

## **Pre-Conference - Wednesday, October 23, 2024 - 1:00 to 4:00**

### **Creating More Inclusive & Excellent Schools**

Most special education leaders believe wholeheartedly in these tenets. Yet the SPECIFICS of how to move systems and mindsets that are deeply embedded in our school systems can be extremely challenging.

This session is the opportunity to go deeper into specific strategies and tools:

- Cultivating the MINDSET of inclusion in general education
- Improving INSTRUCTION so every student has access
- Understanding BEHAVIOR in the context of inclusive schools
- Partnering with PARENTS to support inclusive practices

You will leave this session with a roadmap for your next steps in creating more inclusive & excellent schools.

### **Enhancing Accessibility with AI: Leveraging Generative Tools for Universal Design for Learning (UDL)**

This pre-conference session will explore how artificial intelligence, particularly generative AI, can be harnessed to create accessible learning environments through Universal Design for Learning (UDL). Participants will discover practical strategies for using AI to customize content, support diverse learning needs, and enhance student engagement. The session will also address ethical considerations and offer real-world examples of AI-driven approaches that promote equity and inclusion, ensuring all students, including those with disabilities, can access meaningful, personalized learning experiences.

### **School Medicaid Basics**

Does the term Medicaid confuse or frighten you? Is your district hearing about big changes? Are you preparing for implementation or changes to your Medicaid program? Then this pre-session is for you. We will address the basics of Medicaid systems, what changes are on the horizon for Oregon, and what you can do to prepare your teams for implementing providing, documenting, and billing for medical services.

Learning Objectives:

- Understand the key structure of Medicaid and how it applies in schools.
- Discuss the implications of Medicaid billing in schools.
- Examine your district's preparedness for Medicaid billing.
- Develop a "Next Steps" plan for Medicaid deployment in your district.

### **Connected Communication When the Heat is On**

Be a Connected Communicator - Supporting educators who serve students with exceptionalities requires exceptional connected communication. When teachers, administrators, and caregivers reach out to us, they are often in a heightened state. When we are sitting with families in difficult meetings, emotions can run high -both for them and for us! Learn the skills to de-escalate, allow them to catch your calm, and work through the challenges, all without losing your cool. Then, build the capacity of your staff to reduce the number of difficult conversations you have to have in the first place.

Build Capacity - Imagine if the teachers and support staff you support had the skills to create a culture of connection with students & families, reduce the number of behavioral incidents, and de-escalate students who are dysregulated? When educators have the tools to be connected communicators, our students are better able to learn! Learn how to share the easy to implement strategies, practical tools, and sentence stems with those educators who need it most.

Leave Empowered - You will leave this pre-conference session with the tools to handle whatever communication challenges come your way AND with the tools needed to build the capacity of your staff so you can improve the outcomes of our students. Join us!

### **Respond to the Needs of Your Learning Community**

Review data and consider barriers that may have an impact on creating and maintaining a diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment. Use findings to create intentional action steps to build and grow relationships within the learning community.

## **Main Conference - Thursday, October 24, 2024 - 10:15 to 11:15**

### **Inclusion Changes Outcomes**

An inclusive classroom is one where all students, regardless of their abilities, backgrounds, or needs have a sense of safety, belonging, and ownership of their learning. Central Linn School District recently disbanded their Structured Learning Center at the elementary school determining that all students would be in the general education classroom at least 80 percent of the school day. The benefits have been enormous and we have seen first hand why inclusion is imperative for our students.

### **Wellness Learning Center: A Tiered Approach to Staff and Student Wellness**

Through the use of a Wellness Learning Center all students are able to get their needs met based on multiple access points to reduce bias in identifying students needing support.

### **Bridging the Gap: Addressing Tertiary Behaviors Through Equity-Centered Interventions under IDEA (Ages 3-21)**

Tertiary behaviors are those that require immediate support, such as chronic aggression, self-harm, or eloping. This session explores the relationship between tertiary behaviors and the necessary strategies under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to support students aged 3-21 whose behaviors impede their learning or that of others. Participants will learn to identify a range of such behaviors and implement equity-centered interventions to uphold a free appropriate public education (FAPE) for eligible students and meet legal obligations, including considering the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS) and other strategies. The session will also review IDEA's requirements that protect students from being punished for having a disability and support safe school environments through procedures like suspension, expulsion, manifestation determination reviews (MDR), and removal to interim alternative educational settings (IAES). Aligning with COSA's equity stance, this presentation emphasizes reducing exclusionary practices and ensuring equitable access to education, particularly for students with disabilities and intersecting social identities that systems continue to marginalize.

