

# **Area 4 Developmental Disabilities Board Strategic Plan**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Area Board 4 is one of thirteen area boards on developmental disabilities in California. Area boards are attached to and funded by the State Council on Developmental Disabilities. Area boards help the State Council carry out its responsibilities under the federal Developmental Disabilities Act. Under the mandate of California's Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act, area boards work locally to ensure the rights of individuals with developmental disabilities are protected and that they receive the services they need to be independent, productive, and included members of the community.

The Area Board 4 consists of 17 volunteer members. Five are appointed by the Governor and 12 by the boards of supervisors in the counties of Napa, Sonoma, and Solano. The Area Board 4 office in Vallejo is staffed by an executive director, a community program specialist, and an office technician. Area 4 Board also operates two programs at Sonoma Developmental Center in Eldridge near Glen Ellen. One is the Clients' Rights Advocate (CRA) program and the other is the Volunteer Advocacy Services (VAS) program. Each is staffed with a community program specialist with support from a part-time office technician. The goals and strategies of the CRA and VAS programs are not included in the Area Board 4 Strategic Plan at this time.

The Strategic Plan sets the direction for the Area Board and guides how it applies its resources and energy to serve individuals with developmental disabilities and their families in Napa, Sonoma, and Solano counties.

The Public Comment period for the Area Board 4 Strategic Plan was May 24, 2010 to June 15, 2010. The Board adopted the Strategic Plan at the June 23, 2010 Board meeting.

## VISION

*Persons with developmental disabilities in Napa, Sonoma, and Solano counties experience the same full and equal opportunities for life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness as all Americans.*

## MISSION

*Area 4 Developmental Disabilities Board advocates and promotes policies and practices that enable persons with developmental disabilities in Napa, Sonoma, and Solano counties to achieve self-determination, independence, productivity and inclusion for themselves in all aspects of community life.*

## AREAS OF EMPHASIS

### A. Quality Assurance

The term “quality assurance activities” means advocacy, capacity building, and systemic change activities that result in improved consumer and family-centered quality assurance and that result in systems of quality assurance and consumer protection that-

- (A) Include monitoring of services, supports, and assistance provided to an individual with developmental disabilities that ensures that the individual - 1. Will not experience abuse, neglect, sexual or financial exploitation, or violation of legal or human rights; and  
2. Will not be subject to the inappropriate use of restraints or seclusion;
- (B) Include training in leadership, self-advocacy, and self-determination for individuals with developmental disabilities, their families, and their guardians to ensure that those individuals - 1. Will not experience abuse, neglect, sexual or financial exploitations, or violation of legal or human rights; and  
2. Will not be subject to the inappropriate use of restraints or seclusion; or
- (C) Include activities related to interagency coordination and systems integration that result in improved and enhanced services, supports, and other assistance that contribute to and protect the self-determination, independence, productivity, and integration and inclusion in all facets of community life, of individuals with developmental disabilities.

**Goal:** *Individuals with developmental disabilities and their families have information, skills, opportunities and support to advocate for their rights and services and to achieve self determination, independence, productivity, integration and inclusion in all facets of community life.*

**Objectives:**

- QA 1.1 Area Board 4 will distribute timely information by publishing a monthly e-newsletter; posting meeting agendas, minutes, meeting packets, as well as ‘Practice Democracy’, and its Strategic Plan on its web page; and, will use social networking media such as Facebook to deliver timely information to its constituency.
  
- QA 1.2 Area Board 4 will strive to make information accessible to individuals who are mono-lingual Spanish-speakers by translating “Practice Democracy”, the monthly “E-News”, and the AB4 brochure and posting on its web page; and, by distributing that material to groups and organizations serving Spanish-speaking families.
  
- QA1.3 Area Board 4 will present or co-present workshops to educate at least 100 Individuals with developmental disabilities on their rights and how to advocate for their rights.
  
- QA1.4 Area Board 4 will work with local self advocacy groups, community agencies, and the California People First organization to strengthen local self advocacy organizations, increase participation, and develop regional and statewide connections and support.

