



Switzer Learning Center

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Established in 1966 as a Tax Exempt 501 (c)(3) Nonprofit Corporation Tax ID # 95-2458879

California Department of Education School Accountability Report Card Reported Using Data from the 2017–18 School Year

Address: 2201 Amapola Court, Torrance, CA 90501 **Phone:** 310-328-3611
Heritage Program Principal: Colm Coffey **Grade Span:** 5-12
Spectrum Program Administrator: Wendy White **Grade Span:** 5th grade to 22 years

By February 1 of each year, every school in California is required by state law to publish a School Accountability Report Card (SARC). The SARC contains information about the condition and performance of each California public school.

- For more information about SARC requirements, see the California Department of Education (CDE) SARC Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/sa/>.
- For additional information about the school, parents/guardians and community members should contact the school principal or the school office.
- Switzer Learning Center is a nonpublic, California Public Benefit, Tax Exempt (ID # 95-2458879) 501 (c) (3) nonprofit corporation that is certified by the California Department of Education to provide intensive special education services to LEAs.

ABOUT THIS NONPUBLIC SCHOOL

Contact Information (School Year 2018-19)

School		Administrators	
School Name	Switzer Learning Center	Executive Director	Dr. Rebecca Foo
Street	2201 Amapola Court	E-mail Address	rfoo@switzercenter.org
City, State, Zip	Torrance, CA 90501	Principal	Mr. Colmcille Coffey
Phone Number	310-328-3611	E-mail Address	ccoffey@switzercenter.org
CDS Code	19 65060 6936025	Programs Administrator	Dr. Wendy White
Web Site	www.switzercenter.org	E-mail Address	wwhite@switzercenter.org

School Description and Mission Statement (School Year 2018-19)

School Description:

Our serving children with special needs began in 1966 in a storefront in Hermosa Beach, when Dr. Janet Switzer pioneered the field of educational therapy, proving youngsters who could not learn in traditional ways because of learning and developmental disabilities, language and communication disorders, and/or behavioral and emotional disturbances can learn and achieve academic success if given a positive environment in which to use strengths to compensate for weaknesses. In 1972, the Center moved to Torrance and became a nonprofit, nonpublic, special education school and a clinic providing educational therapy, counseling, and speech therapy for children and adults who learn differently.

Dr. Rebecca Foo, a psychologist on staff since 1988, became executive director when Dr. Switzer retired in 1994. In 2005, Switzer Learning Center moved to an expanded campus with more classrooms, a commercial kitchen, home-science lab, welding and woodshop, arts and crafts studio, occupational therapy sensory room, music production studio, and fitness gym. The larger campus allowed for expansion of services to students from more than a dozen school districts in south Los Angeles County.

After 18 years of being the Mentor Teacher, Colmcille Coffey was promoted to principal of the **Heritage School Program** in September 2017. Mr. Coffey leads an interdisciplinary professional staff that provides integrated educational and psychological services for 5th - 12th grade special education students. Heritage students with learning, social, and emotional disabilities complete their school districts' requirements to earn high school diplomas with individualized academic instruction, counseling, speech therapy, tutoring, and behavioral interventions. Many students dual-enroll and then transition back to public school, or earn their high school diplomas and then attend El Camino Community College or Los Angeles Harbor College.

Fall 2006 Dr. Wendy White began the **Spectrum Program** for middle schoolers with moderate to severe levels of autism spectrum disorders (ASD); which expanded to serve high schoolers in 2009. The Spectrum Program uses an alternative curriculum to teach functional living skills while focusing on self-regulation, communication, social, emotional, and relationship development using guided participation and community-based learning activities.

In 2012, the **Self-Advocacy and Independent Living (SAIL) Transition Program** began to support 18-22 year olds with moderate to severe ASD as they build independence, functional living, and job skills via community based field trips, on campus supported work experience, and shadowed job internships at local businesses.