### **When the Heat is On: Communication Through Conflict**

Supporting the adults who serve students with exceptionalities requires exceptional connected communication. When teachers, administrators, and caregivers reach out to us, they are often in a heightened state. When we are sitting with families in difficult meetings, emotions can run high -both for them and for us! Learn the skills to de-escalate, allow them to catch your calm, and work through the challenges, all without losing your cool. Then, build the capacity of your staff to reduce the number of difficult conversations you have to have in the first place.

### **Building Trust and Capacity by Working Together**

This session will address key reasons why parents file for due process, state complaints and/or civil rights claims against school districts. Presenters will share tips on working collaboratively with families to address the needs of the child. The goal of the presentation is to foster stronger relationships with our families to better serve our kids. We will leave you with ten key proactive approaches to address concerns before they escalate, to build trust between our school teams and our families.

### **The Connection Advantage: Strengthening Adult Partnerships for Impactful SPED Collaboration**

We often teach what we most need to learn, which is why the skills and practices of building positive relationships with our peers are critical to the grounded confidence and excellence we bring to our work with students. In this hands-on, practical workshop, we'll turn the lens inward, helping SPED staff deepen their toolkit for fostering strong, effective partnerships with colleagues, community members, and teams—key players in the broader ecosystem of student support.

### **Oregon School-Based Health Services (SBHS) Medicaid Program Expansion**

When barriers to education are recognized and foundational health services and supports are put in place, it increases the ability for children to attend school and access instruction and builds educator capacity to focus on instruction in the classroom. This presentation will focus on the School Medicaid program, which now allows reimbursement for additional service categories and provider types, and how education agencies can utilize Medicaid reimbursement to increase student access to comprehensive health and behavioral health services. We will explore strategies for optimizing reimbursement and will include practical guidance for education agencies on implementing and sustaining these efforts.

### **Special Education Teacher Coaching**

This presentation will provide lessons learned through our journey and share strategies for implementing special education coaching. Our model of special education coaching support aims to provide training, mentoring and consultation focused on policy, procedures, and paperwork. We strive to support the implementation of specially designed instruction and research-based strategies to close the achievement gap for students with disabilities in our region.

**Thursday, October 24, 2024 - 11:30 to 12:30**

### **Camp Friends and Fun: An Engaging Summer Experience for Students with Complex Support Needs**

Camp Friends and Fun was designed to intentionally provide an authentic and supportive summer camp for students with extensive support needs. Historically the students included in our camp program have been denied access to camp experiences or were not able to have their needs fully met. As the providers of the students' daily instruction in life skills programs, we were able to design a camp that holistically met their physical, social, behavioral, sensory and communication needs.

### **819 Refresh: Key Updates and Essentials Revisited**

Stay current with the latest developments in 819 with a refresher session. We'll begin with a review of recent updates resulting from the latest legislative changes in the short session, ensuring you are up to speed with new compliance requirements and expectations. Next, we will provide a broad overview of new data collection methods and protocols, highlighting how these changes may impact your processes and reporting. Finally, we'll introduce the latest resources and support tools designed to help you adapt to these changes and enhance your practice. This session is ideal for those familiar with 819 looking to stay informed and maintain compliance in an evolving landscape.

### **Practice Makes Perfect: Equitable Reading Instruction to the Rescue**

For decades, marginalized students have been denied access to complex grade-level texts and effective reading practice designed to meet their unique needs. One size doesn't fit all. Participants will discuss and discover how to implement equitable reading practices designed to remove opportunity barriers and hear from Oregon educators who are leading the charge. Evidence-based instruction coupled with perfect practice targeting the right skills at the right time with immediate and corrective feedback accelerates learning for all.

### **Every Day Language of Connection: Adult to Adult**

While every profession has jargon and acronyms, education is especially loaded with them! What the school community members speak - parents, guardians - though, isn't always the same and can be downright confusing.

