



April 17, 2026

Regional Advisory Committee Minutes
State Council on Developmental Disabilities
Central Coast Regional Office (CCRO)

Attendance

Members Present:

Lindsey Baker (online from publicly posted location)
Jonathan Gush (online from publicly posted location)
Tricia Kokes (Main Location)
Makayla Rustigian (online)
Frank Serrano (online)
Daniel Stickney (online)
Karina Guzman (online from publicly posted location)
Ilene Candreva (online)

Members Absent:

Sara Curren (Excused)
Kavita Sreedhar (Excused)

SCDD Staff:

Jennifer Lucas, Regional Manager
Joe Macias, Analyst II
Heather Kroencke, Sequoia Office Technician
Melissa Fitch – SCDD Council Member

Public Attendees:

Samantha Soliman
Yvonne Lui
Angel Montoya
Stanford Stickney

Discussion of Agenda Items

- Call to Order and Introductions (10:01 am)
- Quorum established with 8 members present.
- Minutes for February 20, 2026, RAC meeting were approved with corrections. Motion (Stickney), Seconded (Candrea), Roll Call Vote: 8 ayes.
- **Public comments:**
 - Yvonne Lui introduced herself. She is a Parent of two children on the spectrum; she is also a volunteer at FCSN, which is Friends of Children with Special Needs. This is an organization serving more than 1,000 families in the Bay Area, predominantly Asian Americans.
 - Jonathan Gush shared that his group has received their Non-Profit Status which will allow them to do a lot more outreach and work.
- **Chairperson Report– Tricia Kokes, RAC Chair**
 - **Voting Accessibility Advisory Committee (VAAC):** Just a reminder there is a Vote on June 2nd and then another election in November. The next meeting is on April 23, 2026. They meet every three months.
 - **Committee for Transportation Mobility and Accessibility (CTMA)** -The next meeting is May 14th and will be a hybrid meeting from 10am-12pm
 - **Silicon Valley Independent Living Center.** We have hired a Headhunter company to look for a new executive director because our director is going to be retiring in June.
 - Has joined a Peer Ambassador Program for the ILC at Berkeley that will focus on Transportation, Housing and Climate. The program offers a stipend.
- **Statewide Self-Advocacy Network (SSAN) and Advocacy Report – Daniel Stickney**

SSAN met on March 5 & 6, 2026 and received presentations from Aaron Carruthers regarding the two bills sponsored by SCDD, SB 1052 and AB 2360.

- **People First of San Luis Obispo County Report – Makayla Rustigian**

- There was a meeting on February 20, 2026. They discussed and planned an upcoming Social Gathering that will be held at a Pizza Parlor on May 16th. They also honored a member who had passed away due to cancer. They sponsored a memorial bench in their honor. The next meeting is scheduled for April 21st.

- **RAC Member Reports:**

- **J. Gush** expressed concerns that there is a lack of training for agencies and staff on how to navigate ID/DD Individuals as they age and with Dementia. Specifically skilled nursing facility staff should be trained in recognizing Dementia symptoms so that they can be properly addressed.
- **J. Gush** also shared concerns that the Schools and District are actively pushing end-of-year assessments to the following school year. This is harmful to the students as it does not accurately reflect their progress or lack of.

- **TCRC Purchase of Services – Angel Montoya, TCRC Chief Equity Office**

- Angel Montoya began by introducing himself as the Chief Equity Officer of Tri-Counties Regional Center. He has a 3-person team that covers the 3 counties of Ventura, Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo with 7 offices. TCRC has approximately 408 Service Coordinators, of which almost half are bilingual. They currently serve 21,000 Self-Advocates if you include Early Start and those in the Intake/Assessment Process.