In an educational, therapeutic, and uplifting environment rarely found, the Center's highly trained team helps approximately 100 students annually achieve personal and academic goals unattainable in conventional educational settings. We are proud and privileged to be celebrating 53 years of service to the community, and fulfilling **Switzer Learning Center's mission of "Nurturing students of all abilities to believe, achieve and thrive!"**

Student Enrollment by Grade Level (School Year 2017-18)

Grade Level	Number of Students	Grade Level	Number of Students
Kindergarten	0	Grade 8	9
Grade 1	0	Ungraded Elementary	0
Grade 2	0	Grade 9	9
Grade 3	0	Grade 10	17
Grade 4	0	Grade 11	12
Grade 5	1	Grade 12	16
Grade 6	4	Ungraded Secondary	6
Grade 7	5	Total Enrollment	79

Student Enrollment by Student Group (School Year 2017-18)

Group	Percent of Total Enrollment	Group	Percent of Total Enrollment
African American	29%	White (not Hispanic)	24%
American Indian or Alaska Native	0	Two or More Races	
Asian	9%	Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	73%
Filipino	0	English Learners	0%
Hispanic or Latino	36%	Students with Disabilities	100%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	2%		

[A. Conditions of Learning](#)

State Priority: Basic

The SARC provides the following information relevant to the State priority: Basic (Priority 1):

- Degree to which teachers are appropriately assigned and fully credentialed in the subject area and for the pupils they are teaching;
- Pupils have access to standards-aligned instructional materials; and
- School facilities are maintained in good repair

Teacher Credentials

Teachers	# in	# in	# in	% in
	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2016-17
Clear Level II Special Education Credential	4	3	5	45%
Preliminary Level I Special Education Credential	2	3	3	27%
University Internship Education Specialist Instruction Credentials	3	3	3	27%
Teachers With Waivers Without a Credential	1	1	0	0%
Teaching Outside Subject Area of Competence (with full credential)	0	0	0	0%
<u>Additional</u> Instructional Aides with 30-Day Substitute Credentials in Each Classroom	6	5	6	60%

Teacher Misassignments and Vacant Teacher Positions

Indicator	2015-16	2017-18	2018-19
Misassignments of Teachers of English Learners	0	0	0
Total Teacher Misassignments*	0	0	0
Vacant Teacher Positions	0	0	0

Note: "Misassignments" refers to the number of positions filled by teachers who lack legal authorization to teach that grade level, subject area, student group, etc.

* Total Teacher Misassignments includes the number of Misassignments of Teachers of English Learners.

**Quality, Currency, Availability of Textbooks and Instructional Materials
(School Year 2018-19)**

Year and month in which the data were collected: December 2018

Subject Grade Level & Textbook	Year of Publicatio n	State Adopted Yes/No for Grades 5-8; or District Aligned For Grades 9-12	Percent Students Lacking Own Assigned Copy
Reading/Language Arts			
5. California Journeys: Grade 5	2017	YES	0%
6. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Collections California: Student Edition Grade 6	2017	YES	0%
7. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Collections California	2017	YES	0%
8. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Collections California	2017	YES	0%
9. Language of Literature 9; Houghton Mifflin Harcourt California Collections: Grade 9	1997; 2017	TUSD; LAUSD	0%
10. Language of Literature 10; Houghton Mifflin Harcourt California Collections: Grade 10	1997; 2017	TUSD; LAUSD	0%
11. Language of Literature 11; Houghton Mifflin Harcourt California Collections: Grade 11	1997; 2017	TUSD; LAUSD	0%
12. Language of Literature 12; Houghton Mifflin Harcourt California Collections: Grade 12	1997; 2017	TUSD; LAUSD	0%
Mathematics			
5. Go Math! Grade 5 California	2015	YES	0%
6. Go Math! Grade 6 California	2015	YES	0%
7. Go Math! Grade 7 California	2015	YES	0%
8. Go Math! Grade 8 California. California Algebra 1: Analyze, Connect, Explore	2015 2015	YES YES	0% 0%
9. California Algebra Readiness: Concepts, Skills & Problem Solving; Glencoe Algebra 1	2008; 2014	LAUSD TUSD	0%

10. California Geometry	2008	TUSD	0%
11. Holt McDougal Algebra 2	2012	TUSD	0%
Science			
5. California Science Grade 5 Pupil Edition	2008	YES	0%
6. Holt California Earth Science	2007	YES	0%
7. Holt California Life Science	2007	YES	0%
8. Holt California Physical Science	2007	YES	0%
9. Holt Earth Science (California)	2007	LAUSD, TUSD, LBUSD	0%
10. Holt Biology (California)	2009	LAUSD, TUSD,	0%
11. Integrated Coordinated Science for the 21st Century	2004	LAUSD	0%
12. Introductory Chemistry: A Foundation	2008	TUSD	0%
History-Social Science			
5. IMPACT: California, Grade 5: US History: Making A New Nation	2019	YES	0%
6. IMPACT: California, Grade 6: World History & Geography, Ancient Civilizations	2019	YES	0%
7. IMPACT: California Grade 7: World History & Geography, Medieval & Early Modern Times	2019	YES	0%
8. IMPACT: California Grade 8: United States History & Geography, Growth & Conflict	2019	YES	0%
10. World History: The Modern World	2007	TUSD, LBUSD, LAUSD, RBUSD	0%
11. The American: Reconstruction Through the 21st Century	2006	LAUSD, TUSD, CVUSD, LBUSD	0%
12. Magruder's American Government (California)	2006	TUSD, IUSD, CVUSD, LAUSD, LBUSD	0%
12. Economics: Principles In Action	2007	TUSD, IUSD, LBUSD	0%
Understanding Psychology	2008	LAUSD	0%
Street Law: A Course in Practical Law (8th Edition)	2005	LAUSD	0%
Foreign Language			

