



SUPPORTING INNOVATIVE PRACTICES

Annual Report

2025–2026

Submitted by Riverside County Office of Education (RCOE)
in partnership with El Dorado County Office of Education (EDCOE)
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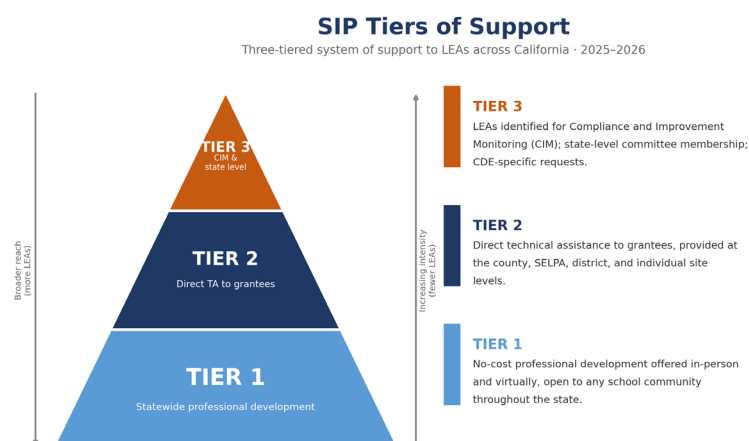
About Supporting Innovative Practices

Supporting Innovative Practices (SIP) exists to help educational systems innovate, transform, and sustain practices that improve outcomes for students with disabilities. Grounded in the belief that meaningful change occurs when culture, policy, and practice are aligned, SIP partners with local educational agencies (LEAs) across California to build systems where every student experiences belonging, access, participation, and opportunity. Its central goal is to increase the inclusion of students with disabilities in general education settings through thoughtful planning, structured systems of support, and sustained technical assistance.

The project provides technical assistance to LEAs in envisioning, building, implementing, sustaining, monitoring, and scaling evidence-based practices within integrated systems of support. Since expanding from a single county office to two in 2018–19, SIP has operated as a partnership between the Riverside County Superintendent of Schools (RCSS), which leads implementation across the southern region, and the El Dorado County Superintendent of Schools (EDCSS), which oversees the north. Together they ensure statewide coordination and fidelity. The work aligns with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part B and addresses California’s State Performance Plan (SPP) and Annual Performance Report (APR) Indicators 3, 5, 6, and 7 — covering least restrictive environment, preschool LRE, early student outcomes, and statewide achievement.

A Three-Tiered System of Support

SIP reaches the field through three tiers that trade breadth for intensity. Tier 1 provides no-cost professional development, offered in person and virtually and open to any school community in the state. Tier 2 delivers direct technical assistance to grantees at the county, SELPA, district, and individual-site levels. Tier 3 supports LEAs identified for Compliance and Improvement Monitoring (CIM), state-level committee membership, and CDE-specific requests. Breadth at the base opens the door; intensity at the top is what moves practice — a pattern the evaluation confirms in Part 5.



The SIP three-tiered system of support — broader reach at the base, increasing intensity toward the top.

The Blueprint for Inclusion

The SIP Blueprint for Inclusion is the project’s organizing framework for systems change, drawing on implementation science and organizational-improvement research. It is intentionally non-linear: organizations enter where they are, revisit earlier stages as conditions change, and rely on

continuous improvement throughout. Its five stages — Envisioning, Building, Implementing, Scaling Up, and Sustaining — each describe a set of leadership behaviors, organizational practices, and enabling conditions that build the capacity for inclusion to take root and last.

- **Envisioning.** Leaders articulate why inclusion matters and what success looks like — developing a clear vision, mission, and values, communicating urgency, and engaging first adopters who model the way.
- **Building.** Vision becomes design through equity-centered strategic planning, measurable goals, and routine data collection and use, supported by the structures, policies, and partnerships that hold the work in place.
- **Implementing.** Inclusive instruction, intervention, and collaboration move into daily practice, sustained by a culture of accountability and growth, ongoing coaching, capacity-building, and clear messaging.
- **Scaling Up.** What worked in a few classrooms becomes how the organization does business — evidence-based practices spread, resources align to inclusive priorities, and student, family, and community voice shapes decisions.
- **Sustaining.** Inclusion becomes part of organizational identity; commitments persist through leadership transitions, expertise is shared, and networks of practitioners support one another across systems.

The Blueprint serves as both a planning tool and a measure of change. Grantee leadership teams complete a self-assessment at entry and again at year's end; in 2025–26 the average score rose from 3.75 to 3.95 on the scale (+0.20), with the largest movement in Envisioning (+0.29), Building (+0.24), and Sustaining (+0.22) — a pattern consistent with grantees moving from initial commitments toward deeper organizational change.



The SIP Blueprint for Inclusion frames research-based change practices in five non-linear stages.

The 2025–2026 Year at a Glance

During 2025–26, SIP served as a statewide catalyst for systems change, partnering with 127 unique LEAs — 98 SIP grantees and 31 CIM districts — across 38 of California's 58 counties. The year

expanded opportunities for shared learning through 11 regional Inclusion Academies, a growing Demonstration Site network, professional learning, webinars, and communities of practice.



SIP 2025–2026 by the numbers.

- **Direct support.** 127 unique LEAs supported through direct technical assistance, coaching, and systems-change support.
- **Inclusion Academies.** 11 regional Academies built leadership capacity and accelerated organizational transformation.
- **Demonstration Sites.** The network grew to 10 LEAs and 14 sites showcasing effective inclusive practice in action.
- **Field engagement.** Roughly 5,077 attendance and registration touchpoints across site visits, communities of practice, webinars, and statewide learning.
- **Student outcomes.** Every SIP entry cohort improved on Indicator 5a — students with IEPs in general education at least 80% of the day — at roughly twice the statewide rate.

Summary of Contract Tasks

Five task areas structure the year's work under the SIP contract. Each subsection below records how the corresponding contract requirement was met during the 2025–2026 program year.

#	Task	Focus
1	Project Coordination	CDE Monitor meetings, contract administration, accessibility (Section 508), quarterly and final reporting.
2	Technical Assistance for LEAs	Onboarding, site visits, professional development, webinars, Inclusion Academies, Demonstration Sites, Spring Institute.
3	Support for Statewide Change	Data review, demonstration-site development, coordination with EDCSS and RCSS, Virtual Inclusion Conference, CDE check-ins.
4	Collaboration and Research	Research engagement, conference presentations, state and national partnerships, continuous learning.
5	Publications and Dissemination	The Special EDge newsletter, the ACSE Annual Report, ongoing resource publishing.

Task 1 · Project Coordination

- **1.1 Regular Meetings with the CDE Monitor.** Ongoing in-person, virtual, email, and phone meetings with the CDE Monitor defined scope, established timelines, and coordinated contract activities throughout the year.
- **1.2 Acknowledgement on Materials.** All presentation materials carry the required acknowledgement: “Funded by the California Department of Education, Special Education Division.”
- **1.3 Style Guides and Accessibility.** All written products comply with CDE style guides and Section 508 accessibility standards (Part 1194, E205), and are reviewed and approved by the CDE Contract Monitor.
- **1.4 Quarterly Reporting.** Q1–Q3 progress reports were delivered on schedule; this Annual Report serves as the Final Report for the program year.
- **1.5 Final Report Timeline.** The draft Final Report is submitted electronically in Word to the CDE Monitor by June 15, 2026, for approval by June 30, 2026.

