



May 14, 2024

Brian Winfield
Deputy Director
Department of Developmental Services
1600 Ninth Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Winfield:

This letter is written in accordance with the Lanterman Act [W&I Code §4519.5(i)(1)]. Alta California Regional Center (ACRC) held one online public meeting on Tuesday, March 19, 2024, from 5:00 pm to 6:30 pm, ACRC hosted the event using the Zoom platform.

The meeting was posted on February 16, 2024, on ACRC's website with flyers translated in Arabic, Farsi, Hmong, Korean, Punjabi, Russian, Spanish, Tagalog, and Vietnamese. The meeting information was posted on social media platforms, including Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Email invitations were sent to community partners including Family Resource Centers, State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD), Disability Rights of California (DRC), Hmong Youth Parents United (HYPU), Hlub Hmong Center (HHC), the UC Davis MIND Institute, E-Center Migrant Head Start, The Arc, Families for Early Autism Treatment (FEAT), and Communicare CREO Program. These partner organizations distributed the flyers to members of their organizations via email and mailing lists. Spanish, Tagalog, and American Sign Language (ASL) translations were provided during the meeting. Contact information to request alternate accessibility accommodations including additional language translations was provided on the meeting announcements.

Attendance at the meetings included individuals self-identified as clients, parent/family members, professionals, advocates, and staff persons. The meeting was recorded and is available on ACRC's YouTube channel and website. Two-hundred-sixty-two individuals registered for the March 19th meeting, and sixty-nine attended. Twelve attendees were ACRC staff, and fifty-seven were comprised of parents, advocates, vendors, and community members. Hosting the event online allowed clients and families to attend irrespective of their geographic proximity and participate from the comfort of their own homes.

The following items were presented during the meeting:

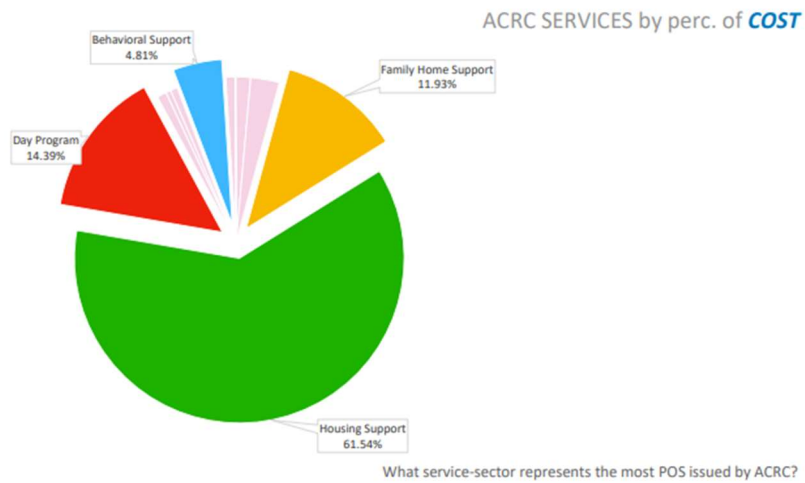
- ACRC's Executive Director welcomed the participants.
- ACRC's Training Manager introduced the meeting presenters.

- ACRC shared systemic changes because of legislative amendments including the implementation of Implicit Bias training, WIC 4511.1; Language Access and Cultural Competency Initiative WIC 4620.4; as well as a review of Service Access and Equity (SAE) grant projects. These legislative changes are positive outcomes impacting the service system at a policy level.
- ACRC conducted a comprehensive review of POS data and examined the significance of the Enhanced Service Coordination caseloads.
- Presentation of the ACRC population chart by ethnicity and percent of spending followed, as evidenced in the slides below. The Caucasian population comprises 43.10% of the total ACRC population and utilizes 45.84% of ACRC’s total POS budget. The Asian population is 8.47% of the total ACRC population and utilizes 7.23% of the POS budget; the African American population is 11.65% of the total ACRC population and utilizes 12.29% of the total POS budget; the Hispanic community is 17.91% of ACRC client populations and uses 17.69% of the POS budget; other ethnicity/multicultural is 15.59% of total ACRC client populations, and they utilize 14.00% of ACRC’s POS budget, and the American Indian/Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islanders are both less than one percent of ACRC’s client populations and also spend less than one percent of POS budget.
- During this Annual POS meeting, ACRC took a closer look at disparities in spending by percentage points and presented data as shown in the graphs below:

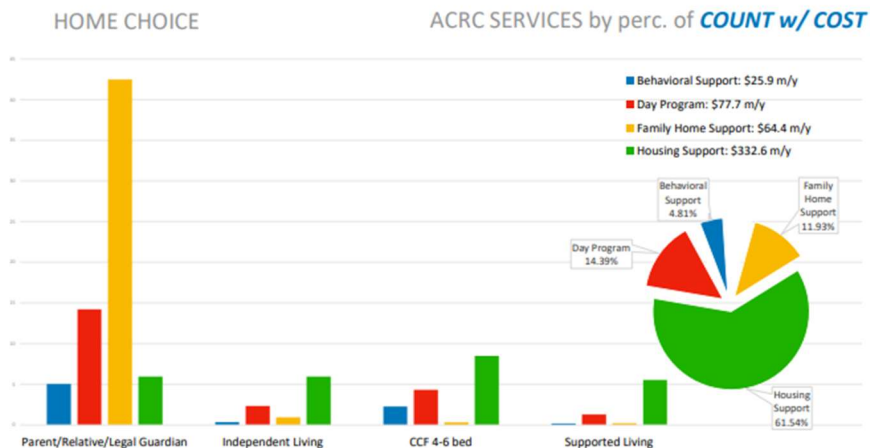
Ethnicity Subgroup	Percent of Client Pop.	Percent of Spending
Asian	8.47%	5.01%
African American/Black	11.65%	12.38%
Filipino	2.33%	1.60%
Hispanic	17.91%	10.48%
Native American/Alaskan	0.48%	0.62%
Other Ethnicity or Race/Multicultural	15.59%	9.19%
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	0.48%	0.22%
White	43.10%	60.48%



- This data indicates a need to increase equitable access in the purchase of services and supports.

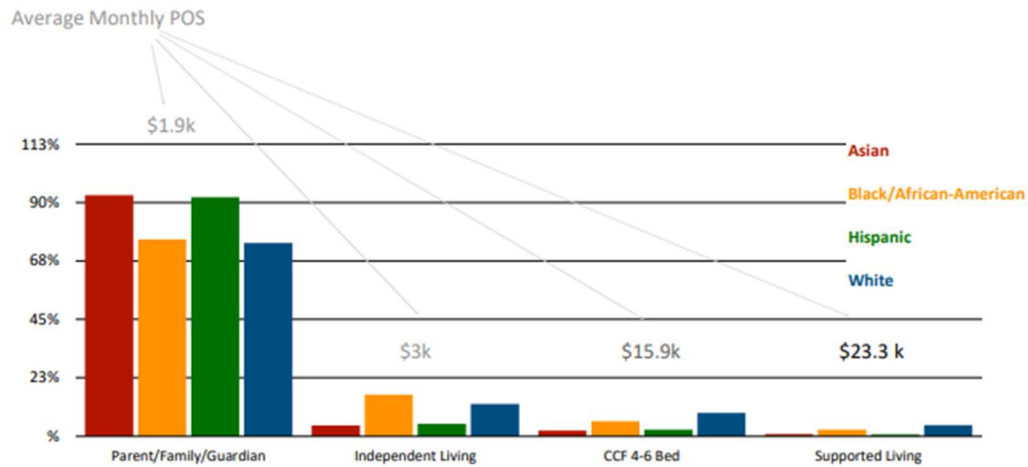


- The bulk of the POS by count for a client living with a family member or guardian is Family Home Support but even despite its high usage, Family Home Support in its entirety is only 11.93 percent of the budget. In other words, there is a strong relationship between Home Choice for the client, the services used, and the underlying cost.