Espanol Santillana 1 High School	2011	TUSD	0%
Espanol Santillana 2 High School	2011	TUSD	0%
Adventures in Japanese, Level 1	2007	TUSD, LAUSD	0%
Health			
Harcourt Health and Fitness	2006	YES	0%
Glencoe Teen Health, Course 1 California Edition	2005	YES	0%
Glencoe Teen Health, Course 2	2005	YES	0%
Glencoe Teen Health, Course 3 California Edition	2005	YES	0%
Lifetime Health	2011	TUSD	0%

School Facility Conditions and Planned Improvements

Switzer Learning Center's exemplary school campus was custom built in 2005 and includes specially designed classrooms, auditorium with stage, arts and crafts studio, commercial kitchen, advanced technology computer lab with wireless internet connection, student kitchen, home/science lab, music editing studio, industrial shop, student clubhouse, arts & crafts studio, fitness gym, and OT/sensory training room, and a dance studio. The school facility is a well maintained and safe environment.

During summer 2017 solar panels were installed on the roof of both building. During winter break 2018 the OT/sensory training room, board conference/IEP room, and landscaping was upgraded.

School Facility Good Repair Status

System Inspected	Repair Needed and Action Taken or Planned			
	Good	Fair	Poor	
Systems: Gas Leaks, Mechanical/HVAC, Sewer	X			
Interior: Interior Surfaces	X			
Cleanliness: Overall Cleanliness, Pest/ Vermin Infestation	X			
Electrical: Electrical	X			

Restrooms/Fountains: Restrooms, Sinks/ Fountains	X			
Safety: Fire Safety, Hazardous Materials	X			
Structural: Structural Damage, Roofs	X			
External: Playground/ School Grounds, Windows/ Doors/Gates/ Fences	X			

B. Pupil Outcomes

State Priority: Pupil Achievement

The SARC provides the following information relevant to the State priority: Pupil Achievement (Priority 4):

- **Statewide assessments** (i.e., California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress [CAASPP] System, which includes the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments for students in the general education population and the California Alternate Assessments [CAAs] for English language arts/literacy [ELA] and mathematics given in grades three through eight and grade eleven. Only eligible students may participate in the administration of the CAAs. CAAs items are aligned with alternate achievement standards, which are linked with the Common Core State Standards [CCSS] for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities); and
- The percentage of students who have successfully completed courses that satisfy the requirements for entrance to the University of California and the California State University, or career technical education sequences or programs of study.

CAASP Test Results in ELA and Mathematics for All Students Grades Three through Eight and Grade Eleven

Switzer Learning Center students participate in mandated statewide assessments known as CAASPP. However, scores are not shown because the numbers of students tested in many categories and student groups are too small to be statistically significant, and could inadvertently make public individual student performance.

CAASP Test Results in Science for All Students Grades Five, Eight, and High School

Switzer Learning Center students participate in mandated statewide assessments known as CAASPP. However, scores are not shown because the numbers of students tested in many categories and student groups are too small to be statistically significant, and could inadvertently make public individual student performance.