- He explained that this 2024/2025 Purchase of Services presentation is one of 10 they are holding this year. These are mandated by law (4519.5 & 4519.6 WIC) to show transparency for the community. The law only states they must do at least one by the end of March every year. They receive a large amount of funding and these community presentations help not only show how that money is being spent but also to highlight any disparities. They take information from these events to help mold their programs and funding to meet the needs they learn of. Most of the TCRC meetings take place in underserved or rural areas.
- Trends from the 2024/2025 report include:
 - Increases in Cost (22.7%) Vs Population Growth (6.3%) have a large discrepancy
 - Spending Gaps are still present between Race/Ethnicity and Primary Language
 - Hispanic families are less likely to utilize RC Services
 - Of the clients 88% Live at home, 6% are in ILS/SLS, 3% are in SNF/FHA and 3% are in CCF/ICF – Those that live at home have much lower costs of services
- What is the Regional Center doing to address gaps:
 - Revamping their website to be more streamlined and accessible
 - Revising Brochures – With more plain language
 - Providing a monthly orientation for new Self-Advocates and Families
 - All Staff will receive Person Centered Thinking Training and Cultural Competency Training
 - New Staff Onboarding is being redesigned
 - Continue the Annual Individual and Family Surveys
- What is the State doing to address gaps:
 - Continuing the Service Access and Equity Grant Program
 - Allocating funds to regional centers for language access and cultural competency programs

- Funding for RC for Specialty Positions such as an Enhanced Services Coordinators, i.e. Deaf and Hard of Hearing Specialists
 - How can the RAC help:
 - There are two more community meetings scheduled. You can attend and give feedback, or there is an anonymous survey available on the website.
- **SCDD Council Member Updates – M. Fitch, SCDD Council Member, discussed:**

M. Fitch shared the State Council Meeting Summary from the March 24, 2026 meeting. The Meeting Highlights included swearing in a new member, Sherry Johnson-Alvarez. It was also recognized that March was Developmental Disabilities Awareness month that was celebrated with Statewide SCDD Events. They reviewed the 2026-2027 Draft Budget, took positions on 10 legislative bills (to support 9). They also acknowledged two new Regional Office managers. The next Council Meeting is scheduled for May 27th, 2026, In-Person. You can also join online; the link is on the SCDD website.
- **CCRO / SCDD Updates – J. Lucas discussed:**
 - J Lucas introduced the newest CCRO team member, Joe Macias. Joe began in March and has previous experience with Community Care Licensing and special education.
 - J Lucas shared recent CCRO highlights and upcoming CCRO and SCDD activities including:
 - Presented “Sensory Implications When Working with People with Developmental Disabilities in Crisis” at the Pacific ADA Center conference in March;
 - Effectively advocating for an additional 30 minutes of time for Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training in Monterey County to allow additional time to educate law

enforcement officers on communication and deescalation strategies;

- Assisting with organizing a May event in partnership with the Palo Alto Office of Emergency Services (OES) to help train emergency services volunteers to respond more effectively and safely by increasing their understanding of disability-related communication and support needs;
 - Presenting an “Overview of the Regional Center System” in June to CASA of Ventura County to help Court Appointed Special Advocates better understand available services, supports, and advocacy strategies for children and youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities involved in the foster care system;
 - Collaborating with the Arc of Ventura County, TCRC, and others on an SCDD Sponsored conference in Oxnard in June focused informed decision-making for Self-Advocates; and
 - Shared SCDD’s Statewide Mental Health Awareness Month activities coming up in May.
- J Lucas provided a short SCDD legislative update along with the following resources:
 - Legislative index - <https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/home.xhtml> (has live and dead bills by topic)
 - “SCDD Position Bills” - <https://ct35.capitoltrack.com/public/0/report/run?id=1272737e-937a-402d-bcbe-24ef851bdcf2>
 - YouTube resources on how to submit a position letter on the Legislative Portal (<https://calegislation.lc.ca.gov/Advocates/faces/index.xhtml>) for a bill you oppose or support:
 - Individual Letter Submission, CA state Legislature -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q3sMXf0BE4I>

- The California Position Letter Portal -
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oZv2c59zXz4>

- **Agenda Items for Future RAC Meetings – All:**

- Include continued review and discussion of RAC Priorities at next meeting on June 19, 2026.
- Chris Arroyo, State Council will present at the next RAC meeting on The May Revise Budget Updates as well as the “There Should Be a Law” Contest

- **12:02 PM: Adjournment**