Task 2 · Technical Assistance for LEAs

- **2.1 Identification and Onboarding.** Targeted and Intensive districts identifying LRE as a needed improvement area were assigned to SIP, with additional LEAs joining after CIM-plan acceptance in March 2025.
- **2.2 Grant Award Notifications.** CDE issued 2025–26 GANs; onsite and virtual meetings, technical assistance, and presentations continued through June 30, 2026.
- **2.3 Data Review and Monitoring.** Fenix Research and Evaluation, LLC provided data review, longitudinal analysis, survey development, logic-model monitoring, and quarterly/final reporting support.
- **2.4 Professional Learning and Research.** The team stayed current on inclusive-education research through peer-reviewed literature, professional organizations, conferences, and professional development.
- **2.5 Development of Materials.** With EDCSS, RCSS, and subcontractors, the team developed presentation, webinar, and PD materials, made available to LEAs electronically and in PDF.
- **2.6 Subcontractor Engagement.** Expert subcontractors were engaged — including Fenix, Axxess Pointe, vFairs, Culture of Accountability, LeDerick Horne Speaks, Mindful Leaders, Organized Binder, and Dr. Sylvia Mac — selected for demonstrated success scaling inclusive practice.
- **2.7 Site Visits and Technical Assistance.** Site visits delivered leadership-team meetings, classroom walk-throughs, action planning, and tailored PD — averaging at least one contact per month with each participating LEA (3.08–3.42 touchpoints per district per quarter).
- **2.8 LRE Measure 5a by Cohort.** An in-depth 5a analysis found SIP LEAs grow at least twice the state and national rate, published in the March 2026 PACE report (Ripma & Wall, 2026); full analysis appears in Part 6.
- **2.9 Webinar and Event Coordination.** The team coordinated and facilitated webinars and events year-round, including four major Q3 webinars (UDL Session 1 and PBIS Sessions 1–3).
- **2.10 Welcome Webinar.** Held September 16, 2025, reviewing 2024–25 outcome data and introducing 2025–26 focus areas and the tiers of resources available to grantees.

- **2.11 Technical Assistance and PD.** 112 professional-learning sessions were delivered across 59 grantee districts (avg. 1.9 per district) year-to-date through Q3, spanning UDL, co-teaching, PBIS, and equity-team topics.
- **2.12 Inclusive Practices Webinars.** Archived and upcoming webinars are posted on sipimpact.org in accessible formats meeting Task 1.3 requirements.
- **2.13 Tier 1 Training Series.** Three open-access series (PBIS/UDL, Inclusive Finance, Executive Functioning Book Study) drew 1,721 registrations from 1,607 unique people across 213 organizations.
- **2.14 Pre/Post Survey of Grantees.** A Fall 2025 pre-survey (N=69) and Spring 2026 post-survey (N=147) measured educator belief and practice change; results are analyzed in Part 4.
- **2.15 Demonstration Sites.** 10 LEAs across 14 sites hosted quarterly tours and curated artifacts, capturing 648 attendance records (505 unique visitors) across 39 visit-events.
- **2.16 Inclusion Academies.** 11 regional Academies (+3 vs. prior year) ran three-session series building system-wide inclusive culture, policy, and practice; 1,024 attendance records were documented.
- **2.17 Spring Institute 2026.** Held April 7, 2026 with 280 attendees engaged in breakout sessions on inclusive culture, strategic action planning, and award recognition.

Task 3 · Support for Statewide Change

- **3.1 Data Review and Continuous Improvement.** Quarterly individual data-review meetings and per-member dashboards gave each team member routine access to their own and their grantees' data.
- **3.2 Development of Demonstration Sites.** All seven returning LEAs plus three new (Davis USD, LAUSD, Moorpark USD) hosted 14 sites spanning TK–high school, reaching roughly 88 organizations statewide.
- **3.3 Monthly Updates with CDE Monitor.** Monthly virtual and phone conferences with the CDE Contract Monitor tracked technical-assistance requests from LEAs.
- **3.4 Statewide Coordination and Alignment.** The team maintained project alignment, expansion, and partnership with EDCSS and RCSS to ensure consistent statewide delivery.
- **3.5 Presentations and System-of-Support Meetings.** SIP prepared materials and attended resource-lead meetings to help CDE promote a unified statewide message on inclusive practice.
- **3.6 Virtual Inclusion Conference.** The 5th annual “Belonging by Design” conference (May 7–8, 2026) drew 1,452 registrations and 3,991 session attendances; participant feedback appears in Part 3.

Task 4 · Collaboration and Research

- **4.1 Staying Current.** The team engaged research and evidence-based practice through reading, professional organizations, conferences, presentations, and PD (July 2025–June 2026).
- **4.2 Development of Resources.** Documents, presentations, and interactive modules were developed in alignment with SPP/APR indicators and statewide systems of support.
- **4.3 Presentations at Conferences.** The team delivered presentations and materials at local, state, and national events, all in accessible formats per Task 1.3.

4.4 Presentations Delivered. Across the 2025–26 program year, SIP leadership and staff carried the project's inclusive-practice message to local, state, and national audiences — including three

keynote addresses and a Legislative Assembly presentation. The representative log below, culled from the SIP presentation record, spans symposia, statewide summits, professional-association conferences, and regional communities of practice.

Event	Role
Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Conference	Keynote
Inclusive Resources Collaborative (IRC) Conference	Keynote
ADR Conference	Keynote
SIL Conference / SIL Summit	Leadership presentation
Legislative Assembly Presentation	Legislative briefing
CA UDL Summit	Presentation
CEC–DADD Conference	Presentation
Every Child Counts Symposium	Presentation
CalECSE Symposium	Presentation
UC/CSU Collaborative — P-3 / UPK Summit	Presentation
CALTASH Conference	Presentation
CISC, ACSE, LACOE Inclusion Conference	Presentation
CCEE State Systems of Support (SSOS) Virtual Conference	Presentation & roundtable
CCEE “Connecting California” Virtual Conference	Presentation
National Association for Co-Teaching Conference	Presentation
ACSA	Presentation
VALCO Geo Lead Inclusion CoP	Presentation
Monterey COE Inclusion CoP	Presentation
Santa Barbara Inclusion Network	Presentation
Merced County School Boards Conference	Presentation
Stanislaus COE Early Education	Presentation
Little Lakes School District PD Day	Presentation

Representative presentations delivered across the 2025–26 program year (SIP presentation log).

Task 5 · Publications and Dissemination

- **5.1 The Special EDge and ACSE Report.** Dissemination ran through The Special EDge newsletter — Vol. 40 No. 1 (“Recognizing Rightful Presence,” Spring 2026) and Vol. 39 No. 2 (“Applying Technology,” Summer/Fall 2025) — and the ACSE Annual Report cycle, under CDE direction with subcontractor support.

