

## News & Announcements

### REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

→ [Learning Acceleration Systems Grant](#) - CCEE is seeking submissions of professional learning opportunities & materials related to evidence-based learning acceleration strategies in literacy, language development, and/or mathematics. Proposals due: January 28, 2022 at 4pm

### REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

→ Coming Soon! The [Community Engagement Initiative](#) (CEI) invites any interested school district in CA to serve in Cohort III of its Peer Leading & Learning Network (PLLN) beginning Fall 2022. Ready to learn more about how your district can transform its community engagement efforts? Check out the RFA flyer [here](#) & stay tuned for more information!



### LOOKING AHEAD

- 1/18: [CCEE Learning Paths: Tools & Tips for Blended Professional Learning](#)
- 1/25: [Program Planning & Partnerships](#) (Workshop 3 of PCY's [Make Your Summer Game Plan series](#))
- 2/3: CCEE Governing Board Meeting

## This Month's Resources

- System of Support Updates ([Jan. 2022](#))
- [The Toolkit Before the Toolkit: Centering Adaptive & Relational Elements of Restorative Practices for Implementation Success](#)
- [Social-Emotional Learning & Wellness website](#) (Santa Cruz COE)

## Executive Director's Corner



*The California Collaborative of Educational Excellence (CCEE) is a statewide leader delivering on California's promise of a quality, equitable education for every student.*

Since the inception of the CCEE, the agency's overall mission has been to work collaboratively with other state agencies and educational partner agencies to deliver on California's promise of providing a quality, equitable education for every student. As part of the Statewide System of Support (SSOS), CCEE has been called to be a leader in this space. Like many of our educational partners, we don't do this work alone. We share the leadership of this work with our County Offices of Education and Local Educational Agencies — both non-charter and charter.

So how can CCEE work with our educational partners to better serve the SSOS? It means not seeing the CCEE as a competitor, rather an educational partner in helping, supporting, learning, and sharing resources and supports that are working in the field to build and create improved equitable educational outcomes. Our SSOS partners have been engaged in some incredible work that is creating equitable educational outcomes for students (see Fall 2021 Geographic Lead newsletter, [Bridging California Connections](#)). Our new organizational structure has transformed the CCEE into three centers of work (previously shared in the [December 2021 newsletter](#)). Together, all statewide partners and agencies can achieve the mission of delivering on California's promise of a quality, equitable education for every student.

Sincerely,  
**Matt J. Navo**

## Building Wellness Centers for Students by Students

### THE IMPACT OF STUDENT VOICE AT THE FOREFRONT OF DECISION-MAKING

By **Carolyn Gray, Research Assistant & Amanda Dickey, Director of Government Relations, Santa Clara COE**



In 2021, at the height of the pandemic, the Santa Clara County Office of Education (SCCOE) established and convened a mental health Youth Advisory Group (YAG) to help guide SCCOE staff as we worked with districts and county behavioral health to open new student wellness centers at 12 local school sites.

The YAG is one of Santa Clara's best examples of great community engagement in practice. YAG members are between the ages of 14-25, and were selected to be representative of our student community's diverse race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, lived experience, ability, geographic distribution, and socio-economic status. Starting in April 2021, over thirty students met monthly to develop community service projects, learn from local guest speakers with mental health expertise, and provide recommendations on the wellness centers — everything from the paint on the walls, to the types of services provided, to the characteristics and qualifications of staff. Students emphasized the necessity for services that are accessible on school campuses and are provided by practitioners who look like them: diverse, young, and from the community.

The YAG is divided into six committees, each with a particular focus around a specific aspect of mental health needs and awareness. For example, through the instruction

of the SCCOE Director of Government Relations, students on the YAG Advocacy Committee learned how to advocate for themselves and the community. After a ten-week course on civic engagement, law making, and advocacy, the students developed their own proposals on mental health workforce development and began presenting their ideas to state and county leaders.

