

**CALIFORNIA  
SPECIAL EDUCATION  
SUMMIT II**

**Meeting Summary**

**December 4-5, 2004  
Sacramento, CA**

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**Saturday, December 4, 2004**

## **LITERACY**

### **✚ Presentation by Catherine Christo, Ph.D., CSU-Sacramento**

([Slides/handouts](#) available with other Summit resources)

### **✚ Facilitated Discussion**

(Participants split into 4 small groups and discussed a series of questions. The following is a synthesis of key issues that emerged during the course of the session.)

## **1) What are the major challenges you've faced with regard to literacy?**

### **Challenges Involving School Personnel**

- ✚ Lack of knowledge of research-based interventions
- ✚ Lack sufficient number of qualified personnel (teachers and administrators)
- ✚ Literacy approaches need more "buy-in" from staff, administration
- ✚ Administrators at the district level need more education about literacy approaches
- ✚ Not enough credentialed teachers
- ✚ Case loads high for literacy-specialized personnel
- ✚ Need to fill in gaps in teacher knowledge (depending on teachers' training)
- ✚ Train special education teachers to link with general education teachers and approaches
- ✚ With little time and changing programs, teachers need an effective and standard way to understand and process student data
- ✚ Teachers know programs but not literacy foundations
- ✚ Teacher morale is low because they feel they have to perform a certain way and work within a scripted program

### **Challenges Involving Students**

- ✚ Lack of resources for students with visual and hearing impairments
- ✚ Among students, there is a high level of frustration, anxiety, depression, and desire to fit in, be successful, and join society
- ✚ Lack of motivation/excitement about reading
- ✚ Unprepared high school and middle school students (insufficient literacy preparation at elementary?) leading to increased drop out rates
- ✚ Older students are reluctant to accept accommodations or additional help
- ✚ Consistency in educational approaches for children, especially for high transient populations
- ✚ Children of deaf/hard of hearing parents may require additional literacy assistance that parents cannot provide (e.g., living skills when looking for jobs). Can after-school programs provide this assistance?

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### **Challenges Involving Implementation -- Funding/Materials/Time**

- ✚ Funding issues affect staff allocations, staff ratios, teacher training; class sizes are too large
- ✚ Special education teachers need materials for all instructional levels
- ✚ Lack of well-structured literacy interventions and structure of services
- ✚ Program fidelity must be maintained despite size of district
- ✚ With a variety of SBR Reading programs, it is difficult to be cohesive across regions/schools
- ✚ How to get systems to change in smaller, remote areas?
- ✚ How to get funding to smaller schools?
- ✚ How to get parents involved in system change (articulate goals)?
- ✚ Do literacy measures, research, etc... transfer across all disability populations? This has not always been well addressed.
- ✚ Sites are reluctant to be creative in order to deliver literacy services
- ✚ Teachers have the challenge of responding quickly to newest research-based instruction
- ✚ Language is used in middle school but doesn't meet grade standards

### **Challenges Regarding 3-Tier Response to Intervention (RTI)/ Response-based Intervention (RBI)**

- ✚ Will this model take the place of other model? How is the RTI model different than current structure?
- ✚ Finding time to implement RBI interventions and to complete required curriculum
- ✚ How to integrate IEP and RBI interventions
- ✚ When/how do I move into RTI intervention phase?
- ✚ When is it okay to use the RTI intervention materials?
- ✚ Does focus on Tier II mean extending the core curriculum?
- ✚ Powerful assessment strategies are needed as children move through 3-tier system
- ✚ Regular and special education staff must work together. Who provides primary instruction? Who provides RTI intervention strategies?
- ✚ Are general education teachers "on board" with RTI approaches? Special education staff has talked about 3-tier model for a while now
- ✚ Some districts seem to be moving away from RBI
- ✚ Can RBI approaches be implemented at secondary levels?
- ✚ If intervention models are not continued at secondary level, it seems there will be no resources for later grades

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## 2) What approaches have been successful with regard to literacy? What tools have been helpful?

### Approaches Involving School Personnel

- ✚ Teachers who use rewards help increase student motivation
- ✚ Communication between home and school
- ✚ Co-teaching/team teaching with areas of expertise
- ✚ All team teachers meeting together to discuss what is working
- ✚ Intervention teams
- ✚ Having flexibility in staffing to make things work
- ✚ Teachers having input about literacy programs/approaches
- ✚ The whole school adopting a motto or chant, such as  
Staff: "Today we read/write"  
Students: "Tomorrow we succeed"
- ✚ Teachers having tools for educating diverse learners
- ✚ Teachers giving input to insure well-balanced formal and informal assessments
- ✚ Service providers are more available with RTI to provide service instead of testing for discrepancy; when site leadership is on board w/ RTI they set the tone for site, thus avoiding chaos
- ✚ Use of after-school mentoring and other service providers

