

# Fall Updates

## 2024-2025

Presented by:

Jeanne Gerhardt-Cyrus

SESA Board Chair

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# Welcome



**THE KEY TO SUCCESS FOR ALASKAN  
EDUCATORS SERVING STUDENTS  
WITH LOW INCIDENCE DISABILITIES**

[www.sesa.org](http://www.sesa.org)

# Agenda

## Goal 1:

SESA Mission

## Goal 2:

Meet SESA Board & Staff

## Goal 3:

SESA Activities

## Goal 4:

SESA Upcoming Events

## Goal 5:

Questions



Fiscal Year 2024 SESA Staff Photo: Fourth/Back Row Left to Right: Claire Agni, Robert Sinclair, Brian Babcock, Brandie Clark, Third Row Left to Right: Christine Collier, Kelly Maki, Jennifer Schroeder, Amy Topmiller, Lyon Johnson, Yuya Hisada; Second Row Left to Right: John Barrowman, Erin Land, Meriah Cory, Olivia Yancey, Angel Black, M'Lissa Parker; Front Row Left to Right: Katie Groller, Autumn Holt, Samantha Weiland, Abby Steer, James Batin

# Mission

SESA provides consultation and training to support the unique educational needs of individuals and the Alaskan communities that serve them.



# Meet the SESA Board & Staff

Jeanne Gerhardt-Cyrus, **Board President**

Anna Attla, **Treasurer**

Caitlin Poindexter

Shelly Vendetti-Vucovitch, **Secretary**

Elizabeth Joseph

Richard Saville, **Ex Officio**

Donald Enoch

Dr. Madeline Aguiard

Michaela Kolerok

Heather Wheeler, **Vice President**





**Katie Groller**  
Executive Assistant

**Yuya Hisada**  
Education Technologist



**James Batin**  
Technology Assistant

**Brandie Clark**  
Program Assistant



**Christine Collier**  
Sr. Program Assistant



**Olivia Yancey**  
Executive Director



**Claire Agni**  
Librarian



# Support Staff



**Kelly Maki**  
Autism Specialist



**John Barrowman**  
Lead Autism Specialist



**Brian Babcock**  
Autism Specialist



**Erin Land**  
Autism Specialist



**Rob Sinclair**  
Autism Specialist

LID Autism Program Goal: Provide distance and on-site technical assistance to support the educational and training needs of individuals with autism, their school district teams, and the Alaskan communities that serve them.



# Emotional Disabilities

Emotional Disabilities Program Goal: Collaborate and consult with rural teams regarding the program and student needs. Provide face-to-face, distance synchronous and asynchronous training on various topics affecting students with emotional/behavioral disorders.

Assist team with on-site visits and distance delivery to create, maintain, and enhance specific programs that meet the needs of students with emotional behavioral disorders



Lyon Johnson  
Lead ED Specialist



M'Lissa Parker  
ED Specialist





**Angel Black**  
Lead VI Specialist



**Abby Steer**  
Lead DHOH Specialist

# Visual Impairment

LID Visual Impairment Program: Provide distance and on-site technical assistance to support the educational and training needs of individuals with vision loss, their school district teams, and the Alaskan communities that serve them.



# Deaf & Hard of Hearing

LID Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program Goal: Provide distance and on-site technical assistance to support the educational and training needs of individuals with hearing loss, their school district teams, and the Alaskan communities that serve them.







**Amy Topmiller**  
Lead MD Specialist



**Samantha Weiland**  
MD Specialist



**Jennifer Schroeder**  
MD Specialist



**Meriah Cory**  
MD Specialist

# Multiple Disabilities

LID Multiple Disabilities Program Goal: Collaborate and consult with rural teams regarding the program and student needs. Provide small and large group training on various topics affecting students with multiple disabilities. Assist teams in person through distance deliver to create, maintain, and enhance specific programs that meet the needs of students with multiple disabilities.