The power of language to connect us is unmistakable. As pros we're already considering what words to use and not use. In this participatory and lively session, returning COSA speaker & human connection expert, Ginger, offers us an interactive session to dig into the de-jargoning and de-acronyming so that every day conversations are more welcome, fruitful, respectful and most vitally understood.

Communication is connection, so come to this session to review and reboot the language you use to connect with adults outside the district.

### **Understanding and Applying Maintenance of Effort (MOE) in Your Work**

Maintenance of Effort (MOE) is a key fiscal compliance requirement that ensures consistent financial support from state and local governments in federally funded programs. This session will provide an overview of MOE, detailing its purpose, the regulations governing it, and the consequences of non-compliance. Participants will learn how MOE works, including the calculation and monitoring processes. Practical application of MOE principles will be emphasized, helping participants incorporate these requirements into their responsibilities, ensuring compliance and maximizing program funding.

### **Recruiting and Retaining Diverse OTs & PTs in a Competitive Market: A Comprehensive Resource Kit for Onboarding**

Oregon faces a shortage of Occupational and Physical Therapists in school settings. This interactive workshop will provide several strategies for recruiting and retaining culturally and linguistically diverse motor staff with an emphasis on deliberate, comprehensive onboarding. A scope and sequence kit with resources for OT/PT onboarding aligned with Quality Indicators and Competencies in school-based practices for Occupational and Physical Therapy will be shared. This resource, hosted on the OER Commons, is available to all districts to access, utilize and contribute to.

## **Thursday, October 24, 2024 - 1:45 to 2:45**

### **Fostering Equity Through Accessible Educational Materials and Content**

In a world where digital content is constantly changing, how do we ensure that ALL students can access their needed school materials? Are we creating a sense of belonging for ALL students through our curriculum materials? Dive into the world of accessible education with us! We will focus on inclusion of historically marginalized students and all students through equitable provision of Accessible Educational Materials. Learners feel supported with a sense of belonging in the classroom when given opportunities to engage and interact with content in multiple formats and demonstrate in multiple ways. Reimagine curriculum as you explore these proactive and vibrant principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL). Join us on the journey to inclusive classrooms where diversity is celebrated and every learner has the tools to access the curriculum and their dreams.

### **819 Basics: A Step-by-Step Approach for Beginners**

This presentation provides an introduction to 819, covering everything a beginner needs to know to get started. We'll explore the foundational aspects, including the key legal requirements you must understand to remain compliant, and how 819 applies in various contexts. Additionally, we will guide you through the practical application of 819 principles, ensuring you know how to implement them effectively in real-world scenarios. Finally, you'll receive an overview of essential resources,

tools, and support networks available to help you navigate the complexities of 819 with confidence. Perfect for newcomers, this session will equip you with the knowledge and tools needed for a strong start.

### **The Wayfinder Bridge: Integrating CTE & SEL to Support School Communities Through Purpose and Belonging**

In this session, presenters Bobbi Anderson and Jenae McCarroll will lead an engaging, hands-on presentation highlighting how to integrate CTE & SEL into SPED and general classrooms. By focusing on durable skill building, leadership, and belonging, we can create passion-filled learning environments for all students. We will work to discuss and align to Oregon TSEL standards and discuss practical ways for integrated learning to support student growth.

### **Creating Safe Spaces: Mental Health Strategies for Inclusive Education**

Join us for an insightful presentation on "Creating Safe Spaces: Mental Health Strategies for Inclusive Education." This session will explore strategies and best practices for fostering mental wellness in students with disabilities. We will delve into tailored approaches that address unique challenges, including personalized support systems, accessible resources, and inclusive classroom practices. Discover how to create an environment that promotes resilience and well-being for all learners. Whether you're an educator, counselor, or advocate, this presentation will equip you with practical tools and ideas to support the mental health needs of every student, ensuring a more inclusive and supportive educational experience.

### **Language of Connection: Student EmPOWERment**

All people are capable of understanding language in their own ways. And while there's no one way for all, there are so many avenues to connect with the precious students we serve. When we begin with language, we set the bedrock for relationships - from positive and constructive to negative and unhelpful.

Ginger leads a session, to compliment the work within the Special Education-specific realm to help boost and build the vital communication to connect with the students we serve.