### General Approaches for Literacy Instruction

- ✚ Reading with parents at home
- ✚ Receiving early intervention, especially in comprehension
- ✚ Universal preschool with trained staff in language development
- ✚ Extended kindergarten opportunities
- ✚ Diagnostic assessment for targeted instruction for at-risk students
- ✚ Feeling comfortable with the "culture" of school (one that supports reading for all students)
- ✚ Multi-sensory integrated approaches to literacy (full immersion)
- ✚ Incorporating cultural literacy by building vocabulary development
- ✚ Focus on increasing vocabulary skills so that comprehension and reasoning skills will also increase
- ✚ Renewed interest in reading fluency and phonemic awareness
- ✚ Focus on phonemic awareness in district learning centers
- ✚ Community collaboration
- ✚ Five days per week of direct focused instruction; systemic literacy instruction across pre-k through 12
- ✚ "Push in model" for instruction
- ✚ Leveling service provision depending on need (e.g., lower quartile given intensive instruction)
- ✚ Successful implementation of technology
- ✚ Departments within schools allocating money to purchase materials
- ✚ Approaching students as individuals and realizing that "One size doesn't fit all"

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## Specific Approaches Involving Literacy Programs

- ✚ Language!
- ✚ Linda Mood Bell/SRA
- ✚ Wilson Reading
- ✚ Character-Based literacy—successful use of hands-on materials with children with emotional disturbance, especially at the middle school and high school levels
- ✚ Zoophonics
- ✚ Project Read
- ✚ Orton-Gillingham approaches
- ✚ DIEBELS
- ✚ SIOP (Strategy Institute Observation Protocol: observation protocol for English Language Learners)
- ✚ Learning Center mode
- ✚ Open court
- ✚ Software/resources: Accelerated Reader; LEXIA; Reader Rabbit; Reading Counts; Orcher

## 3) What can we identify as policy and implementation issues that need to be addressed within the next year?

### Issues Involving School Personnel

- ✚ Reinstatement of the reading specialist at elementary level
- ✚ Cross-grade communication among staff—transition meetings
- ✚ Paid collaboration time for teachers (with an increased opportunity for collaborating with higher education staff)
- ✚ Commitment to curriculum and standards-based education in all environments and from all staff
- ✚ Teachers need to know why their school is using the curriculum the administration has chosen
- ✚ Teachers need to use differentiated instruction
- ✚ Administration should solicit input from all stakeholders about curriculum decisions
- ✚ Principals need training on funding, models, services, delivery systems, etc.
- ✚ Training for staff on how to collect data, properly train teachers—who will monitor effectiveness?
- ✚ Principal needs to monitor implementation
- ✚ NCLB should be bringing principals on board
- ✚ What does 'Highly Qualified' really mean? Will there be a test for teachers?

### Issues Regarding Response to Intervention

- ✚ Systemic shift to embrace all students—regular education, special education, Tier 1, 2, etc.
- ✚ Legislation in CA to support RTI – what will the policy be?
- ✚ How do we merge the current structures in place with the new model?

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- ✚ Fidelity of implementation of programs
  - ✚ Increased focus on Tier 3 kids
  - ✚ Further definition of terms (such as response)
  - ✚ How to track/level reading groups
  - ✚ Small groups need to stay small

### **Issues Regarding Broad Policy**

- ✚ Full funding; more money for special education
- ✚ Flexibility leading to “outside-the-box solutions” (such as learning center model)
- ✚ Legislation to focus on general education to implement aspects of IDEA
- ✚ Taskforce in CA for Special Education/504 Impact (include parents in this work)
- ✚ Access for all, including students with visual and hearing impairments
- ✚ Accountability for school site and administration, including general education
- ✚ Changes to API/AYP scores?
- ✚ Now that 100% of SIG money will be allocated for professional development, what will happen?
- ✚ Local Plan/Annual Service plans need to be revised
- ✚ State leadership and state guidelines need to be assessed
- ✚ Regulations- what will be the impact on Specific Learning Disability criteria?
- ✚ How will alternative dispute resolution be affected?
- ✚ Preschool for all
- ✚ Increased role of SELPA in support and training for districts

### **Issues Regarding Implementation**

- ✚ Parents need to be included in all phases of the process for this to be a true collaborative process and partnership
- ✚ There must be consistency and collaboration of services between grade levels (especially middle school through high school)
- ✚ Secondary implementation may require reorganization of current service delivery model
- ✚ Attention to adolescent reader – is it possible to add reading electives in older grades?

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**4) Are there any shifts or changes with regard to literacy given IDEA reauthorization? Or do we have questions about how reauthorization will affect this area?**

**Changes or Questions Regarding Instruction**

- ✚ Shift from the individual to group—one size fits all
- ✚ Instruction is focused on individual or small groups to fit needs of student
- ✚ Serving immediate needs simultaneously with long-term needs
- ✚ Are compensatory skills being taught? (Music, social pragmatics, etc.)
- ✚ Assistive technology is the future for non-readers and needs to be implemented in the high schools
- ✚ Creative use of teachers to deliver interventions

**Changes or Questions Regarding Broad Policy Implications**

- ✚ NCLB and IDEA need to work together on accountability and individualization
- ✚ How will CA interpret the regulations?
- ✚ California can shape national policy
- ✚ Identify discrepancies between state and federal policies
- ✚ How can we strengthen parent resources/community resources?
- ✚ Partner with Parent Centers