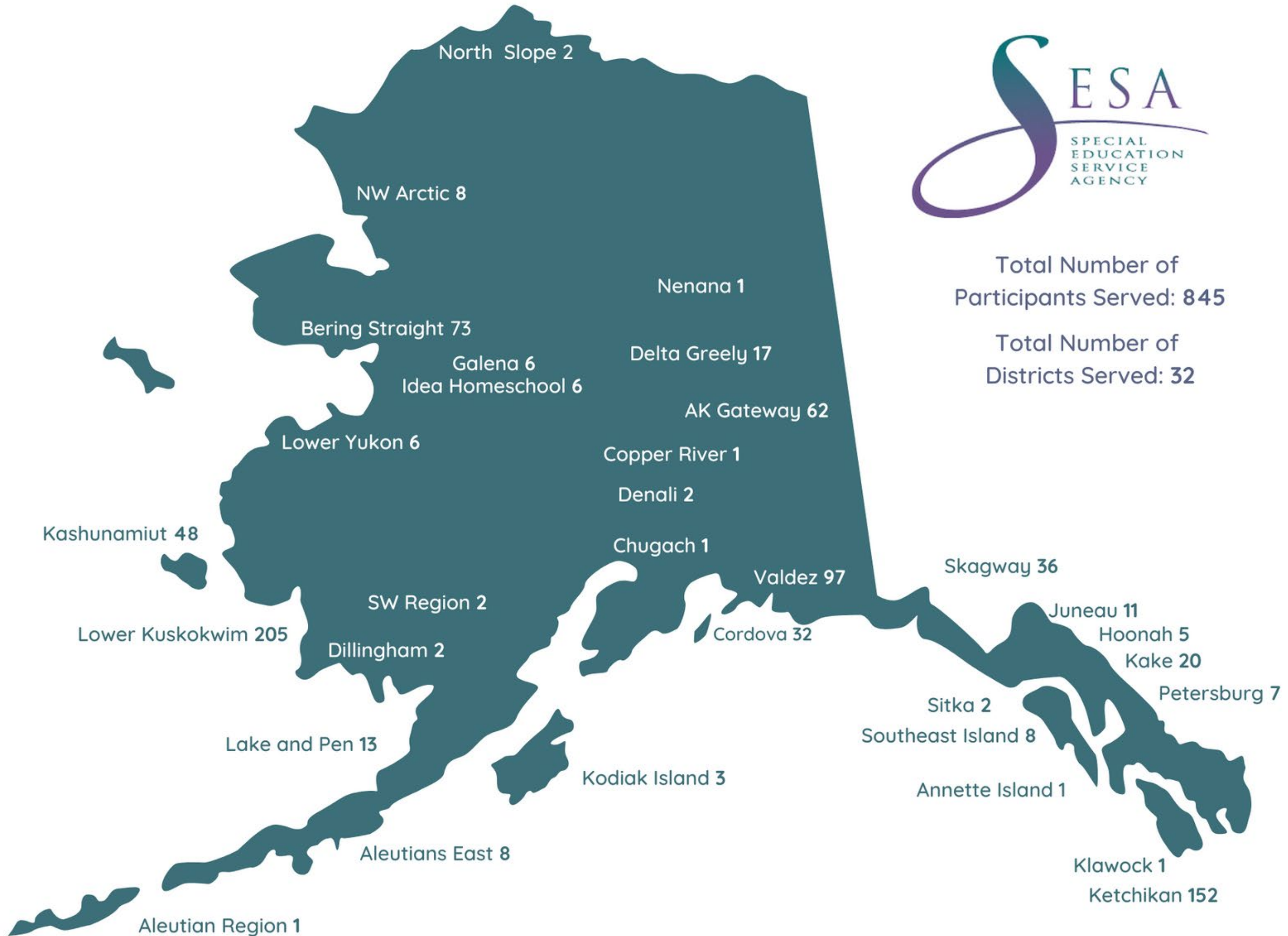


# LID Participants Across Districts FY25: 7/1/24-9/11/24



Total Number of Participants Served: **845**

Total Number of Districts Served: **32**



# How to Make a Referral

## **SESA ONLINE REFERRAL:**

With the online referral, you can save your progress and resume later. On the referral website, you will need to click the "Save Work to Resume Later" button above the menu to get an access code to resume a referral later.

## **SESA PAPER REFERRAL:**

Printable forms are available on our website. You may complete and send them via:

Email: [referrals@sesa.org](mailto:referrals@sesa.org) | Fax: (206)330-0306

Mail To:

Special Education Service Agency

2600 Denali Street, Suite 200

Anchorage, Alaska 99503

**The requesting Alaskan school district completes the SESA forms, obtains parental signature(s), provides the required documents, and sends the referral to SESA.**

SESA Mutual Exchange of Information (MEI)

District Referral Agreement

Medical or school reports documenting the child's diagnosis

Current, signed Individualized Education Plan (IEP)

Current, signed Evaluation Summary and Eligibility Report (ESER)

Contact information



Kelly Maki  
Autism Resource Specialist



John Barrowman  
Grant Coordinator



Autumn Holt  
Autism Resource Specialist



Alaska Autism Resource Center's mission.....serves the needs of individuals with autism spectrum disorders, their families, caregivers, and service providers throughout the state of Alaska. We provide information, referral, training, and consultation via on-site and distance delivery....