AS a former public Middle School Art teacher, Ginger clearly recalls how language will empower or disempower kids so they either self-advocate and increase their confidence, or feels lost, forgotten and a sense of not belonging; the antithesis to what every educator wants!

This lively and highly participative session will dive deep into what words we can shift, ditch, add, and otherwise examine for better alternatives, so that we increase and improve communications and connection with students.

### **Coordinated Service Approach: More Than A Facilitation Model**

Exploration of the Special Education facilitation model aligns with COSA's equity stance by providing actionable steps to dismantle systematic barriers for equity, inclusion, and school/community partnerships. The facilitation model creates systems that create full participation for historically marginalized groups while building capacity within stakeholders across our communities to advocate for the needs of students experiencing disabilities. Furthermore the facilitation model provides a non-traditional model to recruit, retain, support and develop professionals that represent similar diversity within our student communities.

### **AI to Build Special Education Capacity, Effectiveness & Equity: AI Workshop with Playground IEP & Portland Public Schools**

AI is everywhere - and can be a powerful tool to up-level equity & success for all students and staff- but especially those historically marginalized. But do we understand how to use it safely and effectively?

Learn: In this engaging and interactive workshop on AI for Special Education we will learn the history of AI, and how it works.

Practice: We will practice prompt engineering with ChatGPT and explore ethical consideration of AI. Create: We will spend the majority of time using AI to develop hyper-individualized goals, plans, interventions and strategies to build teacher capacity, improve instruction and increase equality.

**Thursday, October 24, 2024 - 3:00 to 4:00**

### **MTSS Essentials at the Secondary Level**

In this session, we will delve into four critical components crucial for the effective implementation of CA-MTSS within secondary education: Collaborative Leadership, Shared Vision for Readiness, Elevating Student Voice, and Universal Practices. Each of these components pose unique challenges within secondary settings, often limiting efforts to achieve optimal implementation in support of students. Drawing from a wealth of resources and real-world examples from secondary sites in Oregon and beyond, participants will gain insights into how these challenges are being addressed in small, rural as well as larger urban and suburban settings. Participants will be actively engaged throughout the session and will (a) develop a shared understanding of the four essential components, (b) self-assess their own site's current standing with respect to each

of the essential components and (3) identify and explore tools and resources designed to support implementation of each component.

### **How Increasing Staff Understanding of the Social Model of Disability Facilitates Design Thinking and Removes Barriers to Learning for All**

The social model of disability is a paradigm shift from the standard medical model. The social model of disability shifts the focus from an individual's impairment to the societal barriers that people with disabilities experience. It posits that disability is not an inherent trait but rather a result of an environment that doesn't accommodate all people equally. This model provides the "why" of inclusive practices and offers strategies for teaching this model to staff, supporting authentic design thinking by all staff to remove barriers to accessibility for all students. Strategies include empowering students with disabilities, Universal Design, policy, and cultural shifts.

### **Anxiety: Empowering Students Working Through Anxiousness.**

This session is dedicated to professional development for educators to improve their skills in supporting students with anxiety. By deepening their understanding of anxiety and effective support strategies, educators can enhance mental wellness within their classrooms and school environments, thereby increasing access to necessary supports. The professional development will cover an overview of anxiety and the brain, the fight, flight, freeze response, how it manifests in students, strategies to build self-efficacy and resilience, effective language to use with students, accommodations (and when they are or aren't helpful), and ways to engage and educate parents and caregivers.

### **Manifestation Determinations**

Attorney Elliot Field will present on best practices and procedures surrounding manifestation determinations, placement, and removals.

### **Policy and Advocacy: COSA's Interim Legislative Session Update and Best Practices in Legislative Advocacy**

At this session, COSA's Policy and Advocacy team will provide insights on the latest happenings during the 2024-25 interim, including important updates on taskforce and legislative workgroups, the 2024 election cycle, and our policy development work in preparation for the 2025 Legislative Session.

For new administrators, this session is also a great opportunity to learn about best practices in legislative advocacy, and how to connect with your local legislators on important education policy and funding issues that impact our students, staff, schools, and districts.