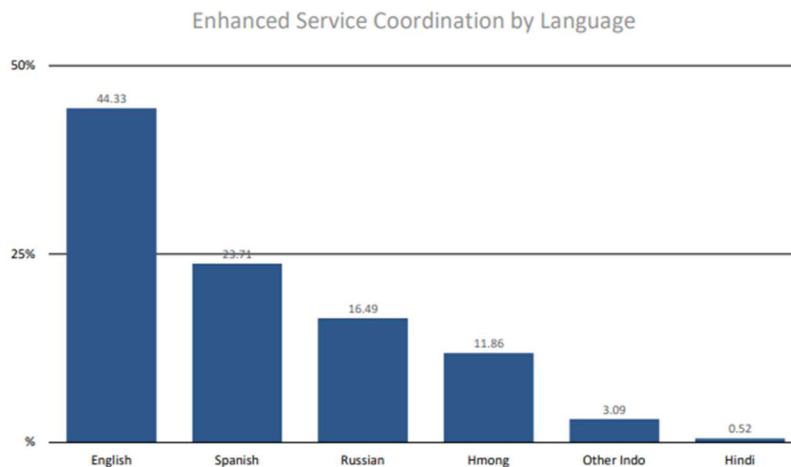


- This infographic depicts that while most purchases-by-count in the top 4 POS types fall under Family Home Support (due in most part to this being the largest housing choice of our regional center’s population) the bulk of the cost in terms of budget and spending goes towards Housing Support (i.e., helping to and completely paying for housing). Housing support costs, which makes up the largest amount of spending at ACRC, only increase as the need for support increases, most especially within those groups that reside outside the family home.

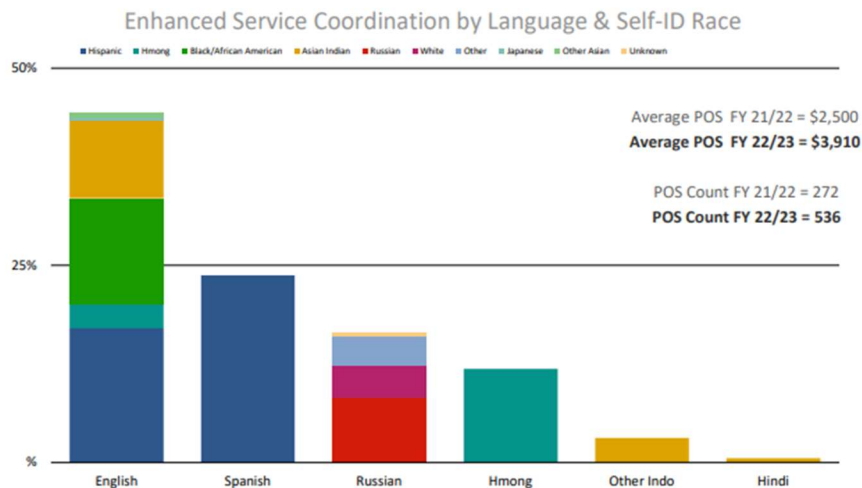
HOME CHOICE



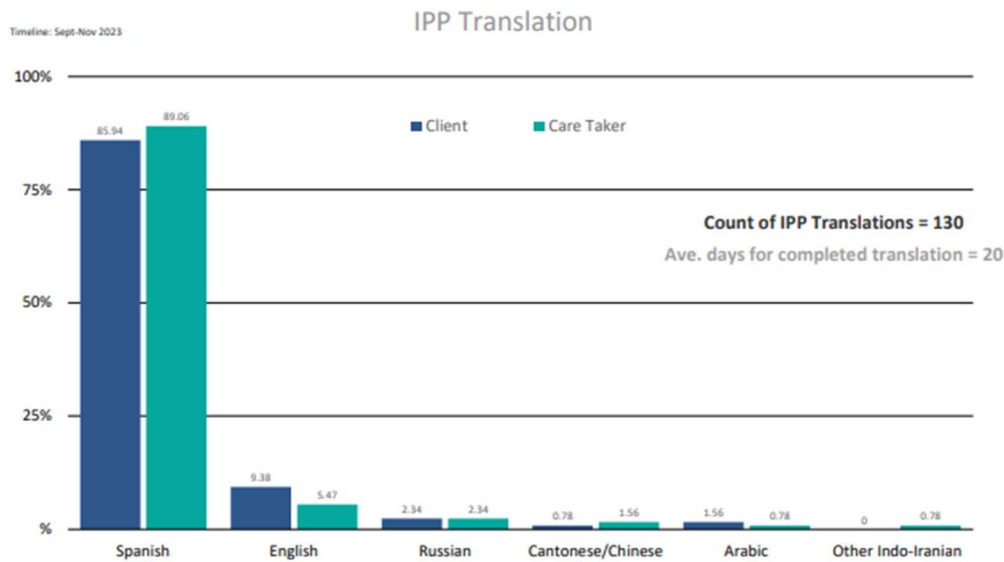
- ACRC has six enhanced service coordination caseloads. These specialized caseloads were created by legislation in 2021 and have a max ratio of 1 SC to 40 clients. Clients eligible for this caseload have Low to No POS which means the cost of their services is under 2,000 annually and clients serviced in this unit either speak Spanish, Punjabi or identify as Hmong, Russian or African American. These were the groups with the highest number of Low to No POS clients. The six Enhanced Service Coordination SCs represent the culture or community they serve. This means the Enhanced Service Coordination SCs who serve individuals who speak Spanish, also speaks Spanish. This slide depicts, by percentage, the languages of the clients and families receiving Enhanced Service Coordination.