Career Technical Education Programs (School Year 2017-18)

To prepare students for careers and college, they are taught applicable skills and knowledge through a variety of modalities, which include but are not limited to the following:

- Individual Transition Plans (ITPs) are developed for each student as a part of his/her IEP, beginning at age 14 for LAUSD students, and at age 16 for non-LAUSD students. The ITP documents transitional goals and objectives, as required. Transition services are implemented in the school program and are provided to the student based upon goals and objectives written in the ITP.
- Interspersed throughout the core curriculum students begin work on pre-vocational skills, including punctuality, working with authority figures/supervisors, completing tasks, discussing a variety of job types, filling out applications, interviewing techniques, a wide variety of age appropriate worksheets, assessment tools, checklists, voting applications, and selective service registrations, etc.
- Elective classes (e.g. Financial Foundations, College and Career Planning, Workforce Preparation, Personal Finance, Leadership Development) address the individual transition needs, and include guest speakers, local college tours, job interview skills, resume writing, internet research concerning careers of interest, and job application completion. The Financial Foundations and the Life Skills for the 21st Century curriculums are used, as well as additional supplemental materials to teach students skills needed for obtaining and maintaining successful employment.
- Technical arts classes (e.g. Film Production, Microsoft Training, Codecademy and Free Code Camp) and extracurricular activities (e.g. small engine repair, home maintenance) begin vocational training. Students in our Music Production course learn to use Nature Instinct's Machine software and M Box which is professional software used by music producers to record beats. They also use professional drum machines, Pro Tools Record software for recording vocals, and instrumental music, and Reason software for professional editing and recording of music tracks. Occasionally, Mechanics and Welding classes are taught to teach the use basic hand and power tools, as well as the science and hands on practice for beginning flex wire welding.
- Heritage students are given the opportunity to expand their vocational skills by working as tutors and assistants in both the Spectrum and Heritage programs. Heritage students are also given the opportunity to assist in the student store to develop customer service skills and improve their ability to handle money and finances.
- Counselors meet with participating students to encourage their post-secondary planning. They assist students in completing online personality and interest inventories. The executive director scores each student's assessments and creates a report interpreting his or her personal Strong Interest Inventory Profile and their Strong Interest Inventory Interpretive Report, which are interpreted by counselors and included in ITPs. Counselors may accompany seniors for tours of prospective community college campuses, and help facilitate enrollment in local community colleges.
- Eligible students may have an opportunity to attend the Southern California

Admission Requirements for California’s Public Universities

All “diploma bound” students shall demonstrate mastery of the curriculum by completing the their own school district’s high school graduation requirements with special education accommodation and modifications described in the Individual Education Plan.

1. Each student must have a minimum of 210 to 230 credits (varies by contracting home school district) and have met other LEA criteria to be eligible to graduate and participate in the graduation ceremony.
2. Each student will be enrolled in at least six classes during each semester in attendance, with the exception of graduating seniors who may take fewer classes if that is all that is needed to fulfill graduation requirements.
3. Each student shall obtain credit as follows:
 - a. Mathematics - 20 credits
 - b. Science - 20 credits
 - c. English - 40 credits
 - d. Social Studies 30 credits (10 World History, 10 US History, 5 Government, 5 Economics)
 - e. Health Education - 5 credits
 - f. Physical Education - 20 credits
 - g. Fine Arts or Foreign Language - 10 credits
 - h. Electives – 75 credits
4. Fulfill all other graduation/ exit requirements established by student’s IEP team.

Completion of High School Graduation Requirements

Switzer Learning Center’s written course of study meets or exceeds proficiency standards for graduation requirements established by student’s IEP teams. “Diploma bound” students demonstrate mastery of the curriculum by completing a minimum of 210 to 230 credits according to the high school graduation requirements established by School Board policy for each student’s school district and must meet other Local Education Agency and State of California criteria to be eligible to graduate and participate in the graduation ceremony.

Career Technical Education Participation (School Year 2017-18)

Measure	CTE Program Participation
Number of Pupils Participating in CTE	40

Percent of Pupils Completing a CTE Program and Earning a High School Diploma	100%
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State Priority: Other Pupil Outcomes

The SARC provides the following information relevant to the State priority: Other Pupil Outcomes (Priority 8):

- Pupil outcomes in the subject area of physical education

California Physical Fitness Test Results (School Year 2017-18)

The California Physical Fitness Test is administered to students in grades five, seven, and nine only. The number of students tested in each grade is too small for statistical accuracy, and their results are not shown to protect student privacy. Detailed information regarding this test may be found on the CDE Physical Fitness Testing Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/pf/>.