### **Oregon State School Funding 101**

This presentation will explore the intricacies of Oregon's school funding, focusing on three key areas: general fund dollars, state grants, and federal grants. We will analyze how general fund dollars are allocated, the role state grants play in enhancing educational programs, and the impact of federal grants on specialized services. Attendees will gain a comprehensive understanding of how these funding sources collectively support Oregon's educational system and the challenges faced in ensuring equitable distribution.

### **Creating a Culture of Belonging: Inclusive Practices for Early Kindergarten Programs**

This presentation will highlight strategies that promote inclusion for all kindergarteners in the Early Kindergarten Transition (EKT) program. This inclusive 3-week pre-kindergarten transition program introduces students and families to their school community through play, friendships, and practicing school routines. EKT centers student and family voices and cultivates every child's unique gifts and interests to promote a positive school experience from day one. As part of the program, family members participate in parent education classes led by teachers to build a network of support together and learn how to best support their child during kindergarten and beyond.

## **Friday, October 25, 2024 - 9:45 to 10:45**

### **Expanding the Continuum: Providing Additional Services to Keep Students Close to Home and Accelerate the Return to LRE**

In California's Inland Empire placements for students with intense behavioral needs have been limited with students enduring long rides and waitlists. Riverside County SELPA partnered Spectrum Center to develop a program providing unique experiences for students who require specialized support to access curriculum. Historically this population has suffered from limited community support and poor outcomes.

## **Using RTI to Inform Data Based Decision Making for Specific Learning Disability Eligibility and Reduce Disproportionality**

This session provides an overview of key elements in using RTI for determining student eligibility for a specific learning disability. We will describe how RTI can address disproportionality of students from historically marginalized groups to ensure that they receive high quality curriculum and instruction (educational rigor). This will disrupt the opportunity gaps that lead to inequities in achievement as well as increasing staff expectations for student achievement. Data needed and the decision making processes will be highlighted to support the multidisciplinary team's process in determining eligibility.

## **Partnering with Oregon's Parent Training and Information Center to Enhance School-Family Collaboration**

This session will introduce participants to Oregon's Parent Training and Information Center (FACT Oregon) and explore how partnering with a PTI enhances school-family collaboration to improve family engagement and student success. Through collaboration, schools and PTIs can create equitable, inclusive environments that support the needs of students with disabilities, building stronger family connections and increasing the likelihood of positive outcomes. This presentation aligns with the COSA Equity Stance by promoting collaboration that addresses systemic barriers for historically marginalized families, ensuring that all families are empowered to participate meaningfully in their child's education and advocate for improved outcomes.

## **Scaffolding Supports for Students with Writing Challenges Within Inclusive Classrooms**

Whether it is writing a paragraph for a social studies assignment or authoring a three-paragraph story for language arts class, students that struggle to write often find these activities arduous and inaccessible. Achieving equity and access to classroom writing assignments for students who struggle with writing, particularly students with disabilities and students from historically marginalized groups, requires an inclusive environment that addresses diverse needs, reduces barriers, and promotes opportunities for success. This presentation will provide information on how to scaffold writing assignments and promote equity-focused evidence-based instructional approaches inside inclusive classrooms.

## **Keeping Students Safe: Risk Management in Special Education Operations and Programs**

Candace and Michael will present information and facilitate discussions with special education administrators on key identifiers of gaps and patterns of elevated risk to student safety in special education operations and programs. Risk management trends will be discussed along with systemic strategies to address gaps in managing risk to keep all students safe and ensure district practices are within the standard of care. Special focus will be on restraint and seclusion, accommodation for school access, MDR/discipline/ supervision/ hiring/ bullying, and harassment based on disability. This professional development will equip school and district administrators with practical strategies to understand common areas of high exposure to student risk and harm, empowering them to prioritize and manage the risk of harm for students, especially those experiencing disabilities.

Key learning outcomes:

1. Understand risk management applied to special education programs and operations.
2. Understand self-assessment tools for program evaluation.
3. Identify risk factors/ gaps and patterns based on trends and self-assessment.
4. Learn to conduct gap analysis in respective schools/ districts with sample assessment tools; Address areas of risk through strategic planning and improvement methodology.

Evidence-based, equity-centered practices will help administrators identify gaps in their systems for the most vulnerable students experiencing disability, fostering a culture of empathy and care.

Active Learning Strategies: Working in table groups to walk through gap analysis, identify priorities, and engage in action planning for improvement.