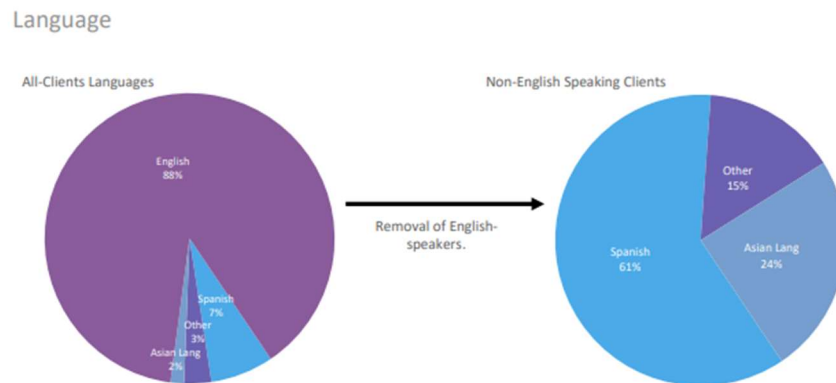
- This slide illustrates the diversity within the language itself. When we look at individuals who speak English, there are individuals who self-identify as Hispanic, African American, Asian Indian, Japanese, and Other/Asian. When we look at individuals who speak Russian, there are individuals who self-identify as Russian, White, or “other” as well as “unknown.” Individuals who represent Spanish, Hmong and other Indio also self-identify as the same race.
- This slide also depicts that ACRC has made progress with increasing service access. In FY 21/22 the average POS dollar amount was 2500.00. In FY 22/23 the average POS dollar amount increased to 3,910.00 The POS count also increased. In 21/22 the POS count was 272. In FY 22/23 the POS count nearly doubled to 536, which suggests that clients are requesting more services. What does the data tell us? The reduced caseloads allow SCs time to complete in-person, quarterly face-to-face visits, and time to build rapport and relationships. With Increased engagement, Enhanced Service Coordination SCs have time to educate and explore resources and navigate services. When individuals know more about services they ask for more services. To date, 293+ clients have been served on an Enhanced Service Coordination Caseload.



- ACRC is committed to ensuring that information in a clients IPP is translated into the native language of the client and caregiver. This slide depicts the languages of translated IPPs. 85.94 % of IPPs were translated into Spanish to meet the language need of a client and 89.06% of the IPPs translated into Spanish was to meet the language need of a caregiver. The data shows that the translation request took an average of 20 days to complete. This is data specific to the timeline of September to November of 2023. ACRC is participating in a Regional Center Performance Measure. The measure requires ACRC to collect data on the number of IPPs translated and the length of time to complete the request.
- According to WIC 4646.5 (a)(5) regional centers shall offer, and upon request provide, a written copy of the individual program plan to the consumer, and, if appropriate, the consumer's parents, legal guardian or conservator, or authorized representative within 45 days of their request in a threshold language.



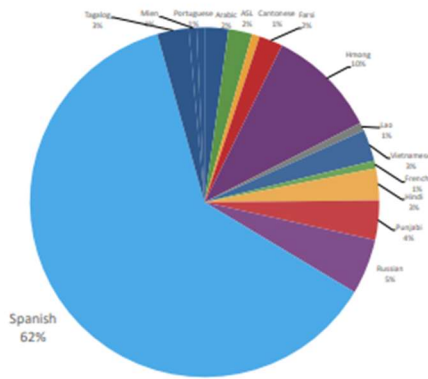
- In reviewing the languages spoken by the clients of ACRC, the pie chart illustrates languages with English included on the left vs languages spoken without English included on the right. The removal of English demonstrates ACRC’s efforts to hire more staff that speak a second language.