Evaluation Findings

The SIP evaluation reports findings at five Modified Kirkpatrick levels — reach and dose, reactions, learning, behavior, and results — each a precondition for the next. The six parts below present the synthesis of each level, the key data points behind it, and one chart that illustrates the finding. Read end to end, they trace a single chain of evidence: SIP reached the field at scale, was well received, produced measurable learning, shifted practice in proportion to engagement, and registered on California’s headline inclusion indicator.

Part 1 · Evaluation Purposes and Methods

The SIP evaluation is intentionally multi-layered. It is organized around a five-element purpose — examining movement toward the least restrictive environment, documenting the program’s activities and reach, informing reflection and continuous improvement, testing whether the theory of change is operating as intended, and generating insights that let the team self-assess and grow — and it operationalizes that purpose through the Wall (2023) variation on the Modified Kirkpatrick model.

The design is mixed-methods in two senses: it pairs quantitative measures (survey scales, matched pre/post gains, cohort indicator trends) with qualitative evidence (open-response coding, participant voices, and the PACE case study), and it pairs process evaluation (what SIP did and how well) with outcome evaluation (what changed as a result). This lets the report separate what SIP did (Parts 2–3) from what participants learned and now do (Parts 4–5) and from whether student-placement outcomes moved (Part 6) — and to ask not only whether SIP works but how it works.

Structuring the evaluation this way guards against two familiar pitfalls. Counting activity alone would overstate impact, while looking only at state indicators would miss the mechanism and the multi-year lag between technical assistance and placement change. By requiring each level to hold before crediting the next — reach must be real before reactions matter, reactions must be favorable before learning is plausible, learning must occur before behavior can shift, and behavior must change before indicators can move — the framework makes the evidence chain falsifiable at every step. The convergence reported in the following parts is therefore meaningful precisely because any weak link would have been visible.

The evaluation reports findings at five levels, drawn from the Wall (2023) variation on the Modified Kirkpatrick Model of Training Evaluation. Each level builds on the one before it: Level 1 describes who participates, Level 2 their reactions, Level 3 what they learned, Level 4 how their practice changed, and Level 5 whether student-placement outcomes moved. Parts 2 through 6 of this report map directly onto these five levels.

Level	Focus	What the level measures
Level 1	Reach and Dose	How many people were reached by SIP, and how intensively.
Level 2	Reactions	Participant reactions to SIP technical assistance and events.
Level 3	Learning	Participants’ learning, skill development, and attitude change.
Level 4	Behavior	Evidence of inclusion behavior change in practice or policy.
Level 5	Results	Change in least-restrictive-environment indicator data.

The five-level Modified Kirkpatrick evaluation framework (Wall, 2023).

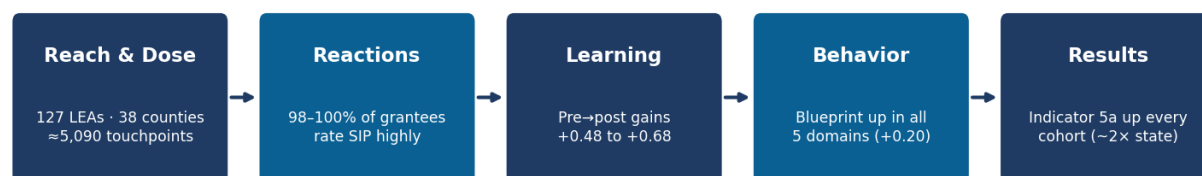
The evaluation is mixed-methods in two senses: it pairs quantitative measures with qualitative evidence, and it pairs process evaluation with outcome evaluation. The table below shows the primary data source and method used at each level.

Level	Data source	Method
1	Registration systems; social-media analytics	Process / quantitative
2	Post-event surveys; Fall and Spring Grantee Survey	Process / quant + qual
3	Pre/post participant surveys; interaction tracking; case studies	Survey + case study
4	Ongoing case studies; project monitoring; post-event follow-up	Mixed / longitudinal
5	CDE state indicator data (Indicators 3, 5, 6, 7); cohort analysis	Quantitative / longitudinal

Data sources and methods by evaluation level.

Key data points Framework: 5 Modified Kirkpatrick levels State indicators analyzed: 3, 5, 6, 7
Design: mixed methods; process + outcome

How the Evidence Builds



How the evidence builds across the five evaluation levels.

Part 2 · Reach and Dose

In 2025–26 SIP reached 127 unique grantee LEAs across 38 of California's 58 counties — 98 SIP grantees receiving Tier 2/3 technical assistance and 31 CIM districts under Tier 3 monitoring, with two served through both streams. That footprint is the high point of a decade of growth, from just 5 LEAs in 2016–17 — though the climb has not been strictly linear: the grantee count plateaued and dipped across 2022–24 (101, then 95, then 99) before expanding sharply to 127 in 2025–26. But grantee reach is only the base layer: through open-access (Tier 1) programming SIP reached far more of the field — roughly 5,077 direct attendance and registration records across the Demonstration Sites, Inclusion Academies, Virtual Inclusion Conference, Community of Practice, Spring Institute, and three webinar series, plus an estimated 11,600 social-media views.

Reach alone, however, understates the story, because dose varied widely across grantees. As later parts show, the districts that engaged most intensively are the same ones that post the strongest Blueprint and indicator movement. Breadth opened the door; intensity is what moved practice. Part 2 therefore functions as the denominator for the rest of the report.

The footprint is also broad geographically. SIP's 127 grantee LEAs span 38 of California's 58 counties, reaching urban, suburban, and rural systems from the far north to the southern border. That distribution matters for the results in Part 6: because SIP works across widely different contexts — and because the practices that move outcomes are structural rather than dependent on any

single setting — the model’s gains are positioned to transfer statewide rather than clustering in a handful of well-resourced districts.

Grantee participation is organized through the tiered system described in the Program Overview. Tier 1 is open to any school community in California and reaches the field through synchronous and asynchronous professional learning, the SIP website and resource library, The Special EDge newsletter, and SIP’s social-media presence. Tier 2 is specific to grantees and individualized — tailored professional learning, leadership-team facilitation through the Blueprint stages, and collaborative planning that moves a community from its current state toward its desired state. Tier 3 adds targeted support for LEAs in Compliance and Improvement Monitoring. Because dose rises with tier, the same structure that widens reach at the base is what concentrates intensity where it produces the learning and behavior change documented in Parts 4 and 5.

The table below summarizes reach by major SIP activity. Across in-person events, multi-session series, and open-access webinars, the 2025–26 portfolio generated roughly 5,077 direct attendance and registration records — in addition to ongoing technical assistance with 127 grantee and CIM LEAs and an estimated 11,600 social-media views.