## **Embracing Neurodiversity: Strategies and Practices for Inclusive Education and Work Environments**

Fostering an inclusive environment that acknowledges and supports neurodiversity is crucial. This presentation will provide an in-depth introduction to neurodiversity and equip participants with practical strategies, actionable goals, and engaging activities to support neurodiverse students and staff effectively.

## **Is it a Specific Learning Disability or an Intellectual Disability? What if it is neither?**

Confusion about specific learning disabilities and intellectual disabilities have often resulted in individuals being inappropriately categorized and placed into special education. This often occurs for individuals of different cultures and languages backgrounds. This presentation assist districts to provide equitable educational evaluations for all.

## Friday, October 25, 2024 - 11:00 to 12:00

### **Engage with COSA!**

Come learn about all the ways to significantly engage in your organization - COSA! There are many ways to become involved in the state's leadership organization. Learn from leaders that play key roles in COSA.

### **Healthcare Transitions and Special Education: Preparing Students for Next Steps**

As young adults age out of pediatric care, they are faced with the daunting task of learning to navigate a new system and finding appropriate providers. Special Education providers can play a critical role in supporting this transition given our expertise around transition planning. By incorporating healthcare transition planning into the classroom and IEP process, we can help remove barriers for youth with complex health needs, so they do not fall in the gap between pediatric and adult healthcare services. This approach can ensure a successful transition to adult healthcare and more independent living.

### **From Complexity to Clarity: Revolutionizing Special Education Practices and Harnessing Employee Voice**

Embark on a transformative journey in this dynamic breakout session as we apply improvement science to revolutionize special education practices! Discover how to leverage Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycles to tackle complex SPED challenges and implement evidence-based leadership strategies to amplify employee voice. Learn to harness the collective expertise of your team turning frontline insights into powerful catalysts for change. We'll delve into how to use data-driven decision-making and continuous improvement methodologies to enhance daily service to all students in complex situations.

### **Supporting School Communities in Times of Crisis: A District's Reflections of their Flight Team Process.**

This session will focus on one district's approach to learning and leadership in their Flight Team process, which is activated when a staff member or student has died. The WLWV school district employs Cheri Lovre's Flight Team model from the Crisis Management Institute. In times of crisis, school administrators rely on the Flight Team for immediate leadership, clear directives, and robust support. The district will share relevant experiences and insights from managing the aftermath of a student's death, highlighting strategies to ensure equitable and inclusive practices. This includes intentional steps in communication, student support rooms, family education, and ongoing staff development.

### **Navigating the Complexities of Restraint and Seclusion and the Intersection of Child Abuse investigations (ODE/OTIS)**

Restraint and seclusion are reactive strategies employed to address the risk of significant physical harm or serious bodily injury when other interventions have proven ineffective in maintaining the safety of students, staff, and the school community. While permissible by law, the improper use of these strategies risks jeopardizing students' entitlement to a free appropriate public education (FAPE) and may constitute disability discrimination. Additionally, reliance on restraint and seclusion is non-relational, fails to impart valuable lessons, and carries inherent risks. Recent legislative changes in Oregon (2023) have amended requirements regarding restraint and seclusion. This session aims to provide attendees with insights into these changes, alongside equipping them with resources for prevention, intervention, and de-escalation techniques aimed at reducing dependency on reactive practices. Representatives from both the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) and the Office of Training, Investigations & Safety (OTIS) will work with participants to gain a deeper understanding of how restraint, seclusion, and child abuse intersect within the updated statutory framework. A deepened understanding of this law, including its updated requirements, will empower attendees to prioritize effective, relational, and student-centered techniques aimed at preventing the need for restraint and seclusion.

### **Meaningful Transition IEPs and Positive Post School Outcomes for Students**

Come to this session to learn what's new for 2024-2025 and how the Transition Network Facilitators (TNF) can support staff in writing and implementing meaningful transition IEPs for students that are compliant with the general supervision guidelines. This is a workshop that begins with the end in mind. The aim is to create meaningful pathways for students so that when they leave school services they will be closer to meeting their post-secondary goals. Our goal is to improve post school outcomes statewide for Indicator 13 and see our students engaged as contributing citizens in their communities. This session is one step toward doing that in partnership with you, your staff, your students, and your families.