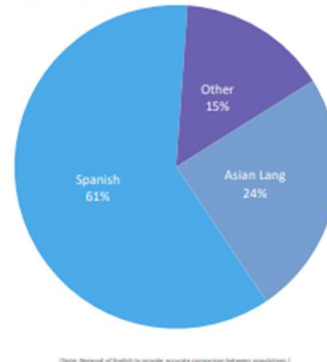
- Much like the State of California, ACRC’s clients, families and employees are diverse. ACRC recognizes the critical importance of bridging gaps in service across our agency. This means ensuring that our employees offer a wide array of languages spoken, and that we have employees who understand the cultural diversity of the clients served. The image below depicts the number and percentage of ACRC staff who are fluent in a second language. ACRC is proud to share that we currently have 137 employees who are fluent in a second language. In fact, 17% of our employees are bilingual to meet the needs of 12% of our clients who are also bilingual.

Linguistic Diversity

2nd Language Fluent Staff



Non-English Speaking Clients

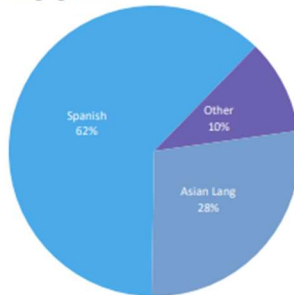


ACRC Staff 2nd Language Fluency: 137 Staff

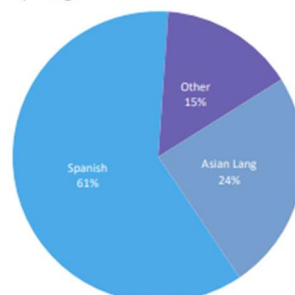
- The slide below represents the same data and is depicted in the way that the State of California DDS represents the same data with respect to languages. ACRC grouped the data the same way the DDS does for statistical simplicity. It is important to note and acknowledge that the State is making a strong push and there is support to communicate and share the data in each category more accurately. For example, “Asian Language” encompasses a wide array of languages and “Other” does not tell us about the languages spoken specifically. This work is part of language access and equity.

Linguistic Diversity

2nd Language Fluent Staff



Non-English Speaking Clients



ACRC Staff 2nd Language Fluency: 137 employees/17% of workforce.

- In Fall 2022, ACRC was awarded an American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Part C Pilot Project. The pilot is specific to the children and families served in Early Start. The purpose of the pilot project is to develop culturally and linguistically sensitive services and to enhance Early Start provider capacity. Community members and stakeholders were acknowledged for helping to inspire this initiative, specifically related to families residing in remote and underserved areas needing more frequent access to services: during non-traditional working hours, and services delivered in native language. At the time of this POS meeting, ACRC has served 700 children with 34 vendors participating in our pilot. We have served 279 children in remote areas, 1133 children in underserved

areas, 900 children during non-traditional working hours, and 318 children in a language other than English. So far, vendors have hired 5 employees who speak a language other than English to serve children and families in Early Start.

ARPA - Part C Pilot:

Culturally and Linguistically Sensitive Services & Enhanced Provider Capacity

Total Clients Served	700 (+558)
Total Vendors Program	34 (+15)
Clients Served in Remote Area	279 (+254)
Clients Served in Underserved Area	1133 (+994)
Clients Served in Non-Working Hours	900 (+779)
Culturally Linguistic Clients Served	318 (+188)

Cultural and Linguistic Diverse Staff Stipend	5 (+3)
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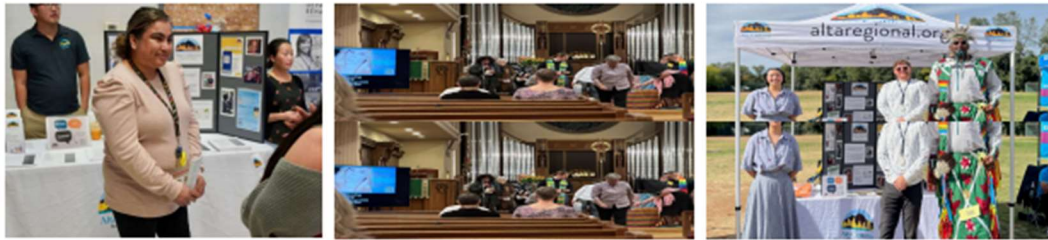
- Overview of Macro Level/Policy Activity was presented and a link to ACRC’s [Service Access and Equity Policy](#) was shared.
- Implicit Bias Training is required by legislation in the Lanterman Act for regional center staff. Regional Center Performance Measures (RCPMs) are enhancing staff training in areas of: Person Centered Thinking (PCT) and Cultural Competence. ACRC staff reported the following: increased knowledge on this subject, that there is no “finish line,” and feelings of humility and curiosity.
- Reviewed SAE Grant activity: Video Project Completed FY 22/23 - [Service Videos - YouTube](#), Intake Navigator FY 23/24 concluding - supporting Spanish and Hmong speaking individuals with navigating intake and eligibility determination process.
- Discussed the Language Access and Cultural Competence (LACC) Budget Activity (CA \$16 million/Alta \$1 million) utilized for document translation (forms/resources) and for Public Meetings.
 - Examples:
 - [A Client's Guide to My Individual Program Plan - Alta California Regional Center \(altaregional.org\)](#)
 - Recruitment/retention bi-lingual staff stipend
 - iPads in reception areas for immediate in-person translation using technology.
 - Contracts for listening sessions: La Familia Counseling Center (LFCC), Hmong Youth, and Parents United (HYPU) and California State University Sacramento.
- Overview of Mezzo Level Engagement to include ACRC’s Diversity Outreach Workgroup (DOW) and ACRC’s Cultural Diversity Specialist’s review of outreach activity.

