

**Regional Center of Orange County
Self-Determination Program Local Advisory Committee
Date: April 13th, 2026
6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
Zoom Meeting**

Present:

Dr. April Lopez, Chair Committee, Parent

Beth Martinko, Parent

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

Evelyn Pinto, RCOC SDP Participant Choice Specialist

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

Kaitlynn Truong, Comfort Connection Family Resource Center

Karen Pagano, Parent

Jennifer Montanez, RCOC Director of Case Management

Renu Moon, Parent

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

I. Welcome and Introductions:

Dr. April Lopez, committee member, called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Dr. Lopez welcomed all attendees of the Self-Determination Program Local Volunteer Advisory Committee (SDP LVAC) Meeting. Committee members introduced themselves.

II. Approval of February 19, 2026, Meeting Summary

The committee reviewed the minutes of the February 19, 2026, meeting. Ms. Beth Martinko made a motion to approve February 19, 2026, meeting minutes. Ms. Kaitlyn Truong second

the motion. All other committee members voted in favor of approving the minutes and motion passed.

III. Update Regarding RCOC Trainings - Person-Centered Thinking

Ms. Crystal Chavez introduced Ms. Leah Saitz, who provided updates regarding the RCOC Training for Person-Centered Thinking. Ms. Saitz shared the training will be a two-day event designed for vendors and Independent Facilitators (IF). Space is limited, and interested participants are encouraged to email Ms. Saitz for additional information. Ms. Saitz also announced upcoming PCP meetings to be held via Zoom. The April 16, 2026 session will be conducted in Spanish, and the May 6, 2026 session will be offered in English via webinar-style format.

IV. Funding to Support Implementation of the Self-Determination Program for Fiscal Year 2024-2025

a. Vote for applicant award: Person-Centered Planning (PCP) Training RFP

Ms. Chavez noted the first proposal was a training that would be exclusive to person serves and their families for PCP Training.

The first application reviewed was for Autism Society Los Angeles (ASLA). Ms. Kim Sinclair, the executive director of ASLA, presented their proposal to the community, along with Naomi Hagel, who would be a co-facilitator assisting Ms. Sinclair in the presentation. Ms. Sinclair noted that they will provide their training in person, both in English and in Spanish over a three-day period. Ms. Sinclair noted ASLA can support up to 150 English speaking and 150 Spanish speaking participants under the current contract, with a minimum of five participants needed for Spanish-language training.

Community members requested clarification regarding the number of individuals who may enroll in the training and how ASLA plans to ensure that all enrolled participants are able to fully attend and complete the training, as there were technology issues during the previous training. They also noted that RCOC families should be prioritized when selecting participants for future training.

Ms. Chavez clarified that the current PCP training proposal is specifically intended for individuals served by RCOC and their family members. She explained that the previous ASLA training was designed for individuals seeking to become independent facilitators and therefore had different eligibility requirements for participant selection.

Ms. Hannah Pickett provided the resource regarding the DDS funding for SDP LVAC: [DDS Directive – FY 2024–25 Self-Determination Program Funding](#).

Ms. Sinclair stated the actual session could be opened earlier to provide participants with additional time to troubleshoot any technological issues prior to the start of the training.

Ms. Martinko provided feedback encouraging flexibility and grace for families participating in the training. She continued to mention there should be no pre-screening of participants and instead allow all interested individuals to attend, with appropriate action taken only if issues arise during the session.

Ms. Chavez noted the second application is from Padres Unidos por el Autismo (PUPA). Ms. Cecilia Ortiz, who is the director of Padres Unidos por Autismo (PUPA), reviewed their limit of participants they can accept but noted that they can also have the training via zoom to have greater access to the community. Ms. Ortiz reviewed the materials utilized during the training will be in Spanish, with the translation in English, as it will help the Spanish speaking community to better understand PCP support and services in a 3-hour session.

Dr. Lopez requested to know if PUPA would offer their services in any other language other than Spanish and English.

Ms. Ortiz noted that they would offer training in any other language if there was interest.

Ms. Chavez noted the third application was submitted by Ms. Sonia Ramiez. Ms. Ramiez presented the goal of her proposal to ensure families gain the knowledge, skills, and competencies needed to understand and participate in their PCP process. She shared she has worked in education in the Santa Ana area for over thirty years and has served as an Independent Facilitator for the past six years. She further described the proposed training as interactive and collaborative, focusing on participant engagement rather than a traditional lecture style presentation. The training would serve approximately 120-160 participants and be organized into 6-8 cohorts, with sessions offered either in a hybrid format or via Zoom.