C. Engagement

State Priority: Parental Involvement

The SARC provides the following information relevant to the State priority: Parental Involvement (Priority 3):

- Efforts the school district makes to seek parent input in making decisions for the school district and each school site

Opportunities for Parental Involvement (School Year 2018-19)

Partnership with our parents is crucial from our initial intake interview all the way through high school graduation, and beyond. Each student's counselor performs a thorough historical interview after a child is enrolled, during which a relationship is established that enables the counselor to serve as a case manager or ombudsman while the student is attending Switzer Learning Center. Additionally classroom teachers maintain regular contact with parents via telephone and parent conferences. During our annual Back-To-School Night, parents meet with the whole team working with their student. Depending on their school district's requirements, parents receive formal progress reports either monthly or quarterly. Parents are invited to attend our student assemblies, holiday celebrations, graduations, and fundraisers. Additionally, one of the seats on our board of trustees is held by a parent of an alumnus.

State Priority: Pupil Engagement

The SARC provides the following information relevant to the State priority: Pupil Engagement (Priority 5):

- High school graduation rates

Switzer Learning Center's high school graduation and mainstreaming back to public school rate is 79% of the student body.

State Priority: School Climate

The SARC provides the following information relevant to the State priority: School Climate (Priority 6):

- Pupil suspension rates;
- Pupil expulsion rates; and
- Other local measures on the sense of safety

Whenever possible, attempts are made to avoid suspending students. Some of the alternatives to suspension include: coordinated behavior plans, alternative programming, behavior monitoring, in-school suspension alternatives, community service, counseling, calls to parents to talk with students during the day, parent conferences, educational packets, restitution, problem solving, negotiating contracts, and positively reinforcing good behaviors. The principal or another school administrator must approve suspensions from school. Individuals with exceptional needs cannot be expelled from school for infractions related to their disabilities.

School Safety Plan (School Year 2018-19)

Switzer Center has a comprehensive Emergency Preparedness Program that can be reviewed on site. The written plan documents procedures for emergency operations, including specific staff responsibilities for handling various emergencies, including, medical, earthquake, fire, hazardous materials spills, and other emergencies. The plan requires staff and student training where appropriate. Disaster drills are conducted as required, including “duck and cover”, “shelter in place” and evacuation. A staff member has American Red Cross Certification to provide Disaster Services & Disaster Mental Health Services and FEMA National Incident Management System IS-00700 Certification a Community Emergency Response Team Member. All staff members are trained annually for using universal health care precautions for protecting against blood-borne pathogens and for using nonviolent CPI behavioral interventions. To protect student and employee health and safety, all employees and volunteers are examined for tuberculosis, and have cleared fingerprints before coming in contact with students.

D. Other SARC Information

The information in this section is required to be in the SARC but is not included in the state priorities for LCFF.

Average Class Size and Class Size Distribution

Switzer Learning Center’s special education nonpublic school provides a personalized academic program in a therapeutic environment for a maximum of 120 students. Currently, Switzer Learning Center’s Heritage School Program has two middle school and four high school classrooms; the Spectrum Program has one classroom for students with moderate disabilities on the autism spectrum, and one classroom for students with severe disabilities on the autism spectrum; and the SAIL Transition Program has two classrooms for students who are 18-22 years of age with moderate to severe autism spectrum disorders who are increasing independent living and vocational skills. All of the Heritage School Program’s coed classrooms have a maximum of 12 students taught by a credentialed special education teacher and an instructional aide. There is a maximum of 9 students in the Spectrum and SAIL Transition classes taught by a credentialed special education teacher authorized to teach moderate to severe disabilities, a classroom instructional aide, and most behaviorally challenged students with autism have a 1:1 behavioral or functional living aide.

Academic Counselors and Other Support Staff (School Year 2017-18)

Title	Number of FTE* Assigned to School	Average Number of Students per Academic Counselor
Academic Counselor	.20	90
Counselor (Social/Behavioral or Career Development)	.20	N/A
Library Media Teacher (Librarian)	0	N/A
Library Media Services Staff (Paraprofessional)	0	N/A
Psychologist & MFT	6	N/A
Social Worker	0	N/A
Nurse	0	N/A
Speech/Language/Hearing Specialist	2	N/A
Resource Specialist (non-teaching)	0	N/A
Other: Classroom Instructional Aides	9.00	N/A
Other: 1:1 Behavior Aides	32.00	N/A
Other: Behavior Interventionist	1.75	N/A
Other: Art Therapist	.40	N/A
Other: Tutor	.50	N/A

Note: Cells with N/A values do not require data.

* One Full Time Equivalent (FTE) equals one staff member working full time; one FTE could also represent two staff members who each work 50 percent of full time.

Administrative Professional Staff (School Year 2017-18)

[Executive Director](#)

Rebecca Foo, Ph.D.

