

Direct Support Professional Training (DSPT)
Regional Advisory Meeting
Central Valley Regional Center
October 07, 2026 9 AM - 11 AM

Minutes

Welcome, Introductions

- Service Hub Representatives- Margo Perkins, Renae Dominici, Ashley Gustin, and Lydia German, and Monica Vega
- Regional Center Representatives-Dr. Anthony Ash, Alma Sanchez, Melissa Cortez, Amaris Clayton-Laguerra, Dilan Pathiranage, April Calderon, Thomas Diaz, Trista Kerrigan. Annmarie Coon, and Isaiah Salas with HCBS Federal Compliance
- Regional Center Vendor Community Care Facility Provider Representatives-Richard Sikes, Jose Pira, Malanie Rafanan, Szabad, Stephanie Hendricks, and Marycruz Leyva, Mauro Medeiros, Nikolas Rodriques, KCorona, and Esperanza Adams
- DDS/CDE Representatives-Julian Elliott DDS, Baris Kourdou DDS, and Tara Neilson CDE

Purpose of DSPT Advisory Committee Meeting-

- To ensure that the Challenge Testing and Training are sufficiently scheduled to meet the needs of eligible DSPs within the Service Hub's regional center catchment area
- Provide updates from DDS and CDE on DSPT program issues
- Address and resolve issues related to the DSPT program within the local regional center catchment area
- Provide Training and Testing aggregate results

California Department of Developmental Services Report- Baris Kourdou

Program updates:

- As of August 01, 2026, Fresno County Superintendent of Schools FCSS, took over as the DSPT Helpdesk.
- Class Capacity: DSPT Year 1 (25) Students, DSPT Year 2 (30) Students
- In-Person Class Capacity: Based on room-capacity limitations.
- Challenge Test for both Year 1 & 2 will be held monthly for each Hub.
- As of August 01, 2026, administrators will no longer have access to DSPs training records.
- Administrators should not be registering their staff. DSPs should register themselves.
- Regional Centers can use their regional center account to view DSP training records.

Work Force Initiatives:

1. DSP University – Certification program with three different tiers to enhance training aimed at

promoting services that are person centered, culturally and linguistically sensitive, and improved outcomes for individuals with I/DD.

2. EDGE – Trainings are delivered via EDGE online. Employee Development, Growth, and Education
3. DSP Internship Program: Provide entry-level interns with the opportunity to be paid for up to 30 hours per week for up to three months while learning high-quality DSP skills alongside a qualified DSP. There are nineteen regional centers currently participating.
4. Bi-Multilingual Pay Differential Program: Allows DSPs to become certified in one or more additional languages and receive a stipend for using those language skills in their work. Launching January 2027 for Bi-Multilingual Pay Differential Program.
5. Email for Work Force Initiatives: workforce@dds.ca.gov

Enrollment Data: Year 1 training 7,916 Enrolled, completed test 5,385, passed 5,192

Year 2 training 5,576 Enrolled, completed test 3,984, passed 3,885

Please email DDS for any DSPT year 1 & 2 inquiries: ccfdsp@dds.ca.gov

Program quality management system:

- Classroom observations are taking place by DDS and by Hubs.

Legislation:

- Curriculum is currently being contracted for updates. CDE/DDS will be contacting stakeholders with our regional centers, administrators, and trainers in doing the updates.
- Second languages will be part of the curriculum updates as well. Spanish & Tagalog

California Department of Education Report-Tara Neilson

- **Materials and supply issues:**

Tara Neilson went over the support role CDE plays with DDS and the Hubs. Works specifically with the service hubs. Process payments and supplies. Provides support and direction with the DSP hubs and DSP instructors.

- **Local coverage (issues, development of formal agreements)**

1. Coordinates training schedule (Online/In-Person), facility/classroom reservation, and provides trainer materials and equipment.
2. Provide statewide support for DSPT training, 4 Hubs - Riverside, Fresno, Orange, and Butte.
3. Conducts trainer monitoring, hiring, and annual trainer re-certification

eDSPT Helpdesk Report: Monica Vega

- Helpdesk can be contacted by 1-800-910-4604 or DSPTHelpdesk@fcoe.org
- Hours of DSPT Helpdesk – **Monday – Friday 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM**
- Please include your full name, city you live in, year of birth, and reason for calling.
- Please see the DSPT Homepage at www.dsptrain.org
- FAQs link has up to twenty-five questions that can help with troubleshooting.
- Navigating eDSPT page for registration. Please click on Register for Year 1 or Year 2.
- Dates of registration will be highlighted in blue on right side. Training classes that are open for registration will show Register.
- Administrators no longer have access to the DSPs training records.
- DSPs need to have full access to their personal DSPT portal for registration and testing.
- Experiencing duplicate accounts with DSPs. Please be advised to call or email the helpdesk if there are any questions to if you already have an account.
- Testing results will be accessed by logging into their DSP portal. Link to print Letter of Certification.

Service Hub Report – Renae Dominici

DSP Hub for Central California Service Hub will be offering a year 1 & 2 Challenge Test monthly. Please look for postings on the DSPT site. Challenge Test will be virtual. Also offering In-Person trainings in Fresno, Stockton, San Jose, and Marin County. In Spring there will be In-Person with Elizabeth Carey in Visalia RC. Alma with CVRC is in Visalia RC and can coordinate those dates. Ashley Gustin teaches at Merced RC.

Regional Center Report – Dr. Anthony Ash

Finished their large conference, Bridging Horizons with 6,000 attendees. Lydia German was awarded the Residential Provider of The Year!!! Richard Sikes is last year's winner!!! Julian Elliott with DDS presented. Planning for next year! Dr. Ash would like to collaborate DSP presence at next year's conference.

Alma is the new quality assurance manager with Central Valley Regional Center.

Dr. Ash also mentioned that he has noticed a decline in DSPs having challenges getting into classes. Tara with CDE reassured us that more classes are being offered, and DSPs can be added to a class when they need to complete their training for certification.

Dr. Ash asked Renae, who the QAs can email for verification of certification. QAs can email Renae Dominici at: rdominici@fcoe.org & DSPT helpdesk at: DSPTHelpdesk@fcoe.org

Provider Representative(s) Input – No feedback currently

DSP Trainer Input- Lydia German mentioned that having the DSPT Helpdesk here in Fresno has been so beneficial for the program. The Helpdesk has been able to accommodate adding DSPs into training. Meeting the needs throughout the state. Lydia German stated that the In-Person training classes are doing well. Testing is done on laptop/tablet on last day for In-Person training. Lydia spoke with RC reps that instructors do go over the HCBS Rule in the curriculum. Trainer Ashley Gustin said online virtual classes are doing well.

Next Meeting – Virtual Platform Meeting in Fall of 2027

Recap and Closure- Input from our team at DDS/CDE/Helpdesk/CVRC/Vendors are appreciated!