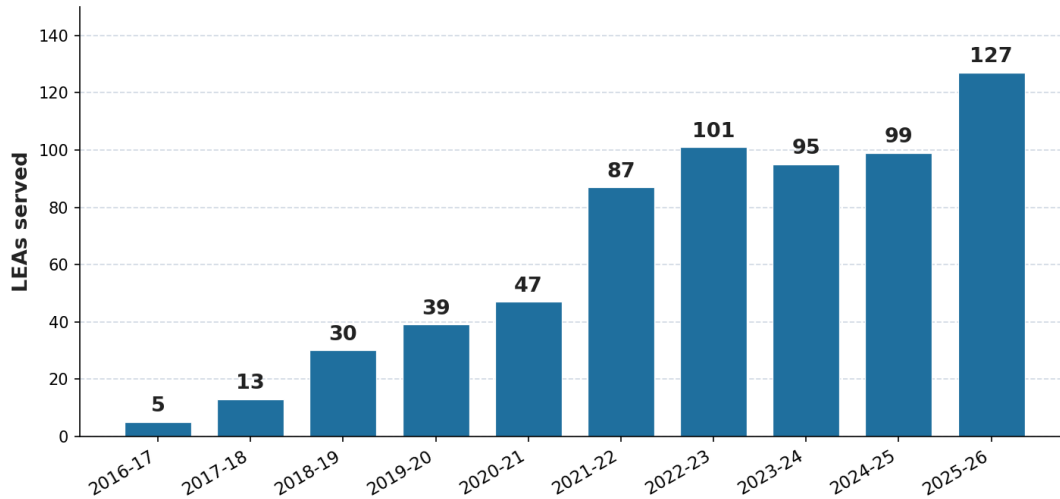
SIP activity	Reach	Window
Grantee + CIM LEAs (Tier 2/3 technical assistance)	127 LEAs (98 SIP + 31 CIM)	2025–26
Demonstration Site visits (39 events, 14 sites)	648 records · 505 unique	Sep–May
Inclusion Academy (11 regional cohorts)	1,024 attendance records	Aug–May
Thriving Together Community of Practice	39 participants	Dec–Feb
Spring Institute	280 attendees	Apr 2026
Virtual Inclusion Conference (5th annual)	1,452 reg · 3,991 session att.	May 2026
PBIS for All — Tier 1 webinar series	700 registered	Feb–Mar
Inclusive Finance — Tier 1 webinar	598 registered	May 2026
Executive Functioning Book Study	336 registered	Apr–Jun
Virtual reach (Meta, website, YouTube)	≈11.6K views · 1,748 followers	2025–26
Total direct event engagement	≈ 5,077 records	2025–26

Total reach by SIP activity, 2025–26. The ≈ 5,077 total sums each activity’s unique registrations or attendees as listed — the Virtual Inclusion Conference is counted as its 1,452 unique registrations, not its 3,991 session attendances. Figures are not deduplicated across activities, so an individual who took part in more than one activity is counted once per activity; social-media views and ongoing grantee/CIM technical assistance are excluded from the total.

The open-access (Tier 1) webinar series deserve particular attention as an index of SIP’s reach beyond its funded grantees. Across the three series — PBIS for All, Inclusive Finance, and the Executive Functioning Book Study — SIP logged 1,634 series registrations from 1,557 unique educators, spanning 540 unique organizational email domains. Because each domain approximates a distinct school, district, or agency, that figure represents a roughly five-fold expansion of institutional reach beyond the 96 Tier-2 grantee LEAs, extending SIP’s professional learning into hundreds of organizations that were not formally part of the grant. Delivered at no cost through EDCOE’s registration platform, these series functioned as an on-ramp — introducing educators from across the state to SIP’s inclusive-practice content and, in many cases, to the deeper Tier-2 and Tier-3 supports documented elsewhere in this report.

Key data points Grantee LEAs: 127 across 38 counties Tier-1 webinars: 1,557 unique educators
Demo Site visitors: 505 unique (648 records) **Total direct records:** ≈ 5,077

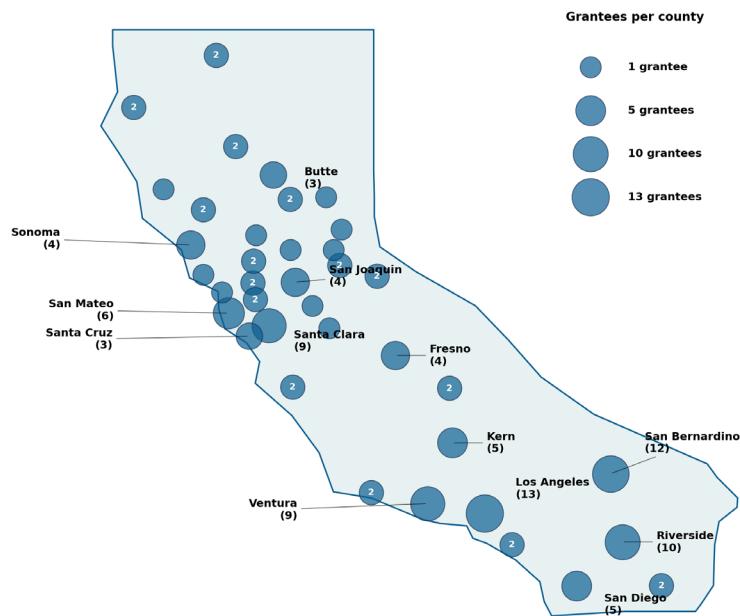
Total LEAs Served by SIP, 2016-17 through 2025-26



Total LEAs served by SIP each year, 2016–17 through 2025–26 — a more than 25× expansion overall, including a plateau across 2022–24 before the sharp rise to 127.

SIP Grantee Distribution by California County, 2025-2026

127 grantees across 38 counties • Bubble size = grantee count



Source: Monday.com 25-26 SIP Grantee Master (Q3 export).

Statewide reach: SIP grantee LEAs across 38 of California's 58 counties.

Part 3 · Reactions to SIP

How is SIP received? Reactions — satisfaction, perceived relevance, a sense of partnership, and intent to apply — are the leading indicators of the deeper learning and behavior change reported in

later parts. On the Spring 2026 Beliefs, Experiences and Practices Survey, grantees rated their experience with the SIP team between 4.56 and 4.71 on a 1–5 agreement scale, with 98 to 100 percent of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing on every item. Open-ended comments name SIP staff with appreciation, describe a partnership that meets districts “where they are,” and ask for the work to continue and expand.

Event by event, the 2026 Inclusion Conference, Spring Institute, Thriving Together Community of Practice, Demonstration Site visits, and Inclusion Academies all returned high satisfaction and high intended use — 91 percent of Conference respondents rated their overall experience as strong, and 100 percent of Community of Practice participants left intending to act. In the Community of Practice specifically, confidence climbed session over session across the three-session arc (4.86 → 5.40), showing that reactions strengthened as participants went deeper rather than fading after an initial event.

Open-response coding surfaced a recurring structural theme: participants repeatedly named cross-LEA seating at plenary sessions as a feature that distinguished the SIP Conference from others they had attended, crediting it with sparking peer connection and candid problem-solving. Favorable reactions are necessary but not sufficient — Parts 4 and 5 test whether they translated into learning and behavior change — but the consistency of these reactions across every flagship event is the leading signal that they did.