**B. Education and Early Intervention**

The term “education activities” means advocacy, capacity building, and systemic change activities that result in individuals with developmental disabilities being able to access appropriate supports and modifications when necessary, to maximize their educational potential, to benefit from lifelong educational activities, and to be integrated and included in all facets of student life.

The term “early intervention activities” means, advocacy, capacity building, and systemic change activities provided to individuals described in paragraph (8)(B) and their families to enhance-

- (A) The development of the individuals to maximize their potential; and
- (B) The capacity of families to meet the special needs of the individuals.

**Goal 1:** *Students with developmental disabilities receive the education and supports they need to reach their academic potential in inclusive communities.*

**Objectives:**

E&EI1.1 At least 75 students and families will receive advocacy services to assert their rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

“Advocacy services” may include provision of information and referral, consultation & technical assistance, as well as direct representation. The Board has established criteria for staff decision-making on representation at due process fair hearings. Factors such as the merit of the case; the capability of the person or family to advocate for themselves or their child with technical assistance; the systemic implications of the case; and, whether another agency is available with more expertise or resources on the issue are taken into consideration.

E&EI1.2 Area Board will participate on the community advisory committees of all four SELPA’s (Special Education Local Plan Areas) in the North Bay counties in order to improve outcomes for students with disabilities.

E&EI 1.3 Area Board will provide, or collaborate in the presentation of, at least 3 workshops on special education rights for parents annually.

**Goal 2:** *Young adults with developmental disabilities and their families are prepared for and experience a smooth transition to adult life.*

**Objectives:**

E&EI2.1 Area Board 4 will participate in Transition Resource Fairs in Sonoma, Napa, and Solano counties.

E&EI 2.2 Area Board 4 will continue working with Solano County Office of Education and other community partners to establish a second Project Search site in Solano County.

**C. Employment**

The term “employment-related activities” means advocacy, capacity building, and systemic change activities that result in individuals with developmental disabilities acquiring, retaining, or advancing in paid employment, including supported employment or self-employment, in integrated settings in a community.

**Goal 1:** *Working age adults with developmental disabilities work in integrated employment for minimum wage or greater.*

**Objectives:**

- E1.1 Area Board 4 will continue its leadership role on the North Bay Autism Regional Taskforce (NBART) and its “Employment Workgroup” to advocate for “Employment First” policy change that increases integrated employment outcomes for working age adults.
- E1.2 Area Board 4 will continue to participate on the Employment Services Network to inform and educate participants on best practices for integrated paid employment for individuals with developmental disabilities.

**Goal 2:** *Area Board 4 will advocate for changes in policy, services, and funding that enable young adults with developmental disabilities to experience college and other post-secondary education opportunities.*

**Objectives:**

- E2.1: Area Board 4 will continue participation on Santa Rosa Junior College’s “College to Career” program which provides a post secondary educational experience with workforce training and education to increase the prospects for integrated employment for the students.
- E2.2 Area Board 4 will establish working relationships with both Solano Community College and Napa Valley College to promote and develop post-secondary education opportunities, including access to workforce training programs that lead to integrated employment outcomes.
- E2.3 Area Board 4 will maintain its relationship with UCLA’s Tarjan Center and participate on the Post Secondary Education Consortium to stay informed on statewide and national efforts to promote post secondary education and will disseminate information on transition and post secondary education monthly through the AB4 E-News.

**D. Housing**

The term “housing-related activities” means advocacy, capacity building, and systemic change activities that result in individuals with developmental disabilities having access to and use of housing and housing supports and services in their communities, including assistance related to renting, owning, or modifying an apartment or home.

**Goal 1:** *Individuals with developmental disabilities have access to affordable housing that provides control, choice and flexibility regarding where and with whom they live.*

**Objectives:**

- H1.1 Area Board 4 will continue liaison with North Bay Housing Coalition to stay informed on and contribute to efforts to increase access to affordable housing.
- H1.2 Area Board will continue to participate on the North Bay Autism Regional Task Force (NBART) Housing Workgroup to increase access to affordable housing.

