos on the spot so that everyone could memorialize this special evening for years to come. One of the program's manager's said, "It's truly a joy to see the smiles on our prom attendees' faces and to feel the warmth and acceptance in this environment."



Beverly Gunderson and Patrick Doherty having a great time with big smiles at the event!



Fern Nobles enjoying her evening!



Prom attendees enjoying their event!

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Margaret St. George,
mstgeorge@sjcoe.net

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Kortney Kauss,
kkauss@sjcoe.net



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San Joaquin County Office of Education

James Mousalimas, County Superintendent of Schools

Scott Anderson, Deputy Superintendent, Business Services

Janine Kaeslin, Assistant Superintendent, County Operated Schools & Programs

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Applicants must have a high school diploma or equivalent and meet one (1) of the following criteria:

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