# In-Person Services by Location FY25: 7/1/24 -9/11/24

## Trainings & Resource Consultations



**Total Number of  
Participants  
Served:  
150**



**Angel Black**

Alaska Deafblind Project Grant Coordinator

## Alaska DeafBlind Project

Alaska DeafBlind Project Mission:...serves any individual from premature birth to age 22 with hearing and vision loss... Specialists serve those in urban as well as remote areas as well as individuals not enrolled in school and those in secondary school.





**Meriah Cory**

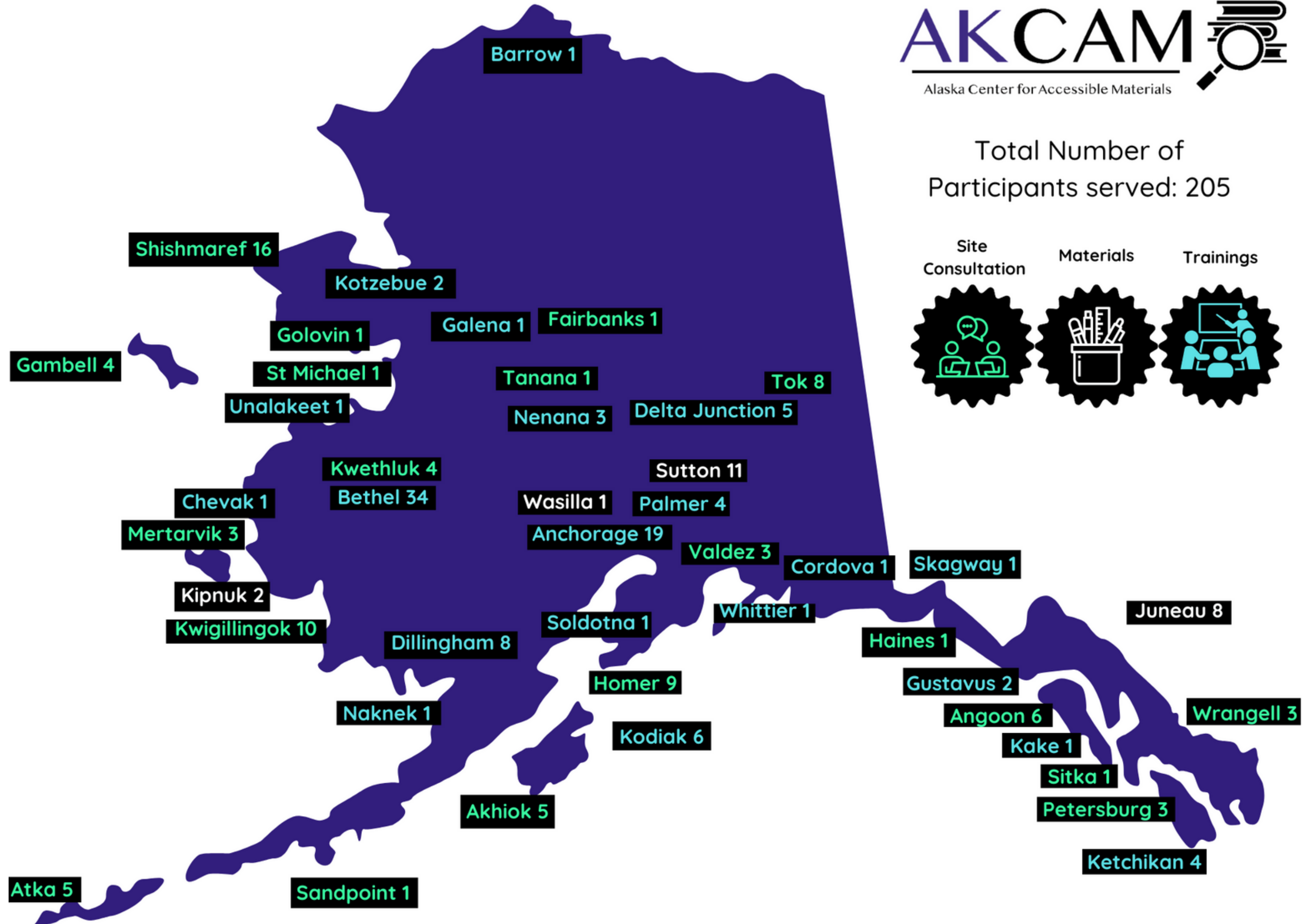
Alaska Center for Accessible Materials  
Grant Coordinator