ACRC and CBO Partnerships

- La Familia Counseling Center



- Hmong Youth and Parents United



Feedback/Proposed Strategies from our stakeholders:

- One attendee shared positive feedback to include:
 - They appreciate that the meeting notice for the March 19 POS meeting had a link to the POS data.
 - The State Council on Developmental Disabilities Sacramento Regional Office sent out a mailing publicizing the meeting.
 - The audio sound and viewing worked.
- One attendee suggested the following observations and suggestions for next year:
 - ACRC should hold language and ethnic specific meetings to truly inform and engage our various communities.
 - Communities should not have to request language translation. ACRC should reach out to partner organizations to co-host a POS meeting and have translation services available.
 - Another regional center hosted some of the sessions with their community partners.
 - ACRC should post the POS presentations at its website weeks before the listening sessions.
 - ACRC post sooner to the ACRC community by emailing to all persons who registered for the POS meeting. People should be encouraged to email any questions ahead of the meeting. When a major document is presented at the POS meeting, the audience is trying to absorb a lot of material and is not able to ask questions.
 - ACRC provides clear definitions of POS count and explain why the POS count data matters.

- The attendee questioned whether we got real clarity or understanding of why the disparities in spending exist.
- One attendee shared that they would like to see a more user-friendly data presentation on ACRC's website and that they preferred last year's version.
- Additional feedback from a letter compiled by Stakeholders:
 - Regional centers hold focus groups with consumers and their families to inquire about their cultural and linguistic needs as it relates to services and support through the regional center.
 - ACRC should indicate whether recommendations from previous year reporting were completed and implemented, and how those recommendations impacted current year data.
 - ACRC was commended for timely posting the event to their website in the events section.
 - It was brought to our attention that ACRC did not post the POS meeting notice in the Transparency section of our website, as required (this was an oversight and ACRC commits to doing so for all future meetings).
 - ACRC was commended for the availability of interpreters for the POS public meeting. The increase in the variety of interpreters for this meeting shows that ACRC has made efforts to inform several diverse communities about the POS meeting, thus increasing the number of participants in the meeting.
 - Include a link to the POS data page in the meeting invite registration once it is released so that both pages can be linked for more convenience.
 - Participants also reported that they found the graphs and information presented to be more accessible and understandable this year compared to last year's presentation. This shows that ACRC has taken steps since last year's presentation and considered participant follow-up suggestions to improve the presentation of the data to laypersons.
 - Allow participants to view and respond to activity in the chat.
- ACRC informed the group that anybody could continue to send their input through the posequity@altaregional.org email box. Hearing from our communities moves us forward. The grant is one lane that we navigate. There are other initiatives that ACRC is working on that complement DDS's efforts to understand the variance in POS expenditures.
- It was announced that this meeting would be available for public viewing on ACRC's YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vZp8Hnr41og>

ACRC's Recommendations and Plans to Promote Equity and Reduce Disparities

*Note: * represents a prior recommendation or initiative that ACRC continues to implement, along with brief details.*