**Changes or Questions Regarding Response to Intervention**

- ✚ Focus has shifted away from paperwork to RTI, creating better outcomes
- ✚ A task force is needed to identify RTI and RBP
- ✚ Should California improve IDEA by requiring RTI vs. discrepancy?
- ✚ Need for definitions of key terms; Intensive? Tier I and III?
- ✚ Continue service to meet underlying needs even if student “meets” goal
- ✚ Checklist of Steps in Tier I-III concrete/specific
- ✚ Reading delay not only symptom of Learning Disabled
- ✚ Could RTI exclude kids with organizational executive function, or other “hidden” impacts of Learning Disabilities from getting service?
- ✚ Are kids w/ Learning Disabilities who read going to be excluded?
- ✚ How do we get RTI infused into teacher prep programs and in schoolteacher development?
- ✚ Who monitors that all the interventions are done?
- ✚ What do we do with kids who have no discrepancies but are low performers?
- ✚ Curriculum may need to be adjusted
- ✚ Large number of teachers and interns are implementing Tier I and II  
If school psychologists/special education staff doing Tier (II) what happens to special education case load, testing—will someone take over diagnostic?
- ✚ How do we know when to exit?

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### **Changes or Questions Regarding Testing**

- ✚ What is reasonable related to AYP and special education?
- ✚ Shift from performance-based to high stakes testing
- ✚ How will IDEA reauthorization affect statewide testing?
- ✚ California High School Exit Exam requirements

### **Changes or Questions Regarding Evaluation /Monitoring of IEP goals**

- ✚ If no discrepancy to diagnose Learning Disabilities—then what?
- ✚ How will we assess if students have processing disorders?
- ✚ How can we be sure evaluators are qualified to evaluate?
- ✚ At what point do students get comprehensive evaluations?
- ✚ Progress monitoring key factor
- ✚ Monitoring for regression of skills
- ✚ Online Data Management
- ✚ Establish objective criteria for evaluation goals, benchmarks
- ✚ Reauthorization impacts the way we write our goals and objectives

### **Changes or Questions Involving Teachers/School Administrators**

- ✚ Access to implications/training on reauthorization info (not just administrator centralized)
- ✚ Informing general education teachers that we are a team
- ✚ Some district level special education administrations don't support special education teachers
- ✚ Collaboration, paid training
- ✚ Accountability for money--Title 2 as professional development, how to support teachers?
- ✚ How will NCLB requirements affect teacher-training programs?
- ✚ Site Administrator being open to doing something different
- ✚ Need leadership from districts/superintendents
- ✚ Highly Qualified Regulations - how can we implement them and what will the impact on general education be?

### **EARLY CHILDHOOD and MENTAL HEALTH INTERVENTION**

- ✚ **Presentation by Chris Drouin, California Department of Education, and John Hoffman, Ph.D., Hunting Beach USD/UCLA School Mental Health Project**  
([Slides/handouts](#) available with other Summit resources)

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## IEPs/STANDARDS

- ✚ **Presentation by Janet Canning, California Department of Education**  
([Slides/handouts](#) available with other Summit resources)

- ✚ **Presentation by Diane Youtsey, Association of California School Administrators**  
([Slides/handouts](#) available with other Summit resources)

- ✚ **Facilitated Discussion**

(Participants split into 4 small groups and discussed a series of questions. The following is a synthesis of key issues that emerged during the course of the sessions.

### 1) What are the major challenges you've faced with regard to IEPs/Standards?

#### Challenges Involving Parents

- ✚ IEP process is still intimidating to parents
- ✚ Sensitivity to parents at an orientation on site is still needed (need information ahead of time regarding proposed services and results of assessment)
- ✚ Parents afraid to not write everything on IEP
- ✚ Communicating with parents who do not speak English
- ✚ Translation is not always accurate so parents may not understand
- ✚ Parents sometimes rebuffed when trying to self-refer; they get letter saying no suspected disability

#### Challenges Involving Writing/Designing IEPs

- ✚ IEP development may involve teacher as scribe and not as giving input
- ✚ Teacher spends over-abundant amount of time completing IEP and takes away from serving the student; loss of teachers may result
- ✚ Over-proceduralization eliminates relationship-building among IEP team
- ✚ Potential for litigation and focus on compliance may eliminate team decision-making and less focus on child
- ✚ Individualization in IEP may be lost due to time constraints (individual student needs must be clearly articulated so that they can be met)
- ✚ IEP may not address independent living issues (e.g., scheduling, organization skills, etc)
- ✚ Team doesn't always have state standards at IEP meeting for reference
- ✚ Parent knowing they can opt out
- ✚ Number of students in alternative programs
- ✚ Length of final IEP document and length of IEP meeting
- ✚ State has not succeeded in providing standardized forms
- ✚ Content standards

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### **Challenges Regarding Implementation – time, materials, funding, training**