Dr. Foo joined the Switzer Center in 1988 having earned her Ph.D. in psychology from the University of Southern California. A licensed psychologist, her area of specialization is in the behavioral, social and academic problems of special education children and adolescents. After initially doing clinical work with students and families, she became the Executive Director in 1994. The California State Legislature honored Dr. Foo as the 2006 California Woman of the Year for her work with children with special needs and her leadership in the field of special education. Dr. Foo is concurrently the secretary of the board of directors of the California Association of Private Special Education Schools (CAPSES). Dr. Foo can be reached at (310) 328-3611 x 337 or rfoo@switzercenter.org.

Principal

Colmcille Coffey, M.Ed.

Mr. Coffey began teaching at Switzer Center in 1999, two years after he earned a Master's of Education for Students with Serious Emotional Disability from the George Washington University of America. He holds a clear Level II Education Specialist Instruction Credential with Specialization for Moderate/Severe Disabilities issued by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. He has served as a Pro-ACT certified safety instructor, leads crisis intervention teams, and promotes growth and development for new teachers as the Center's mentor teacher. In 2017, after teaching high school at Switzer Learning Center for 18 years, Mr. Coffey became the principal of the Heritage School Program. Mr. Coffey can be reached at (310) 328-3611 x 133 or ccoffey@switzercenter.org.

Spectrum Programs Manager

Wendy White, Psy.D.

Dr. White came to Switzer Center to start the Spectrum Autism Program in 2005 and has 18 years of experience increasing the quality of life for children with autism and their families. After researching best practices in autism across the country, she developed our exceptional Spectrum Autism Program to fill the needs for dealing with the core deficits in autism - building relationship and social skills. Her dissertation for her Doctor of Psychology degree at Alliant International University San Francisco was on therapeutic school programs for children with autism. Dr. White coordinates the Spectrum Autism training program for all staff, conducts admission intake interviews for potential new students, and supervises the acceptance of new students, and their academic, behavioral assessment and transition plans, as well as conducting treatment planning teams and coordinating Individual Educational Plans. Dr. White can be reached at (310) 328-3611 x 334 or wwhite@switzercenter.org.

Director of Mental Health

Felicia Bookchin, Psy.D., L.M.F.T.

Dr. Felicia Bookchin is a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, with a Doctorate in Clinical Psychology. She has worked with children and adolescents in private practice and non-public school settings for over 25 years. Dr. Bookchin has also been Clinical Director, supervising related service providers, in two non-public schools prior to becoming Clinical Director at the Switzer Learning Center. She provides individual counseling sessions for Switzer students and supervises the clinical psychologists, speech and language therapists,

and art therapist. Dr. Bookchin can be reached at (310) 328-3611 x 328 or fbookchin@switzercenter.org

Types of Services Funded (Fiscal Year 2017-18)

Approximately 14 public school districts and two charter schools contract with Switzer Learning Center's school to provide basic special education instruction for 180 regular school year days and 20 extended school year days, plus designated instructional services that include: transportation, counseling, and speech and language therapy, 1:1 behavioral aides, and 1:1 independent living aides.

Professional Development

Switzer Learning Center assesses professional development needs of the school and staff on an ongoing basis. Prior to the beginning of the school year, all staff participates in four pupil free staff training days. During those annual orientation days all staff members are trained in Crisis Prevention and Intervention (CPI) Nonviolent Crisis Intervention, behavior management principles, plus many ethical, legal, and contractual requirements. Staff members hired after the beginning of the school year receive the same CPI and orientation training mid-year. We also use ongoing professional development opportunities to share new information with staff, to reinforce school standards, procedures and expectations, and to provide training on topics related to students' needs. During the school year, our assessed professional development needs are addressed during staff trainings on ten minimum days. Additional topics are covered during twice a month staff meetings, and weekly school staff and clinical staff meetings. Annually, Switzer Learning Center staff participates in the two-day staff development conference sponsored by the California Association of Private Special Education Schools

Classroom teachers, instructional aides and behavioral aides working with students in our Spectrum Autism classrooms are also trained to incorporate the theories and techniques guided participation. The focus is strengthening the six core deficits of autism: 1) motivation and ability to share experiences; 2) co-regulate with others; 3) integration of thoughts; 4) feelings and meaning to create personal memories; 5) self-awareness and appraising "best-fits" with their environment; and 6) flexible, creative thinking and problem solving. Guided participation techniques foster creative problem solving, referencing others to learn what is appropriate, and self-regulation.