Grantee experience item (1–5 scale)	Mean	% Agree
My overall experience with SIP was positive	4.63	99%
The SIP team member(s) I worked with were knowledgeable	4.68	98%
The SIP team member(s) were well-regarded within my LEA	4.71	99%
I was eager to interact with the SIP team this year	4.68	100%
I have applied ideas from the SIP partnership to my work	4.57	100%

Selected items, Spring 2026 SIP Beliefs Survey (98–100% agreement across all items).

Beyond the grantee partnership survey, every flagship SIP event returned high satisfaction and high intended use. The table below summarizes the headline reaction metric for each, showing consistency across formats — from the two-day Virtual Inclusion Conference to the three-session Community of Practice.

Event	Headline reaction metric
2026 Virtual Inclusion Conference	91% rated overall experience strong
Thriving Together Community of Practice	100% left intending to act; confidence 4.86 → 5.40
Grantee partnership (Spring Beliefs Survey)	4.56–4.71 mean; 98–100% agreement
Demonstration Site visits	High satisfaction and intended use
Inclusion Academies	High satisfaction and intended use

Headline reaction metric by flagship SIP event, 2025–26.

“I appreciate their kindness and taking us from ‘where we are’ to ‘where we need to go.’ Keep the momentum going.”

Part 4 · Learning and Attitude

Across every instrument, SIP's 2025–26 engagements produced measurable learning. Where SIP delivered concentrated professional learning, knowledge, confidence, and capacity rose consistently. Demonstration Site visitors gained +0.48 overall (matched n=128), led by Action Planning at +0.91; Inclusion Academy participants gained +0.22 in knowledge and +0.68 on the organizational-practices domain, while self-confidence dipped slightly (–0.18) as participants recalibrated against a more demanding standard — a healthy pattern in deep professional learning.

The Spring Institute produced +0.7 to +0.9 shifts across five readiness items in a single day, and the Virtual Inclusion Conference averaged +0.54 across nine items with medium-to-large effect sizes (Cohen's d 0.70–0.98, all $p < .001$). The Inclusion Academy's organizational-practices gains were statistically robust as well, with 22 of 24 items reaching significance ($p < .05$) — evidence that the learning was broad-based across the curriculum rather than driven by a few standout topics.

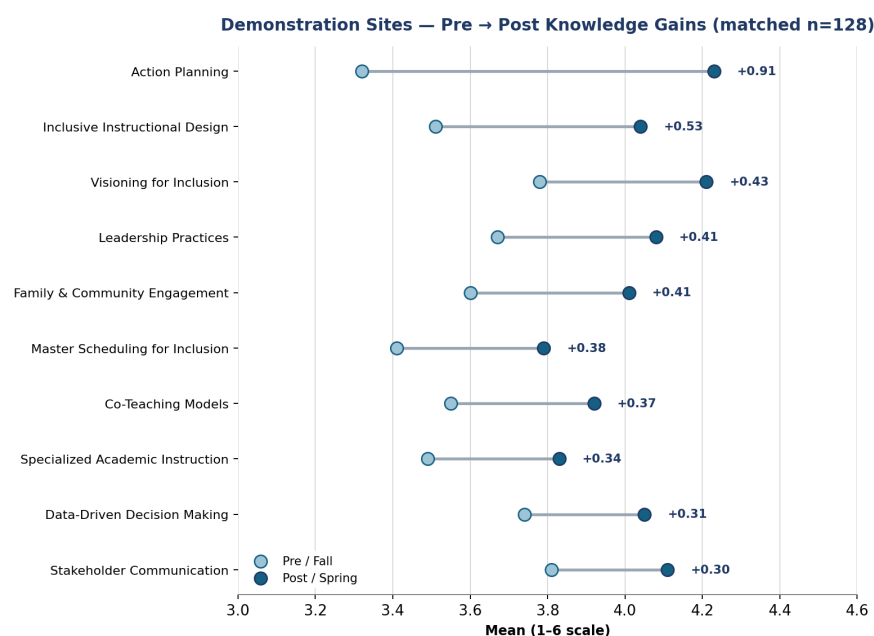
Meanwhile, perceived barriers to inclusion held essentially steady — mindset (≈ 3.3), practice (≈ 3.0), and culture (≈ 3.0) — exactly what a one-year theory of change predicts, since practice shifts before the perceived obstacles around it. The slight dip in self-confidence among Demonstration Site visitors fits the same logic: as participants encounter a more demanding standard of inclusive practice, they recalibrate what “proficient” means before their confidence catches up. Attitudes move more slowly than skills, but across cohorts, instruments, and domains the direction is consistent and positive.

The table below consolidates the matched pre→post learning gains across SIP's four principal professional-learning vehicles. Read together, they show consistent, statistically robust movement wherever SIP delivered concentrated instruction — the strongest single result being the Inclusion Academy's +0.68 gain on organizational practices.

Instrument	Matched n	Gain	Significance
Demonstration Sites — composite	128	+0.48	$p < .001$
Demonstration Sites — Action Planning	128	+0.91	$p < .001$
Inclusion Academy — knowledge	35	+0.22	—
Inclusion Academy — organizational practices	35	+0.68	22 of 24 items $p < .05$
Virtual Inclusion Conference — 9 items	—	+0.54	d 0.70–0.98, $p < .001$
Spring Institute — 5 readiness items	—	+0.7 to +0.9	single-day shift

Matched pre→post learning gains across SIP's four principal professional-learning vehicles (1–6 scales).

Key data points Demo Sites (matched n=128): +0.48; Action Planning +0.91 Virtual Conference: +0.54, all $p < .001$ Academy org. practices: +0.68 Spring Institute: +0.7 to +0.9



Demonstration Site pre→post knowledge gains across ten items (1–6 scale; matched n = 128).

Part 5 · Behavior

Behavior change is measured as movement on the SIP Blueprint for Inclusion, tracked through three independent instruments. On the all-grantee Beliefs & Practices Survey, all five Blueprint domains — Envisioning, Building, Implementing, Scaling Up, and Sustaining — rose between Fall 2025 and Spring 2026, lifting the overall Blueprint score by +0.20 on the 1–6 scale. The largest item-level gains landed on exactly the levers SIP pressed this year, including communicating urgency and inclusive master scheduling (+0.53).

Read together, the three instruments tell a dose–response story: the more concentrated the SIP experience, the larger the practice gain — survey +0.20 across all grantees, +0.48 at Demonstration Sites, and +0.68 in the Academy. Grantees reporting the most frequent monthly contact with the SIP team also reported the highest Blueprint scores, with the signal strongest where SIP is embedded in routine leadership work rather than consulted occasionally. Depth of engagement — not breadth — is what moves practice.