- ✚ Implement IEP with lack of money
- ✚ Need more time and money with early childhood
- ✚ Concern that we're using special education (IDEA) resources for the 3-tier systems
- ✚ Implementing modifications in general education program when modifications are very significant
- ✚ Over-use of some general education teachers
- ✚ Lack of training for both general and special education teachers
- ✚ Divisions between general and special education teachers
- ✚ True collaboration with parents, staff at schools and keeping other agencies involved
- ✚ Need more specialized personnel
- ✚ Speech and language personnel need updated training
- ✚ Caseloads too high
- ✚ Lack of access to materials (no teacher editions of textbooks) across grade levels (especially reading materials)

### **Challenges Regarding Standards**

- ✚ Being able to understand standards and how they're being implemented
- ✚ Choosing essential standards for individual students and involving them in the regular program
- ✚ All students having access to standards and accommodations
- ✚ Interfacing the "individual" in IEP with standards; sometimes goals not tied to state standards; what about processing goals that are not imbedded in standards?
- ✚ Standards are double-edge sword – raise expectations but also cause student frustration and teacher/administrator accountability
- ✚ Backlash against special education because of not meeting AYP under NCLB
- ✚ Trying to teach core curriculum and address remediation (could consider conducting remediation after school)
- ✚ Standards address cultural knowledge and academic knowledge; special education students challenged in cultural information
- ✚ More service provision needed for moderate-profound; fewer ties to content standards
- ✚ Administrators on site need to be leaders in curriculum

### **Challenges Regarding Assessment/Graduation**

- ✚ Why testing when they are an IEP kid? We already know they are not performing at grade level
- ✚ Accuracy of test results; are the tests meaningful? Measuring what the student learns?
- ✚ How do we know student is getting accommodation on day of testing? Is district following IEP?

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- ✚ What kind of alternative diploma is acceptable (rather than certificate of completion)?
  - ✚ CAHSEE- violation of federal law- no alternative assessment for CAHSEE; no development of assessments
  - ✚ Inconsistency that students can opt out of state tests but not CAHSEE
  - ✚ Inconsistency of interpreters for deaf and English Language Learners for testing
  - ✚ Disproportionate number of students being referred by parents because parents erroneously think they'll be excluded from California Exit Exam

## 2) What approaches have been successful with regard to IEPs/standards? What tools have been helpful?

### Approaches Involving Parents

- ✚ Sending parents reports, speaking with parents about goals and objectives prior to IEP meeting
- ✚ Getting parents to attend meeting (call day ahead to verify if they will attend)
- ✚ Parent training is far and few between – more funding for this implementation
- ✚ More parent/teacher communication so bond can form; no breakdowns should occur

### Approaches Regarding Writing/Designing IEPs

- ✚ For new teachers: copies of standards, trainings; communicate changes in a timely manner
- ✚ Have students at the IEP meetings (start this young); having student show off own work – portfolio at the IEP; self-advocacy
- ✚ Have older students run their own IEPs
- ✚ Use of online/computerized IEP – have to complete all components; using online IEP may not benefit parents
- ✚ Addendums to the IEPs should be easier via phone conversations
- ✚ Trainings – IEP coaches (one expert at each school); IEP forms training
- ✚ Acsa and Cars + manual
- ✚ Goals and Objectives Handbook
- ✚ “Selected” Goals and Standards
- ✚ Having a professional interpreter present
- ✚ Having adult chairs and tables
- ✚ IEP begin with transition meeting
- ✚ State standardized form will make things easier
- ✚ Communication where pre-steps have been taken so that meeting format is meaningful and participants are prepared to participate
- ✚ Stakeholders attending the IEP meeting (principal, regional center, etc.)
- ✚ No acronyms at the IEP – parents are in the dark
- ✚ Standardized agenda for IEP meetings

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## Approaches Regarding Overall IEP Process

- ✚ “It’s a collaborative effort between teachers (special and general ed), parents, and students.”
- ✚ Task force members and stakeholders – dialogue about changes and ongoing communication
- ✚ Alternate dispute resolution so issues don’t bog down in fair hearing
- ✚ Follow through on IEP policy and implementation
- ✚ SELPAs/districts need to work with parents and get information out
- ✚ Results of assessments including strengths and weaknesses; recommendations for learning style
- ✚ Have systematic process and language for communication
- ✚ Time line for compliance – as long as IEP started should not be out of compliance
- ✚ IEP procedural- safeguards; language friendly for parents; use layman’s terms
- ✚ Commonality in language between general and special education facilitates more collaboration between groups
- ✚ Integrity of IEP process is critical
- ✚ Change mentality of participant so that everyone knows it’s about the learning needs and not the disability
- ✚ LEAD program – every child with disabilities is included; high school students go to middle schools to talk to kids at the club
- ✚ Community Advisory Committee – share info with parents, bridge gap between school and families
- ✚ Raising expectations
- ✚ Staff knowing standards
- ✚ Special education teachers collaborating and sharing expertise and materials to best serve students
- ✚ Implementation of IEP goals utilizing the Core curriculum
- ✚ Assistive technology given in IEP to help bridge the gap for testing

