



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **SCCOE hosts first ever Inclusion Collaborative statewide conference**

**SAN JOSE, CA** – The first annual Inclusion Collaborative State Conference hosted by the Santa Clara County Office of Education (SCCOE) and supported by the California Department of Education’s (CDE) Special Education Division will be held on Oct. 23 and 24. More than 260 individuals from public and nonprofit agencies that support special education have registered for the two-day conference being held at the SCCOE’s central office at 1290 Ridder Park Drive in San Jose from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

The philosophy of inclusive education is that every student is valued, belongs and has the right to be a member of a classroom community.

Nationally-recognized experts in the fields of special education and inclusion will speak, focusing on effective strategies that have been proven to create positive outcomes for students with disabilities and that can guide inclusive practices in the programs and communities of those involved in the care and education of children from birth to age 8 with and without disabilities. The goal of the conference is to develop relationships across these agencies, while creating a community of practice with the capability of supporting inclusion throughout California.

Twenty-seven virtual sites around the state will also have participants tuning in via a live web stream to connect with and learn from their peers during the course of the conference.

In addition to supporting the work of this signature program through this first-of-its-kind conference, the CDE has also selected the Inclusion Collaborative to serve as a statewide technical assistance center for inclusionary practices, supporting districts in the expansion of inclusive programs in schools and communities.

Jointly created by First 5 Santa Clara County, the Local Early Education Planning Council (LPC) and the SCCOE in 2004, the Inclusion Collaborative is committed to ensuring that children with special needs have equal access to full participation in high-quality, inclusive learning environments. The collaborative supports this goal by demonstrating respect for all children and families, providing leadership in the community, integrating general education and special

education to support the needs of all children, offering training and education at all levels and establishing support for parents, providers, teachers and children.