**E. Community Supports**

The term “family support services “[community supports] means services, supports, and other assistance, provided to families with members who have developmental disabilities, that are designed to—

- (1) Strengthen the family’s role as primary caregiver;
- (2) Prevent inappropriate out-of-the-home placement of the members and maintain family unity; and
- (3) Reunite families with members who have been placed out of the home whenever possible.

**SPECIFIC SERVICES**—Such term includes respite care, provision of rehabilitation technology and assistive technology, personal assistance services, parent training and counseling, support for families headed by adding caregivers, vehicular and home modifications, and assistance with extraordinary expenses associated with the needs of individuals with developmental disabilities.

**Goal 1:** *People with developmental disabilities and their families have access to community based services and supports available to the general population (such as recreation, transportation, child care, etc. ) that enable them to live productive and inclusive lives.*

**Objectives:**

- CS1.1 Area Board 4 will inform persons with developmental disabilities, their families, and the community about budgetary and legislative proposals that impact persons with developmental disabilities by (a) Including information on legislative and budgetary issues impacting individuals with developmental disabilities in its e-newsletter; (b) Presenting at least one Budget and/or Legislative Forum annually; and, (c) Presenting at least three workshops a year to persons with developmental disabilities on topics such as voting rights and legislative advocacy.

CS1.2 Area Board 4 will inform and educate legislators about budgetary and legislative proposals that impact persons with developmental disabilities by (a) Including information on legislative and budgetary issues impacting individuals with developmental disabilities in its e-newsletter and distributing its e-newsletter to all legislators whose legislative districts are in Napa, Sonoma, and Solano counties; (b) Presenting at least one Budget and/or Legislative Forum annually and inviting legislators to attend and participate on a “Legislators’ Panel”; (c) Meeting with legislators district legislative representatives at least annually; and by monitoring and taking positions on at least 10 bills per year and communicating the Board’s position to legislators.

**Goal 2:** *Area Board 4 recognizes the unique challenges of individuals with autism, and the lack of services and supports specific to individuals with autism. Therefore the Area Board 4 will advocate strongly for local service development for individuals with autism in line with the Area Board 4’s Mission.*

**Objectives:**

CS2.1 Area Board 4 will continue its partnership with the Senate Select Committee on Autism, Senator Lois Wolk, and the many community partners on the North Bay Autism Regional Taskforce to develop solutions to problems and issues in the areas of Early Identification & Treatment, Medical Insurance Coverage, Affordable Housing, and Employment.

CS2.2 Area Board 4 will continue its participation on the Autism Community Team (ACT) to develop and improve services for children and adults with autism.

CS2.3 Area Board 4 will continue liaison with the Collaborative Autism Training & Support Program (CATS) to contribute to the long-term continuation of the CATS program.

**Goal 3:** *People with developmental disabilities, their families, and agencies that serve them are prepared for emergencies and disasters.*

**Objectives:**

CS3.1 Area Board 4 will present or co-present workshops on disaster preparedness to at least 75 individuals with developmental disabilities.

**Goal 4:** *Area Board 4's presence and participation at meetings of agencies and committees on issues affecting people with developmental disabilities will increase commitment to the Board's vision.*

**Objectives:**

CS4.1 Area Board 4 will attend, participate, and in many cases give reports or disseminate information in meetings of many organizations, agencies, and groups in Napa, Sonoma, and Solano involved with persons with developmental disabilities. They include but are not limited to North Bay Regional Center (NBRC); the NBRC Vendor Advisory Committee, and service provider groups in Napa, Sonoma, and Solano counties; special Education Local Plan Area Community Advisory Committees (SELPA CAC's); California People 1<sup>st</sup> and local self-advocacy groups; Matrix Parent Network and Resource Center; Parents CAN; Department of Rehabilitation; North Bay Housing Coalition; Disabled Student Programs and Services at the three community colleges, among others.

**Goal 5:** *Area Board 4 will apply its grant funds from the State Council to realize the vision it holds for people with developmental disabilities and the goals it has adopted.*

**Objectives:**

CS5.1 Area Board 4 will form a Grants Committee to oversee the grant process and will conduct the grant process to ensure widespread awareness in the community of the grant cycle and allow a minimum of 6 weeks for interested individuals and agencies to apply.