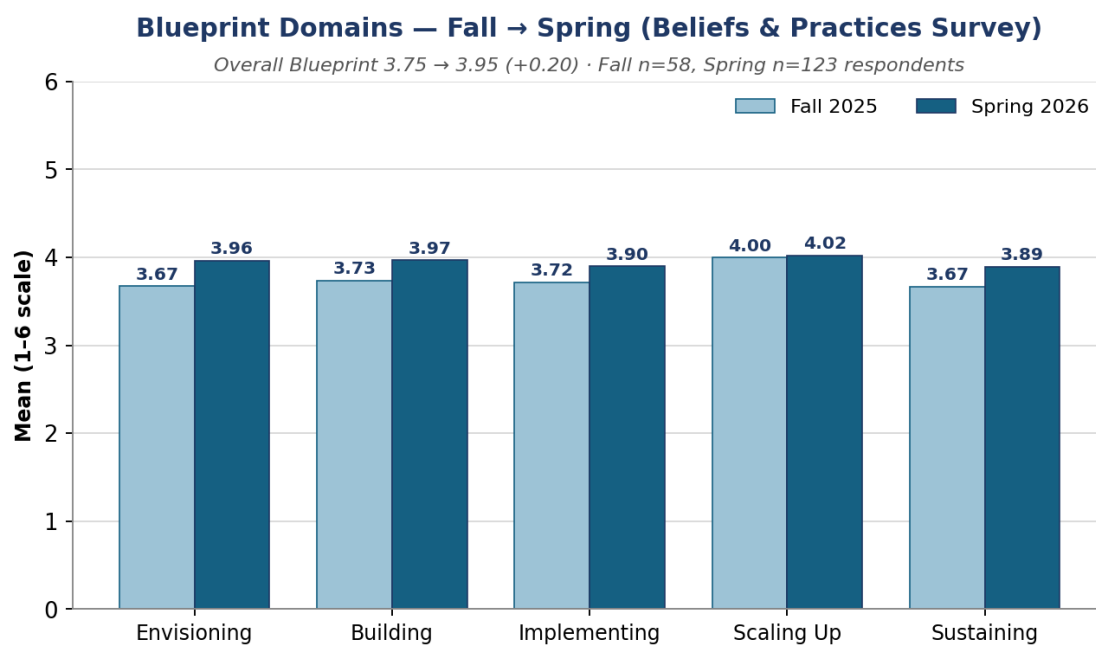
This dose–response curve is the report’s clearest causal signal, and it carries a direct operational implication: the practices that changed most — inclusive master scheduling and communicating urgency chief among them — are precisely the levers SIP concentrated on, and they were also the actions grantees most often named as their next step. Master scheduling alone was cited as the next planned action in 63 percent of Academy action plans, linking the measured gains in Part 5 to the forward-looking commitments that seed the following year’s movement.

The domain-by-domain record below shows the movement underlying the +0.20 overall gain. Every Blueprint domain rose between Fall 2025 and Spring 2026, with the largest gains in Envisioning and Building — the early stages where SIP concentrated its first-year technical assistance — and Scaling Up already near ceiling at entry.

Blueprint domain	Fall 2025	Spring 2026	Change
Envisioning	3.67	3.96	+0.29
Building	3.73	3.97	+0.24
Implementing	3.72	3.90	+0.18
Scaling Up	4.00	4.02	+0.02
Sustaining	3.67	3.89	+0.22
Overall Blueprint	3.75	3.95	+0.20

SIP Blueprint domain scores, Fall 2025 → Spring 2026 (all-grantee Beliefs & Practices Survey; 1–6 scale).

Key data points Blueprint overall: 3.75 → 3.95 (+0.20) All five domains: rose Fall→Spring Dose-response: +0.20 / +0.48 / +0.68



SIP Blueprint domain scores, Fall 2025 vs Spring 2026 (Beliefs & Practices Survey; 1–6 scale).

Part 6 · Results — State Indicators

Data note — Indicator 5 sources For 2024–25 and earlier, this report uses the finalized state SPP/APR data SIP typically relies on. To gain an early read on 2025–26 — for which finalized state data are not yet available — we used DataQuest data, which comes from a different source and reflects only a partial year. Because the two are not directly comparable, the most accurate interpretation is to read Indicator 5 differences only through 2024–25 and to treat the 2025–26 point as preliminary.

The state-indicator record answers “does it work?” for the measure SIP most directly targets. On Indicator 5a — the share of students with IEPs in general education at least 80 percent of the day — every SIP entry cohort improved from its pre-entry baseline. At the most recent endpoint (2025–26)

the pooled gain stands at +5.9 percentage points; the prior year (2024–25) reached a higher peak of +8.8 points. The 2025–26 endpoint is drawn from preliminary, partial-year DataQuest data rather than the finalized state SPP/APR series used for the earlier years, so the two points are not directly comparable and the apparent step down should be read with that caveat rather than as a confirmed decline. Across the series SIP grantees advanced at roughly double the statewide rate (the first cohort’s 5a measure rose about 18 percent since 2015, against roughly 6 percent statewide and 4 percent nationally). Among secondary K–12 measures, Indicator 5b stood at –3.0 percentage points at the 2025–26 endpoint — a favorable movement, since 5b counts students in general education less than 40 percent of the day (the most separate settings), where a decrease means fewer students placed apart from peers; Indicator 5c was roughly flat. Preschool Indicator 6 was mixed; Indicators 3 and 7 cannot yet support a clean cohort claim.

If the indicators answer whether SIP works, the SIP–PACE “Strategy in Action” case study answers how. Across districts that posted some of the largest LRE gains, four implementation conditions recur — an underlying structure that enables inclusion, leadership mindset and culture, data-driven planning and continuous improvement, and cross-role collaboration — made concrete through eight strategies led by inclusive master scheduling. Because the mechanism lives in schedules, roles, and routines rather than in individual champions, the gains transfer: SIP’s technical assistance can replicate them across contexts.

The report is deliberately honest about the boundaries of this claim. The strongest, cleanest signal is on Indicator 5a, the measure most tightly aligned to SIP’s theory of action; the secondary placement measures (5b, 5c) and the preschool Indicator 6 measures were favorable-to-mixed, and achievement (Indicator 3) and preschool outcomes (Indicator 7) cannot yet support a clean cohort claim. That pattern — large movement where SIP pushes hardest, and a more mixed picture farther from its primary lever — is exactly what a focused inclusion intervention should produce, and it strengthens rather than weakens confidence that the 5a gains reflect SIP’s work.

Two methodological features give the 5a finding its weight. First, the analysis is cohort-based: each SIP entry cohort is measured from its own pre-entry baseline rather than against a single fixed year, so districts that joined at different times are compared to where they started rather than to one another. Second, the SIP trajectory is read against statewide and national reference rates, which is what allows the roughly two-fold difference in growth to be stated at all. Because inclusion change accrues over multiple years — technical assistance shifts practice first, and placement data catch up afterward — the cohort design is essential: it lets a multi-year signal surface that a single-year snapshot would miss, and it is why cohort-level 5a tracking is carried forward as SIP’s headline outcome measure in the recommendations that follow.