Ms. Moon requested clarification on the length of the training. Ms. Ramírez responded that the training would consist of two day sessions each lasting four hours.

Ms. Chavez asked about the location for in-person training. Ms. Ramírez stated that sessions would be held at various churches within the community. She also noted that scheduling would be flexible based on participant availability, with sessions potentially offered in the morning or later in the evening.

A community member asked whether the proposal could be reviewed. Ms. Chavez confirmed it has been posted on the RCOC website under today's event and on the Self-Determination Program portion of the RCOC website.

Dr. Lopez noted that a motion should be made to move forward with a proposal. Ms. Chavez noted that a break will need to be provided for the interpreters and the motion can be reviewed after the provided break.

Break at 7:06-7:11pm

Dr. Lopez requested a motion regarding the PCP proposals that were reviewed. Ms. Martinko made a motion to approve ALSA with conditions that they do not pre-exclude any individual from participating in the training, that they exercise flexibility and understanding with parents and families during the entry and exit process of training, and that they provide Korean and Vietnamese interpretation if there is at least one

participant who requests it. Dr. Lopez seconded the motion. Dr. Lopez then requested to know if there is any room for discussion from the committee members. Ms. Moon noted that she agreed that ASLA allows as many people as possible to participate in the training. Ms. Sinclair clarified that the application did not include Vietnamese or Korean interpretation, as it was not a requirement noted in the Proposal. Ms. Sinclair noted the cost of additional language translation would be considered an additional cost from the total amount that is in the application. However, they can do the close caption for other additional languages. They do have the materials in Korean, but do not have the materials in Vietnamese.

Dr. Lopez inquired whether the alternative proposals include interpretation services for other communities. Ms. Martinko confirmed that the proposal has the capacity to support multiple languages without additional cost.

A community member also raised concerns regarding the effectiveness of subtitles provided in their language, noting that they are not always functional and can limit access to training offered by certain organizations, particularly for individuals who are not technologically proficient.

Ms. Karen Pagano requested clarification on whether the alternate proposal included interpretation services and materials in Korean and Vietnamese.

Ms. Ortiz and Ms. Ramirez confirmed that their proposal has the capacity to provide both materials and interpretation services in additional languages as needed.

Ms. Sinclair stated that their team has materials available in Korean and may be able to secure a Korean interpreter. However, she noted that they are not currently able to provide interpretation services or materials support for the Vietnamese community.

Dr. Lopez requested to continue with the vote on the current proposal for PCP training. Ms. Martinko noted that although ASLA appears to have stronger qualifications for the

training, she expressed concern that ASLA does not currently have the capacity to provide services for the Vietnamese and Korean communities. She further noted that the other applicants also have relevant community experience.

All committee members voted in favor of the proposed motion, however Ms. Scarlett Von Thenen abstained from voting for the motion. Motion did not pass.

Dr. Lopez requested to make a motion to open the proposal for the other application awards that only have one proposal for another 30 days so that it provides time for additional application to submit proposals. Dr. Lopez requests to know if the committee members would like to discuss that motion. Ms. Chavez requested to clarify that this motion would just be for the Employee and Labor Law Training and Advance Training for Independent Facilitators. Dr. Lopez clarified that the motion would just be for the Employee and Labor Law Training & Advanced Training for Independent Facilitators. Ms. Martinko noted that she would second the motion. All other committee members voted in favor of approving the extension of the proposal. Motion passed.

b. Vote for applicant award: Employee and Labor Law Training RFP

Due to time constraints, this item was not reviewed.

c. Vote for applicant award: SDP Parent Support Group RFP

Due to time constraints, this item was not reviewed.

d. Vote for applicant award: Advanced Training for Independent Facilitators RFP

Due to time constraints, this item was not reviewed.

V. Funding to Support Implementation of the Self-Determination Program for Fiscal Year 2023-2024

a. SDP Resource Fair Follow-up Update

Due to time constraints, this item was not reviewed.

VI. RCOC Self-Determination Activities:

a. Self-Determination Statistics

Due to time constraints, this item was not reviewed.

b. Self- Determination Demographics

Due to time constraints, this item was not reviewed.

VII. Disability Access Navigator

Due to time constraints, this item was not reviewed

VIII. Community Input and Barriers to Completing the SDP Process

Due to time constraints, this item was not reviewed.

IX. Agenda Items and Date of the Next Meeting

Due to time constraints, this item was not reviewed

X. Adjourn

Meeting Adjourned at 7:33pm.