## 3) What can we identify as policy and implementation issues that need to be addressed within the next year?

### Issues Involving Teachers

- ✚ Shortage of teachers
- ✚ Institutes of higher education need attention to recruitment and preparation
- ✚ Time/workload of special education teachers
- ✚ Salary
- ✚ Highly Qualified teachers and staff
- ✚ Training – need to know what to include in trainings
- ✚ Teachers say there are too many assessments; how many times do they need to do the same thing?
- ✚ Under-representation of minorities in staffing

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- ✚ Teachers feel powerless at times to suggest services that will cost the district money
  - ✚ Don't make teachers think it's more work – something being added (read California Reading Initiative)

### **Issues Regarding IEP Implementation**

- ✚ New technology challenges
- ✚ Don't do too much before regulations come out
- ✚ More money for implementation
- ✚ Policy and compliance review
- ✚ Know that attorneys are monitoring
- ✚ Community Advisory Committee can give good input regarding compliance
- ✚ Need vocational curriculum to be reintroduced
- ✚ Every school site plan needs to address IEP students with details
- ✚ 2004 IDEA implementation quickly- 2005; have standardized IEP by July 2005
- ✚ Multi-agency involvement is helpful
- ✚ 3-year IEP

### **Issues Regarding Broader Policy**

- ✚ Policy should come from education community and not from legislature
- ✚ Policy and funding should come from separate areas; collaboration, training for funding could help
- ✚ Policy needs to look at mixed population of special education classroom
- ✚ Need representation and cross-section of parents to set policy

### **Issues Involving Parents**

- ✚ Help empower parents and help them navigate the school system; educate them; work with different SELPAs
- ✚ Train parents in the very beginning when their child first gets an IEP- "IEP 101 for parents"
- ✚ Pay parent liaisons – paid by district at same level as teachers (constraints put on liaison by district)
- ✚ CAC partner with new parents, handbooks, resources, parent paid liaison
- ✚ Interagency support for parents
- ✚ Parent thinks school's role is to deny services
- ✚ Make IEP parent-friendly; not just directive from the school "experts"
- ✚ LEA maintain open door policy to parents

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### **Issues Involving Students**

- ✚ Concern about the number of students assigned to special education. What is reasonable number to ensure progress of each student; inclusion model
- ✚ Meeting individual needs with great ranges of ability and ages, etc., in the same classroom
- ✚ Middle school students have more student involvement in IEPs than in K-6; this needs to happen earlier
- ✚ Having one teacher and student moving to multiple teachers is a problem
- ✚ Over-representation of minority students in special education

### **Issues Regarding Assessment**

- ✚ High stakes taken out of the coursework and testing. Pass/fail is not accepted; accountability is
- ✚ CA has 2 parallel tests and this is not needed; too much money going into this
- ✚ Assessments to measure progress and achievement of standards
- ✚ IEP modify CAHSSE

### **4) Are there any shifts or changes with regard to IEPs/standards given IDEA reauthorization? Or do we have questions about how reauthorization will affect IEPs/standards?**

#### **Changes or Questions Regarding Broad Policy/Legislation Issues**

- ✚ IDEA has reinforced NCLB requirements
- ✚ NCLB allows more interventions to more students
- ✚ Is eligibility going to change?
- ✚ Will the funding be reallocated?

#### **Changes or Questions Regarding Writing/Designing IEPs**

- ✚ Opportunity to apply for pilot IEP – include in “1-pager”
- ✚ CA is too big to be the pilot program for the new IEPs as well as 15 other states
- ✚ Multi-year IEP? What will it look like, etc?
- ✚ Focus on academics to the detriment of social/emotional issues
- ✚ How are we going to know when progress is being made?
- ✚ Do kids still need report cards?
- ✚ Goals/objectives change will affect people in different ways depending on current quality of goal writing
- ✚ New goal requirement may not show the “road map” to meet the goal
- ✚ Parents will seek higher number of goals
- ✚ More parent awareness for all the IEP accommodations or modifications
- ✚ Progress reporting- quality manner to report student progress toward goal; conferences, etc.; How are we going to measure goals and progress without benchmarks?
- ✚ On new IEP – need a place to put in specifics for V1 or D/HDH needs (there aren't prepared IEPs)
- ✚ Want parents to know they don't have to sign IEP at meeting

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### **Changes or Questions Regarding Response to Intervention**

- ✚ Tier 1 and Tier 2 – how will this affect identification rate (increase/decrease)?
- ✚ If parent circumvents RTI, how can we provide quality services?
- ✚ Showing that interventions didn't work when circumvent RTI not documenting child's need for special education
- ✚ How are we going to pay for Tier 1 and Tier 2?; using IDEA funds with non-special education students
- ✚ How can we ensure accommodations and modifications are made for students without IEPs in Tiers 1 and 2?
- ✚ Case load for teachers if have more students because of Tier 2
- ✚ 3-tier system -- how it will be used; intensity for IEP students; who is going to monitor; what is the psychologist's role?
- ✚ What is adequate progress and who/what will the definition be?
- ✚ What information will be used if we don't have a discrepancy model?