## Alaska Center for Accessible Materials

Alaska Center for Accessible Materials (AKCAM)  
Mission:...collaborate with school districts to provide accessible educational materials (AEM) throughout the state of Alaska. SESA continues to be an authorized user of the NIMAC as well as an alternative materials producer to provide education to districts regarding the use of the NIMAS/NIMAC system to meet the needs of students who need AEM.



Total Number of  
Participants served: 205



Site Consultation    Materials    Trainings



# SESA in Action

Photo Caption: An Adult woman with red hair rests her head on the left shoulder of a girl wearing glasses in a purple jacket. An Adult woman in glasses with an orange headband smiles over the right shoulder of the girl

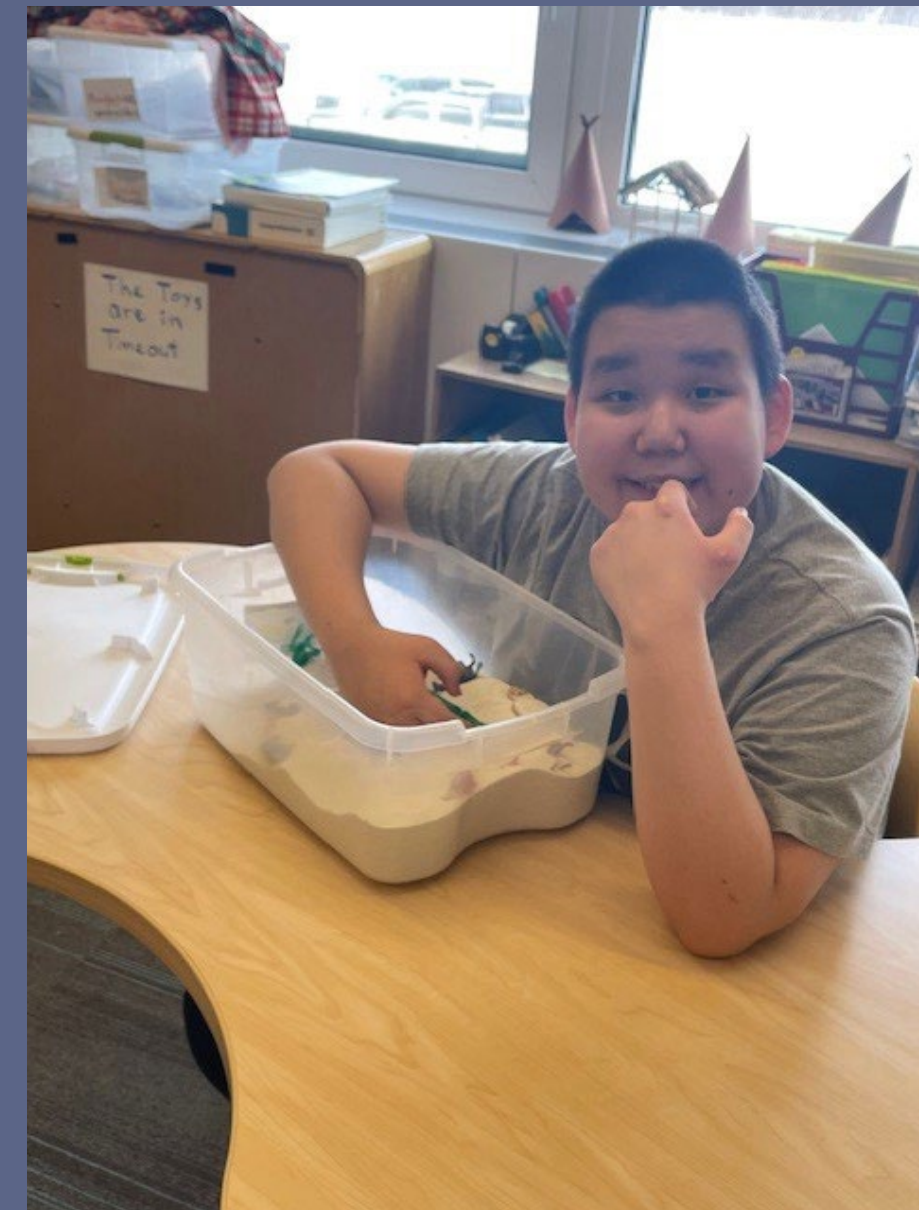


Photo Caption: A boy with a shaved head in a grey tee-shirt sits at a table with his hand in a plastic container of sand working independently on OT and a sorting activity

Class is in session! SESA Specialists are already traveling through Alaska connecting with students and their teams. In just one month, Specialists have completed 25 trips to rural and remote areas to offer hands on trainings and services.

