

Regional Center of Orange County
Self-Determination Program Local Advisory Committee Meeting
Date: February 19, 2026
5:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.
Zoom Meeting

Present:

Beth Martinko, Parent

Crystal Chavez, Regional Center of Orange County (RCOC) Self Determination Program (SDP)
Coordinator

Evelyn Pinto, RCOC SDP Participant Choice Specialist

Gihong (Collin) Kwon, RCOC SDP Participant Choice Specialist

Hannah Pickett, Office of Clients' Rights Advocacy (OCRA)

Kaitlynn Truong, Comfort Connection Family Resource Center

Jennifer Montanez, RCOC Director of Case Management

Karen Pagano, Parent

Renu Moon, Parent

Scarlett Von Thenen, Orange County Office on the State Council on Developmental Disabilities
(SCDD)

I. Welcome and Introductions

Ms. Beth Martinko, committee member, called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Ms. Martinko welcomed all attendees of the Self-Determination Program Local Volunteer Advisory Committee (SDP LVAC) Meeting. Committee members introduced themselves.

II. Approval of January 26, 2026 Meeting Summary

The committee reviewed the minutes of the January 26, 2026, meeting. Ms. Renu Moon noted that she was not present at the last meeting, but her name is written as being present and would like to make the corrections on January 26, 2026 meeting summary to remove her name from the attendance.

Ms. Moon made a motion to approve the January 26, 2026, meeting minutes, with the removal of her name being in attendance from the meeting, Ms. Hannah Pickett second the motion. Ms. Kaitlynn Truong and Ms. Scarlett Von Thenen both abstained from voting on the minutes as they were not present for the last meeting. All other committee members voted in favor of approving the minutes and motion passed.

III. Approval of the Expenditure of Implementation Funds of the Self-Determination Program from Fiscal Year 2023-2024 for Purchase of “Think Outside the Box” book by Disability Voices United: 500 books in English and 500 books in Spanish.

Ms. Martinko noted that this item was the review to request the purchase of using the remaining funds from the Fiscal Year 2023-2024, “Think Outside of the Box” by Disability Voices United, 500 books in English and 500 in Spanish. Ms. Martinko noted to be open for discussion.

Ms. Crystal Chavez requested clarification in regards to requirements needed to be completed prior to the ability for someone to receive a book. Ms. Martinko noted feedback provided from the community regarding the waiting period between completing the orientation and receiving the certificate of SDP Orientation completion to when families receive the “Think Outside the Box” book. Ms. Martinko suggested individuals are able to receive this book when they express interest in the Self Determination Program (SDP) so they can have a better understanding of SDP. Ms. Karen Pagano noted it would be beneficial if the person receives the book as soon as they express interest in SDP and don’t have enough information about the program. Ms. Moon noted that she would like to wait until the individual has completed the orientation, as it shows they are committed to participating in SDP. Ms. Von Thenen, stated that she agrees with Ms. Moon that an orientation must be completed prior to obtaining the book. Ms. Truong also reported to agree with Ms. Moon and Ms. Von Thenen.

Ms. Martinko noted that she would like to hear from the community regarding the topic. Ms. Martinko also noted that she would like to see if a person who has taken the orientation but has yet to receive the certificate can be provided with a book.

A community member stated that they agreed with both points. They noted that the book should not be handed out to everyone. They stated that it took some time for them to start the process and if they had the book before the orientation, it would have helped them be more inclined to start the SDP process. The community member suggested that if the person reach out to their service coordinator and reported to be interested in SDP then the book can be provided to them.

Ms. Pagano further commented that by the time they have completed the orientation they already have the information, and it would be helpful to those who are just expressing interest or don't have enough information regarding SDP.

Ms. Martinko requested for a motion to be made for one of the options presented, which were to require certification in order to receive a book, confirmation of registration or anyone who indicated interested in SDP to their service coordinator.

Ms. Truong made a motion to use the 2023-2024 fiscal fund to purchase the "Think Outside the Box" book in English and Spanish. The purchase will be 500 books in English and 500 in Spanish to the people who have confirmed to have already registered for the orientation or have completed the orientation. Ms. Moon second the motion. Ms. Martinko requested to know if anyone had any further discussion. Ms. Pagano noted not to be in favor of the motion, all other community members reported to be in favor of the motion. Ms. Chavez noted that the motion was for 5 yes, and 1 no, due to majority vote the motion was passed.

Ms. Martinko, noted if Ms. Pagano wanted to provide additional feedback as to why her vote was against the motion. Ms. Pagano noted she would have voted yes, if the requirements were to either have a certificate, registered to vote or express interest in

SDP to their service coordinator. Ms. Martinko did note that the motion had already passed. Ms. Von Thenen noted that she would agree that if someone had expressed interest with their service coordinator that this could also be an option for them to obtain more information. Ms. Martinko request to see if SC's can provide the books to those who express interest in SDP. Ms. Chavez noted that SC are informed to let their families know if they interested in SDP they should sign up for the orientation. Ms. Chavez, reviewed the two options on how to register for the orientation are through the State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD) or through RCOC. Ms. Chavez reminded the committee the has motion passed, where the person requesting a copy of the book would need to provide verification of their registration for the orientation.

Ms. Troung noted that she manages Comfort Connection at Regional Center of Orange County (RCOC) and they have a lot of community events for which provide families with information on SDP, where receiving this book would not the only source of information families receive regarding SDP.

Ms. Von Thenen mentioned that a community member asked if some copies could be provided to the Comfort Connection Family Resource Center lending library, as it gives the community an opportunity to check out the book if they are interested in learning more about SDP. Ms. Martinko noted that it could be an additional motion. Ms. Von Thenen noted that she would like to make a motion to provide 10 copies of English and 10 copies of Spanish, "Think outside of the box" book to the Comfort Connect family resource center at RCOC." Ms. Troung noted to second the motion.

Ms. Martinko opened for discussion. Ms. Chavez requested to clarify if these were additional purchases to the 1000 books already reviewed. If so, then this would not be part of the agenda item that were noted to be reviewed for today's meeting or if the books provide to comfort connect would come from the 1000 book total that was approved to be purchased. Ms. Martinko noted that it would come from the 1000 books that were to be purchased and not a separate purchase request.

Ms. Von Thenen clarified that the motion was, out of the 500 English and 500 Spanish books purchased, 10 English and 10 Spanish books would be given to the Comfort Connect lending library at RCOC. Ms. Troung second the motion. Ms. Martinko noted this would provide the opportunity to lend the book to someone who is interested in SDP without having to register or complete the orientation. Ms. Martinko inquired if there was additional discussion. No other comments were provided from the community or committee members. All committee members present were in favor of the motion and motion passed.

VI. Setting of Agenda Items and Date for Next Meeting

Ms. Chavez inquired if a meeting poll should be provided for SDP LVAC members to vote for the next LVAC meeting date via e-mail. Ms. Martinko inquired if anyone objected to this. No objections were made by the SDP LVAC members.

A community member requested to know where they could request assistance to make a complaint regarding an FMS agency. They noted that there seemed to be a lot of barriers with working with the FMS and it's been a four-month issue that has resulted in barrier in hiring her providers. Ms. Martinko noted that LVAC meetings do not assist with individual case-related concerns. Ms. Hannah Pickett offered the community member to contact their office if they have any legal questions or issues and provided the community member with the contact information for the Clients' Rights Advocacy.

Ms. Von Thenen noted that the community member could reach out to their Office of Clients' Rights Advocacy and is open to any one who has RCOC services.

V. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 6:05pm