### **Changes or Questions Regarding Discipline**

- ✚ The way IDEA '04 is implemented will be a major issue with regard to discipline issues related to behavior disorders
- ✚ Shift of burden of proof to parents regarding discipline
- ✚ Changes in manifestation determination – implementation of IEP; if not special education may have prior direct knowledge of behavioral issues

### **Changes or Questions Regarding the Personnel Implementing IEPs**

- ✚ Fill demand for highly qualified teachers and aides
- ✚ Pay for aides because of requirement for more education
- ✚ Teacher training (across all teachers and administrators) -- systematically; consistently, to stay informed; for quality teaching/accountability
- ✚ Schools held accountable for assessment
- ✚ Evolution that general education will educate most all students and special education expertise will serve moderate to severe populations; shift over the next 10 years
- ✚ Training on accommodations/modifications
- ✚ How can we focus on needs of the child and not on compliance issues?

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**Sunday, December 5, 2004**

## **IDEA REAUTHORIZATION '04**

### **✚ Panel Discussion**

In a large group, participants raised comments, concerns, and questions regarding the reauthorization of IDEA '04. In some cases, panel members responded with their reactions; in other cases, the comments were simply recorded to be addressed in subsequent discussions and forums.

- ❖ **Brett McFadden, Legislative Advocate, Association of California School Administrators**
- ❖ **Dr. Judy Shanley, Access Center**
- ❖ **Jerry Hime, CAN Coordinator, CALState Council for Exceptional Children**
- ❖ **Dale Mentink, Senior Attorney, Protection and Advocacy, Inc**

**Moderated by Suzanne Fisher, Executive Director, California Association of School Psychologists**

### ***Participant Concern***

- ✚ How do we come together to work on IDEA concerns when we're all representing different organizations?

### **Panel Response**

- ✚ More forums and dialog such as this will help. We need to get the issues and points of disagreement out on the table and dig down to deeper levels.

### ***Participant Concern***

- ✚ What is the definition of "highly qualified teachers," and how does this apply, especially at the secondary levels?

### **Panel Response**

- ✚ We share the concern of the lack of clarity. We need a common viewpoint that we can take back to Washington, DC. In California, we need to decide and interpret what this means and how it will apply.

### ***Participant Concern***

- ✚ I'd like clarification on content pieces; teachers don't have to take an exam on all the content pieces, so we can't expect a teacher to be competent in all core areas. Secondary teachers can/do pass competence tests but we are still wrestling with the definition that teachers HAVE to be competent in every core subject area.

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### ***Participant Concern***

- ✚ I need more information on the extraordinary fund. This is a civil rights issue for blind students. Materials for low-incidence disabilities need to be streamlined. Clarification is needed on whether accessible materials need to be provided at the same time.

### **Panel Response**

- ✚ Low-incidence funds are not necessarily targeted for new equipment needs but rather for upkeep.
- ✚ There is no disability specificity, but rather all high-cost students.

### ***Participant Concern***

- ✚ Parents fear that this reauthorization, and specifically the manifestation determination, will lead to higher drop-out rates and increased expulsions, as well as delays in early intervention. There is also concern about IEP appropriateness and lack of sensible implementation.

### **Panel Response**

- ✚ Students with many behavior problems may not have an IEP with a behavioral goal.

### ***Participant Concern***

I have seven main concerns/issues that I hope subsequent meetings can cover and interpret:

1. Paperwork reduction: this is too big for a pilot program, especially since the state of CA has over 690,000 special education students
2. Response to intervention -- there are many undefined definitions applying uniformly as to who is a qualified student for LD
3. Highly qualified teacher provision and the concern of teacher shortage
4. Discipline and manifestation determination
5. Elimination of short-term objectives and how parents know progress and how teachers measure progress
6. Attorney fees and rule 11 -- parents may have to pay school district fee and might not bring forth all of their issues
7. Large-scale assessments and how CA has interpreted and used high stakes testing; application to severely cognitively impaired students who are not in compliance; students who are performing on grade level but still need alternate assessments.

### ***Participant Concern***

- ✚ Imperfect ability: is that a change from using the wording “inability”?

### **Panel Response**

- ✚ There is not a change in the wording; it has always been “imperfect ability.”

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### **Participant Concern**

- ✚ I'm worried about the kids with zero response to intervention and manifestation determination. How will we know if their difficulty is related to behavior if we're not seeing any response?

### **Panel Response**

- ✚ We share this concern. This is clearly an issue that needs to be fleshed out.

### **Participant Concern**

- ✚ Specific LD eligibility -- there is too much ambiguity in what minimal progress is. How do we define substantial progress? There is concern about consistency if local districts are setting up criteria.

### **Panel Response**

- ✚ This is relevant to what Cathy Christo spoke about earlier in her (Saturday) presentation. Note that the new model does not HAVE to be used.

### **Participant Concern**

- ✚ Teacher shortage: how do we work to train special education teachers? We would like to figure out ways to recruit teachers and conduct induction programs (and make them highly qualified).