All 12 SCCOE student wellness centers are now open to students and are experiencing even greater success than anticipated — one wellness center recorded more than 700 student visits in the first week. Based on the input provided by the YAG, wellness center staff offer a broad scope of evidence-based services and supports ranging from one-on-one cognitive behavioral health counseling to clinician-led group activities such as art therapy, music therapy, and mindfulness. Now that the centers are fully operational, the YAG has pivoted to developing ongoing messaging on the wellness centers and focusing on building youth advisory groups at every campus so that wellness centers continue to grow in partnership with the needs of students.

## Reflections on Leadership, Systems, and Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)

By **Sandra Azevedo**, Coordinator of Continuous Improvement, Butte COE




An impetus to our shifting worldviews is that we are living in a world of increasing complexity and uncertainty. We have been particularly affected by adversity in Butte County, and not unironically, I have found comfort in learning that there are frameworks for supporting us within that space — a sort of certainty about uncertainty. An internationally lauded sense making framework, [Cynefin](#), is one of them that has been emerging in leadership, equity, improvement, and restorative practices circles these past couple of years and that feels critically important to understand. We are currently exploring a partnership with Sonoma COE and consultants, Cultivating Leadership, to enhance our "[Complexity Fitness](#)" and gain competence with Cynefin.

Along with Cynefin, at a recent presentation regarding Butte's social-emotional learning (SEL) and mental wellness efforts, I shared a simplified version of a tool, the [Two Loops of Systems Change](#), derived from the Living Systems Theory. I categorized our SEL efforts by how we are *stewarding and hospicing* (holding and supporting our systems and the people within it) and how we are *innovating* (pioneering new approaches and connecting via networks and communities of practice). This tool, the Two Loops, and the way we can utilize it to think differently, build awareness, and engage is a part of new leadership approaches that are emerging. One place we are practicing these at Butte COE, in conjunction with some of our COE and state partners, is through the [S.L.O.W. Collaborative](#).

The "how" of many of these emerging leadership practices are being supported from awareness-based or participatory leadership methodologies, such as [Compassionate Systems](#) and the Art of Hosting. So, what exactly is participatory leadership? Deeply rooted in the practice of inquiry, the [Art of Participatory Leadership](#) (AoPL) allows us to see ourselves, others, and systems more clearly, while simultaneously fostering both the conditions for learning and the SEL competencies that we desire. Participatory practices can help:

- Tap into diverse perspectives
- Cultivate leaderful communities and collaboratives
- Create cultures of equity and inclusion
- Inspire deeper levels of trust across partners
- Host conversations for meaningful action
- Explore mindsets & norms that are keeping harmful/ineffective systems in place
- Provide participants with the experience and resources to replicate the practices and tools learned

If this sounds like it is deeply aligned with SEL, equity, systems thinking, and improvement work, it's because it is. Awareness-based/participatory systems methodologies, versus traditional, hierarchical, linear, mechanistic interventions are the "how" to complexity or a living system's "what". When our worldviews shift, our approaches need to as well.

 [Click here to read Sandra's full article!](#)

## Get to Know the CCEE Team!



**Mindy Fattig**, Senior Advisor,  
Special Education

Mindy works collaboratively with COEs, LEAs, the CA Dept. of Education, and other California educational agencies focusing on improving outcomes for all students in the Statewide System of Support. Her expertise is bringing partners together in designing and supporting inclusive environments for students with disabilities.

**Fun Fact:** Mindy loves to listen to true crime podcasts!



**Belinda Gaspar**, Program Specialist,  
Teaching, Learning, & Leading

Belinda supports the Teaching, Learning, & Leading Center in its efforts to provide direct technical assistance to LEAs across the state. She is also supporting the Center with the Learning Acceleration Systems Grant RFP which aims to partner with (a) county office(s) of education to develop evidence-based professional development opportunities for educators that can support learning acceleration in mathematics, literacy, and language development.

**Fun Fact:** Belinda comes from a large family and has more than 30 first cousins!