- ACRC created an Enhanced Service Coordination unit composed of Service Coordinators who represent the communities they serve (Hmong, Punjabi, Spanish, Russian, and African American) who are focused on increasing service access to clients who are reflected as Low to No POS.
- Development of client-family portal to ensure equitable access by language.
- ACRC will continue to explore diversity-related proposals to continue to address the needs of ethnically diverse communities. *Community Based Organizations and the DDS share with ACRC SAE grant proposals intended to serve our catchment area. Proposals not approved for SAE grants may be funded all or in part through ACRC's LACC budget.
- Improve access to ACRC's intake process through continuing the Intake Navigator position due to the SAE grant.
- Continue to promote and support the Diversity Outreach Workgroup (DOW) composed of ACRC employees to engage community partners across diverse populations. *ACRC convenes a monthly internal DOW committee meeting to review and reflect on prior months community engagement activity and plan for participation including staff representation at future outreach opportunities.
- ACRC will focus on ensuring that we are empowering client and family choice by providing direct access to cultural and language specific specialists. These actions help to inform choice. We will provide targeted outreach to the communities we serve to build system fluency. We have built a robust and data driven public facing needs assessment in developing services for our clients. *Link to Public Facing Survey: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe45zS1115-VJTB66FZBxJm0t8XG9AI3sLwqiBMINCBhPMx_A/viewform
- The Hmong Youth and Parents United (HYPU) and La Familia Counseling Center both received funding to continue information and outreach regarding developmental disabilities and "learning together" for a mutually beneficial conversation between ACRC staff and Hmong and Spanish speaking families. *LACC budget was used to contact for community engagement projects.
- ACRC maintains its Lending Library and makes available to its clients the Chromebooks obtained from previous grant years. Service coordinators who have clients needing to participate in remote programming, ACRC's committees, Zoom meetings, and virtual schooling benefit from the Chromebooks loaned to them. * Thirty Chromebooks are available and lent on a rotating basis.
- ACRC will continue to implement the Early Start Part C ARPA pilot project to enhance the service availability during non-traditional work hours for families with children enrolled in the Early Start program. This effort is in collaboration with the Early

Start Units of ACRC and the Community Services and Supports. *Please see chart on page 8 of this report.

- ACRC and DDS are working together to implement the Implicit Bias training (WIC 4511.1) with EquitiFy and other related training sessions under the initiative. *ACRC has delivered 7 Implicit Bias training courses to all Case Management, Training, Legal and Community Services and Supports staff.
- ACRC continues to receive funding for WIC 4620.4 for our LACC initiative. This mandate and the corresponding funding allows ACRC to:
 - *Identify documents and website content for translation, as well as points of public contact in need of oral and sign language interpretation services.
 - *ACRC proactively provides Spanish and ASL language translation for all publicly held meetings and provides options for additional language translation upon request.
 - *Any routinely used ACRC documents or resources are proactively translated to languages spoken by more than 100 ACRC clients.
 - *Clients and Staff are encouraged to request translation of any documents or resources needed to conduct regional center activity.
 - *Conduct orientation/information sessions with ample and publicized questions and answers, scheduled at times considered most convenient for working families and in consultation with community leaders. [Outreach Requests - Alta California Regional Center \(altaregional.org\)](https://altaregional.org)
 - *Conduct regular and periodic language needs assessments to determine threshold languages for document translation. POS and SANDIS data is included in the posted POS Data report.
- Coordinate and streamline interpretation and translation services, including tracking of IPP translation.
- ACRC will continue to implement culture-specific training, competency, proficiency, sensitivity, and cultural humility training with staff and vendors.
- *ACRC has delivered 4 hours of Cultural Competence training for Case Management staff with another 2 hours per quarter scheduled for 2024.
- ACRC's continued long-term goals include conducting surveys on the housing needs of the culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) communities, conducting focus group discussions for prioritization of resources for the CLD communities, and future surveys for topic or issue-related ideas.
- *Surveys will be modified and tailored to acquire relevant data.
- ACRC's SAE policy incorporates system-wide perspectives of cultural humility, promoting the communities served as experts in their own lived experiences.

- *Posted on website: [Microsoft Word - Service Access and Equity Policy \(altaregional.org\)](#)

Should you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Jennifer Bloom at 916-978-6572 or jbloom@altaregional.org or Mechelle Johnson mjohnson@altaregional.org.

Sincerely,

Mechelle Johnson
Mechelle Johnson
Director of Client Services

Jennifer Bloom
Jennifer Bloom
Director of Client Services

Dana Muccular
Dana Muccular
Client Services Manager
Enhanced Service Coordination Unit

cc: Lori Banales, Executive Director
Dan Lake, Board President