## **MATH**

- ✚ **Presentation by Melissa Storm, Ph.D., Access Center**  
([Slides/handouts](#) available with other Summit resources)

### **Facilitated Discussion**

(Participants split into 3 small groups and discussed a series of questions. The following is a synthesis of key issues that emerged during the course of the session.)

## **1) What are the major challenges you've faced with regard to math?**

### **General Challenges**

- ✚ Math scores have dropped because there is too much focus on literacy
- ✚ Students don't know basic math skills or how to apply them in life
- ✚ It is very frustrating that so many students have significant math challenges

### **Challenges Involving School Personnel**

- ✚ Teachers don't have the time to learn how to implement new strategies
- ✚ Secondary teachers have 150 kids – no time to implement effective strategies
- ✚ Special education teachers are not adequately educated -- not enough core content expertise in math
- ✚ Teachers don't always take advantage of professional development opportunities

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- ✚ Better training of school psychologists is needed
  - ✚ General education teachers need strategies about modifications and accommodations
  - ✚ General education teachers are concerned with the numbers of special education students and their ability to provide accommodations
  - ✚ Teachers have holes in knowledge regarding specific disabilities (e.g., autism, spectrum disorders); need strategies that are effective with specific kinds of problems
  - ✚ School administrators need to be more thorough with the master schedule planning
  - ✚ More support from districts to provide trainings
  - ✚ There aren't enough education interpreters who understand math concepts

### **Challenges Involving the Algebra I Requirement**

- ✚ People can be successful in life without algebra, so why is it a requirement to pass Algebra I? Many parents would like to communicate this sentiment to the districts
- ✚ We need special algebra classes for our students with disabilities
- ✚ If students don't meet Algebra I requirement they will drop out
- ✚ Teachers who don't believe a student will pass the Algebra requirement can have lowered expectations for that student's performance in all subject areas
- ✚ Kids who meet all requirements except Algebra I and can't get a diploma will not get accepted to college
- ✚ Staffing problems in special education classrooms when a student cannot pass Algebra I and must remain in that math class
- ✚ At the secondary level, need more time for teaching remedial skills so student can advance to Algebra class; need time for re-teaching material.

### **Challenges Involving the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE)**

- ✚ So many changes in CAHSEE; middle schools don't recognize the importance; hard to stay on top of changes
- ✚ We need to protect students' civil rights, especially with regards to graduation
- ✚ Are there appropriate accommodations in math for CAHSEE?
- ✚ CAHSEE is behind in the use of assistive technology
- ✚ For students who have passed classes but now can't pass CAHSEE, perhaps they have a disability; more referrals are needed in middle school and high school
- ✚ Are teachers going to be teaching content or are they going to be prepping for the exit exam?
- ✚ There are emotional repercussions for students who cannot pass CAHSEE or Algebra and can't be involved in extra curricular activities (e.g., graduation ceremonies, prom, etc.)

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### **Challenges Regarding Materials**

- ✚ Code in Braille is very important for adaptation in math but it not always available
- ✚ Administration will not allow materials that are not state-sanctioned
- ✚ Materials that are more appropriate for student needs; supplemental materials are needed
- ✚ Teachers need to use accommodations and modifications in the classroom, (e.g., calculators)
- ✚ Consistency between materials of general and special education is lacking

### **Challenges Regarding Implementation**

- ✚ Fidelity of implementation
- ✚ Pacing of instruction
- ✚ Middle school transition issues -- lack of consistency between elementary and secondary instruction
- ✚ Discrepancy with general education teachers not allowing students to use manipulatives if they need them
- ✚ Consistency in use of research-based strategies; fidelity of use
- ✚ Lack of materials available to special education teachers
- ✚ Lack of research on Response to Intervention
- ✚ Transition to use of Research-Based Strategies
- ✚ Methods/strategies for teaching Deaf and Hard of Hearing students
- ✚ Assessment reports guide intervention and instruction

## **2) What approaches have been successful with regard to math? What tools have been helpful?**

### **Approaches Involving School Personnel**

- ✚ Support and mentoring for new, energetic teachers
- ✚ Seeking out professional development in areas of need
- ✚ In-service for general education teachers focusing on the needs of students with disabilities
- ✚ Collaboration between special and general education teachers about techniques and methodologies for math instruction
- ✚ Teachers being supported by IEP teams
- ✚ Teaching using consistent approaches in teaching math

### **Approaches Regarding the Algebra I/Exit Exam**

- ✚ Taking tests in chunks over the course of a year (teach-test/ teach/test)
- ✚ Test after each section and then use as resource for end of course test
- ✚ Extend algebra classes over multiple years instead of a one-year course
- ✚ Multiple exposures to exit exam for children

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## Approaches Regarding Implementation

- ✚ Push-in support to help make math successful
- ✚ Multi-sensory approach
- ✚ Using computer software to reinforce math topics
- ✚ Embedding math into “real life” subjects like cooking
- ✚ Students talking to each other/collaborating during math lessons
- ✚ Having textbooks that support the use of concrete manipulatives
- ✚ Scaffolded instruction in math texts
- ✚ Language arts development occurs through math word problems
- ✚ Making math a systematic process
- ✚ Teachers modeling the instruction, “I do, you do” – more traditional special education techniques are good for general education students as well