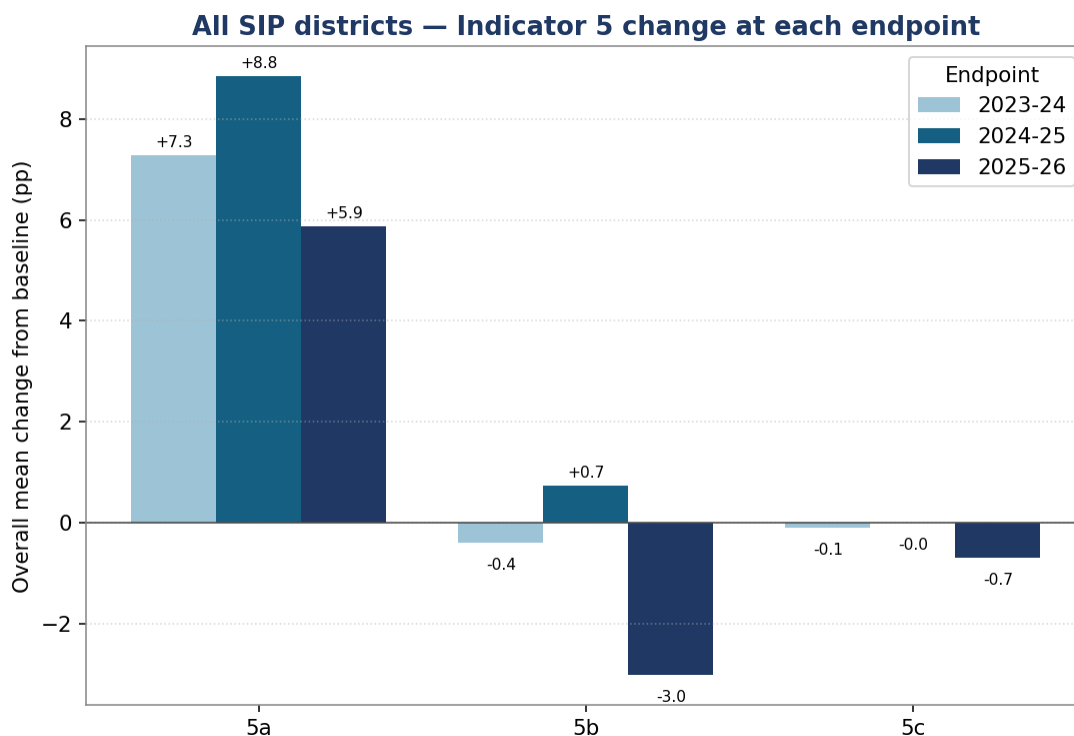
The table below summarizes SIP’s reading of each state indicator in scope. The pattern is consistent with a focused inclusion intervention: the strongest, cleanest movement is on Indicator 5a — the measure most tightly aligned to SIP’s theory of action — with a more mixed picture farther from that primary lever.

Indicator	Measure	2025–26 reading
5a	Gen-ed 80%+ of the day (K–12 LRE)	+5.9 pp (2025–26); +8.8 pp peak (2024–25); every cohort up; ≈ 2× statewide

Indicator	Measure	2025–26 reading
5b	Gen-ed less than 40% of the day (most-separate settings; lower is better)	–3.0 pp (2025–26) — favorable, fewer students placed apart
5c	Separate environment	Roughly flat / mixed
6	Preschool LRE (6A regular, 6B separate)	Mixed
3	Dashboard achievement (Distance From Standard)	No clean cohort claim yet
7	Preschool outcomes (7a, 7b, 7c)	No clean cohort claim yet

SIP reading of state indicators in scope (Ripma & Wall, 2026). The 2025–26 Indicator 5 readings use preliminary partial-year DataQuest data; earlier endpoints use finalized CDE SPP/APR data, so the two sources are not directly comparable.

Key data points Indicator 5a (2025–26): +5.9 pp; peak +8.8 (2024–25) **Vs. statewide:** $\approx 2\times$ the rate
Cohorts improving on 5a: every cohort



All SIP districts — pooled Indicator 5 change from each cohort's pre-entry baseline. The 2025–26 endpoints use preliminary partial-year DataQuest data; earlier endpoints use finalized CDE SPP/APR data, so differences are best interpreted only through 2024–25 (Ripma & Wall, 2026).

Recommendations

Drawing on the 2025–2026 evaluation evidence summarized in Parts 1–6, the SIP project team offers the following recommendations to the California Department of Education, Special Education Division for the 2026–2027 grant year and beyond. Each is anchored in a specific evidence base from this report.

- **1. Sustain investment in the regional Inclusion Academy model.** The Academy posted matched pre→post gains of +0.68 on Organizational Practices, with 22 of 24 items significant at $p < .05$. Sustained funding for the three-session, regionally scaled model would extend access and deepen the dose–response pattern documented in Part 5.
- **2. Expand the Demonstration Site network to underserved regions.** With 128 matched visitor cases producing a +0.48 composite gain — led by Action Planning at +0.91 — the Demonstration Site remains the most cost-effective field-based learning vehicle in SIP’s portfolio. Expansion into underrepresented regions would address geographic equity and accelerate scaling.
- **3. Codify the PACE implementation conditions in onboarding.** Once finalized, the implementation conditions identified by the Ripma & Wall (2026) PACE case study should be made explicit in the 2026–27 grantee onboarding curriculum and tracked annually.
- **4. Maintain quarterly key-indicator measurement of grantee experience.** The quarterly key-indicator scale gave the team a structured, low-friction way to self-assess engagement on four dimensions and flag where additional outreach was needed. Maintaining this cadence — paired with the Spring Belief Survey — preserves the project’s internal monitoring system.
- **5. Continue cohort-based Indicator 5a tracking as the headline outcome.** The SIP-cohort growth rate on Indicator 5a is the most consequential outcome finding in the portfolio. Cohort-level 5a tracking, with refreshed comparison groups as CDE releases new APR data, should remain SIP’s headline outcome measure.

Cross-Cutting Implementation Notes for 2026–2027

Four cross-cutting notes emerged that the SIP team will carry into 2026–27 planning. First, protect coach availability at a 2×-monthly minimum: because depth of engagement drives practice change, caseload decisions should preserve monthly coach availability for every Tier-2 grantee, staging new grantees rather than diluting current relationships where necessary. Second, center master scheduling in the Academy curriculum — it produced the largest item-level Beliefs gain (+0.53) and was named the next action in 63 percent of Academy action plans — anchoring it as a Session 1 topic with take-home scheduling protocols.

Third, maintain the cross-LEA seating model at the Inclusion Conference, which participants repeatedly credited as a distinguishing structural feature. Fourth, expand the Thriving Together Community of Practice to a second cohort: with 100 percent of participants reporting intent to act and confidence rising 4.86 → 5.40 across the arc, the model demonstrated strong first-year proof of concept and will relaunch with the same three-session structure and monthly cadence.



Educators at a SIP “Foundations of UDL 3.0” professional-learning session.