## 3) What can we identify as policy and implementation issues that need to be addressed within the next year?

### Issues Involving Teachers

- ✚ Teachers understanding foundational knowledge regarding math skills
- ✚ Teachers not teaching to the underlying process disorders
- ✚ Teachers need to know “essential goals”
- ✚ Some support/incentives for teachers
- ✚ Institutes for higher education money for teacher preparation
- ✚ How to release poor, ineffective but tenured teachers
- ✚ Need greater accountability for teachers

### Issues Regarding Math Instruction

- ✚ IEP goals that reach whole child as opposed to just academic skills (i.e., underlying nature of their cognitive processing disability)
- ✚ Algebra is punitive and not supported by research
- ✚ Identify best practices for addressing math issues and disseminate
- ✚ Demand implementation of teaching strategies that do not require reading as part of math implementation
- ✚ If accommodations/modifications should occur, how do you ensure that accommodation/modification happen?

### Issues Regarding Algebra Requirement

- ✚ Policy, results and process can be discriminatory – student understands the content but can’t pass the test; civil rights issue; statistics show it’s a discriminatory policy
- ✚ Need multiple ways to get a diploma that are civilly equal
- ✚ Administrators need training for waiver policy and Algebra waiver
- ✚ Parents need to be informed early of requirement of Algebra requirement in high school

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### Issues Regarding Assessment

- ✚ Give credit for course work taken, not passing end of year/semester test
- ✚ Alternative assessment strategies for all children with disabilities
- ✚ Test-taking modifications (chunking)
- ✚ What accommodations are acceptable for the High School exit exam?  
Accommodations from the IEP should translate onto the exit exam
- ✚ Parents and teachers have to teach to high stakes exam, even though that may not be what is in the child's best interest

### Issues Regarding Broader Policy

- ✚ All contingencies work together to change and fix bad policy
- ✚ When IEP uses modifications -- state automatically gives a bad connotation (taking API money away)
- ✚ Problems with 1-page, 3-year, no objectives, 1-child-fits-all-IEPs
- ✚ Are we going to go forward with State Improvement Grant money and use this for pre-service?
- ✚ Consistency needed among schools and what they provide
- ✚ Alternative dispute resolution
- ✚ Funding policies that build in adequate funding
- ✚ Policy re: cultural and language differences
- ✚ Provide information in home language
- ✚ Core principles for policy in CA need to be collaborative and not coming from special interest groups or politics
- ✚ Change in policy (NCLB) so that not all kids will be at grade level
- ✚ Provide intensity and services to meet high expectations
- ✚ Playing catch up and looking at instruction in early grades
- ✚ Looking at children's needs vs. cost-effective processes

### **4) Are there any shifts or changes with regard to IEPs/standards given IDEA reauthorization? Or do we have questions about how reauthorization will affect IEPs/standards?**

#### **Changes or Questions Regarding Broad Policy/Legislation**

- ✚ Perhaps we need to wait for the regulations to come out: do we take the law at face value or wait for the regulations?
- ✚ Interpretation of new law -- state guidance
- ✚ Regulations drive instruction
- ✚ Law takes away educators' good judgment
- ✚ Alignment of CA ED code with IDEA 2004 (e.g. RTI) and eligibility
- ✚ Push schools to find a way to teach all students; provide many classes for students to learn concepts

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### **Changes or Questions Involving Teachers/Training**

- ✚ Addressing the shortage of teachers by measuring the quality of out-of-state preparation for teachers wanting to move to CA
- ✚ California has such higher standards than many states regarding Highly Qualified
- ✚ Who is eligible to teach particular classes?
- ✚ What data are we using to measure “highly qualified”?
- ✚ No mandates for institutes for higher education to do anything to add to teacher training
- ✚ Institutes for higher education have no idea about 504, IEPs, accommodations/modifications for students

### **Changes or Questions Regarding Algebra/High School/Transition**

- ✚ Should students start Algebra in Middle School?
- ✚ High Schools are offering more opportunities for kids to take Algebra in summer school, for more years, but then what are students missing? Other content areas? Electives?
- ✚ Need to be clear what the feds say and don’t say; there is nothing about Algebra requirement but access to curriculum
- ✚ Change of age with respect to transition...keep 14?
- ✚ Need to keep vocational opportunities/life skills
- ✚ Put more focus on transition from High School to college and provide vocational opportunities
- ✚ Transition and life goal for everyone in High School – self-exploration
- ✚ Because we have adopted A – G rigorous standards, CA needs to be responsible for students who can’t meet these requirements and take responsibility for kids age 22 and make sure everyone graduates
- ✚ State is trying to raise standards for graduation
- ✚ Consequences of pressure on students
- ✚ Finding loopholes to allow kids to graduate
- ✚ Is state going to make more requirements for students? This will continue to make kids secluded rather than included

### **WRAP-UP**

- ✚ Presentation by Katie Drummond, Ph.D., Access Center, and Judy Shanley, Ph.D., Access Center  
([Slides/handouts](#) available with other Summit resources)