Looking Ahead

As California continues to advance educational innovation and equity, SIP remains committed to helping systems move beyond isolated initiatives toward sustainable transformation. Through leadership development, strategic implementation support, and a focus on continuous improvement, SIP is helping educational communities create the conditions where innovation thrives, barriers are reduced, and every student has the opportunity to learn, belong, and succeed.

The work reflected in this report demonstrates more than statewide reach. It reflects a growing movement of educators, leaders, families, and partners committed to reimagining what is possible for students with disabilities — and to building the systems that make those possibilities a reality. The priorities above translate this year’s evidence into next year’s design: protect the dose that drives change, codify the conditions that make it transferable, and keep the least-restrictive-environment indicator at the center of how success is measured.

The Evidence, End to End

Read together, the six parts trace a single, coherent chain. Part 2 establishes the scale of the 2025–26 footprint — 127 grantee LEAs across 38 counties and roughly 5,077 direct engagement records. Those favorable reactions in Part 3 (4.56–4.71 satisfaction, 98–100 percent agreement) translated into measurable learning in Part 4 (+0.48 at Demonstration Sites, +0.54 at the Conference, +0.68 on the Academy’s organizational-practices domain). Part 5 shows those gains expressed as practice — all five Blueprint domains rising, with the strength of the gain scaling with the intensity of SIP contact. Part 6 closes the loop: every SIP entry cohort improved on Indicator 5a, at roughly double the statewide rate, and the PACE case study explains the structural mechanism behind it. The convergence across instruments, time scales, and cohorts is the report’s clearest signal: depth of engagement is what moves practice, and practice is what moves student placement.

The strength of this chain is that no single link carries it alone. Reach without favorable reactions would signal compliance rather than partnership; reactions without learning would be mere satisfaction; learning without behavior change would stay theoretical; and behavior change without indicator movement would leave the question of student impact unanswered. Because each level was measured independently — through registration systems, event and grantee surveys, matched pre/post instruments, the all-grantee Blueprint, and cohort indicator analysis — the fact that every level held is what turns a collection of favorable results into a coherent, falsifiable argument. That is the throughline of the 2025–26 evaluation: SIP did not simply reach the field, it changed what the field does, and those changes are beginning to register where they matter most — in where California’s students with disabilities spend their school day.

Our Team

The 2025–2026 SIP project is implemented by a 14-member team spanning the Riverside County Office of Education, the El Dorado County Office of Education, and a network of expert subcontractors.

Project Leadership: Kevin Schaefer · Carmen Hopkins, Ed.D. · Janelle Mercado

Project Specialists: Juliet Anyanwu, Ed.D. · Heather Snipes · Sara Bleeg · Celese Heron · Jessica Maiorca-Nunez, Ed.D. · Megan Gross · Thomas Veloso · Kaitlin Hendricks-Petitti, Ph.D. · Sara Lincoln

Project Staff and Supporting Team: Erica Munoz · Rebecca Fuller

This team is supported by a network of expert subcontractors and partners whose specialized contributions make the breadth of the 2025–26 portfolio possible — spanning inclusive instruction and Universal Design for Learning, master scheduling and systems design, family and community engagement, data and evaluation, and the facilitation of the Demonstration Sites, Inclusion Academies, and statewide Inclusion Conference. The project is jointly administered by the Riverside County Superintendent of Schools, which leads implementation across the southern region, and the El Dorado County Superintendent of Schools, which oversees the north, ensuring statewide coordination and fidelity.

Conclusion

The 2025–2026 project year was the largest in SIP’s history — 127 grantee LEAs across 38 counties, alongside 14 Demonstration Sites, 11 regional Inclusion Academies, the 2026 SIP Inclusion Conference, and the new Thriving Together Community of Practice. Beneath the reach lies a more important pattern: convergence. Beliefs, Blueprint, indicator, and dashboard data — collected through different instruments, at different time scales, by different cohorts — point in the same direction. The work ahead is to deepen what is working and broaden access to it. SIP is grateful to the California Department of Education for the trust placed in this work, to its subcontractor and partner network, and most of all to the educators, leaders, and families across California whose daily efforts make inclusion real.

The Year in Perspective

Placed against the arc of the project's history, the 2025–26 year marks both a milestone of scale and a maturation of method. A decade ago SIP worked with just five local education agencies; this year it partnered with 127, a more than twenty-five-fold expansion that now touches 38 of California's 58 counties and, through open-access programming, hundreds of additional organizations beyond the funded cohort. Growth of that magnitude could easily have come at the expense of depth. The evaluation evidence suggests the opposite: the districts that engaged most intensively are precisely the ones posting the strongest movement on beliefs, Blueprint practice, and the least-restrictive-environment indicator. Breadth and depth, in other words, have grown together rather than in tension.

Looking forward, the priorities are clear and evidence-anchored: protect the dose of coaching and facilitation that drives practice change, codify the implementation conditions that make gains transferable across contexts, sustain the regional Academy and Demonstration Site models that proved most cost-effective, and keep Indicator 5a at the center of how success is defined. SIP enters 2026–27 not with a new direction but with a sharpened one — deepening what is working, widening access to it, and continuing to build the durable, structural conditions under which inclusion becomes simply the way California's schools do business.

Continuous Improvement and Data Use

The findings in this report are a product of the same continuous-improvement discipline that SIP asks of its grantees. Throughout the year, each team member held quarterly individual data-review meetings and worked from a personal dashboard giving routine access to their own activity and their grantees' outcome data. That structure turned evaluation from an end-of-year exercise into an ongoing management practice: patterns in engagement, satisfaction, and indicator movement were visible in near-real time, and the team could adjust outreach, staging, and support before small gaps became large ones.

A quarterly key-indicator scale complemented the dashboards, giving the team a structured, low-friction way to self-assess grantee engagement on four dimensions and flag where additional outreach was warranted. Paired with the Fall pre-survey and Spring Belief Survey, this cadence created a closed feedback loop — measure, interpret, act, and measure again — that mirrors the Blueprint's own emphasis on data collection and use as a routine organizational practice rather than a compliance step. It is also the mechanism that allows this report to speak to depth as well as reach: the dose–response pattern documented in Parts 4 through 6 was visible to the team as it unfolded, not merely in retrospect.

Acknowledgements

SIP's 2025–26 accomplishments are the product of many hands. The project is grateful to the California Department of Education, Special Education Division, for its continued partnership and stewardship of this work; to the county offices of education, SELPAs, and statewide initiatives that align their systems of support with SIP's; and to the Demonstration Site host districts, Inclusion Academy teams, and Community of Practice members who opened their classrooms, data, and practice to shared learning. Above all, SIP thanks the educators, site and district leaders, families, and — most importantly — the students across California whose daily work gives this report its meaning. Their willingness to reimagine what is possible for students with disabilities, and to do the patient, structural work that makes inclusion durable, is the foundation on which every finding in these pages rests.

This work is also carried forward in memory of a colleague whose vision shaped it. The report closes, fittingly, by honoring her.

In loving memory of

Bridgette Ealy

Champion of Inclusion · Beloved Colleague · Tireless Advocate for Every Student