# AKDBP in Action

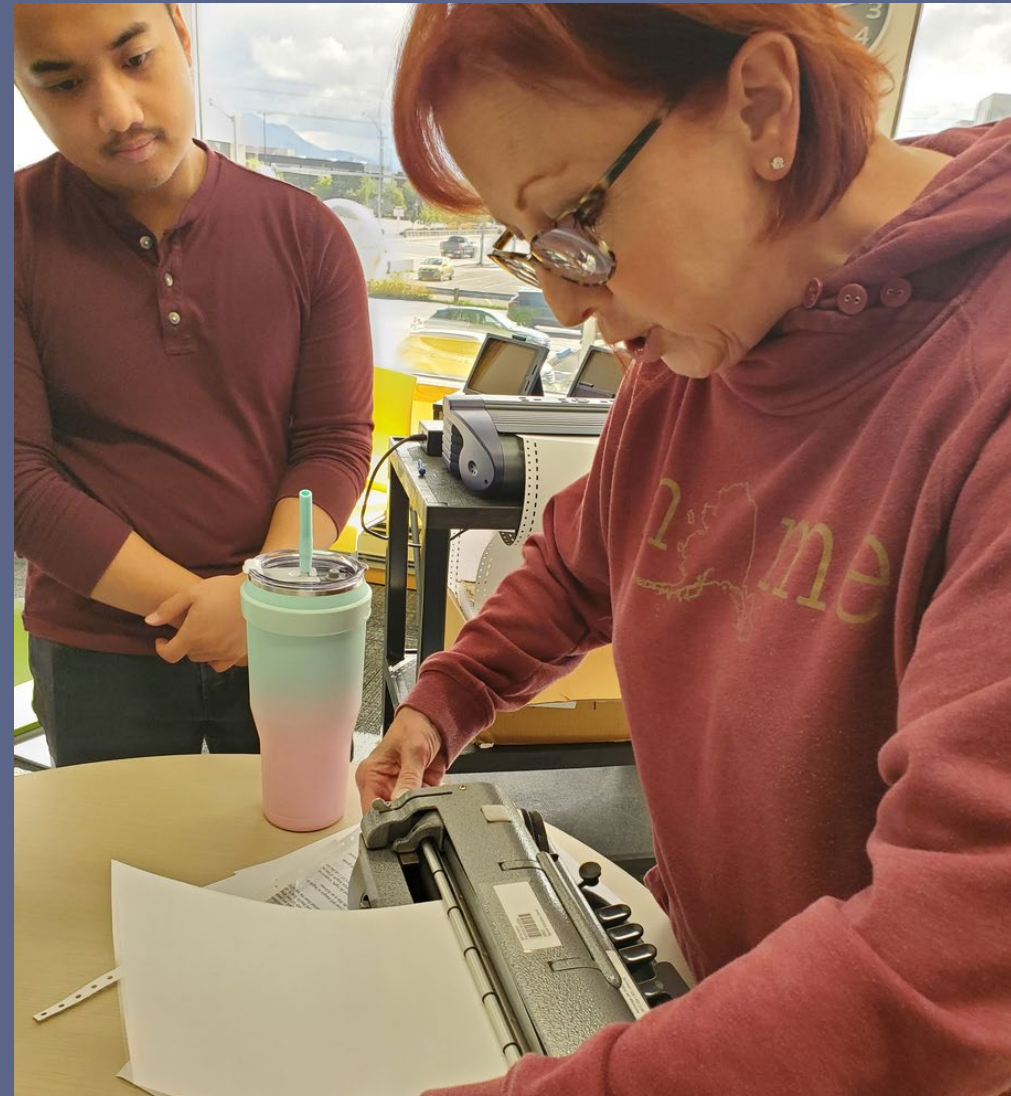


Photo Caption 1: Woman with red hair shows a man in a red shirt how to load paper into a braille

# AARC in Action



Photo Caption 2: A man and a woman in black stand in front of a table covered in blue with fidgets and papers on it

# AKCAM in Action

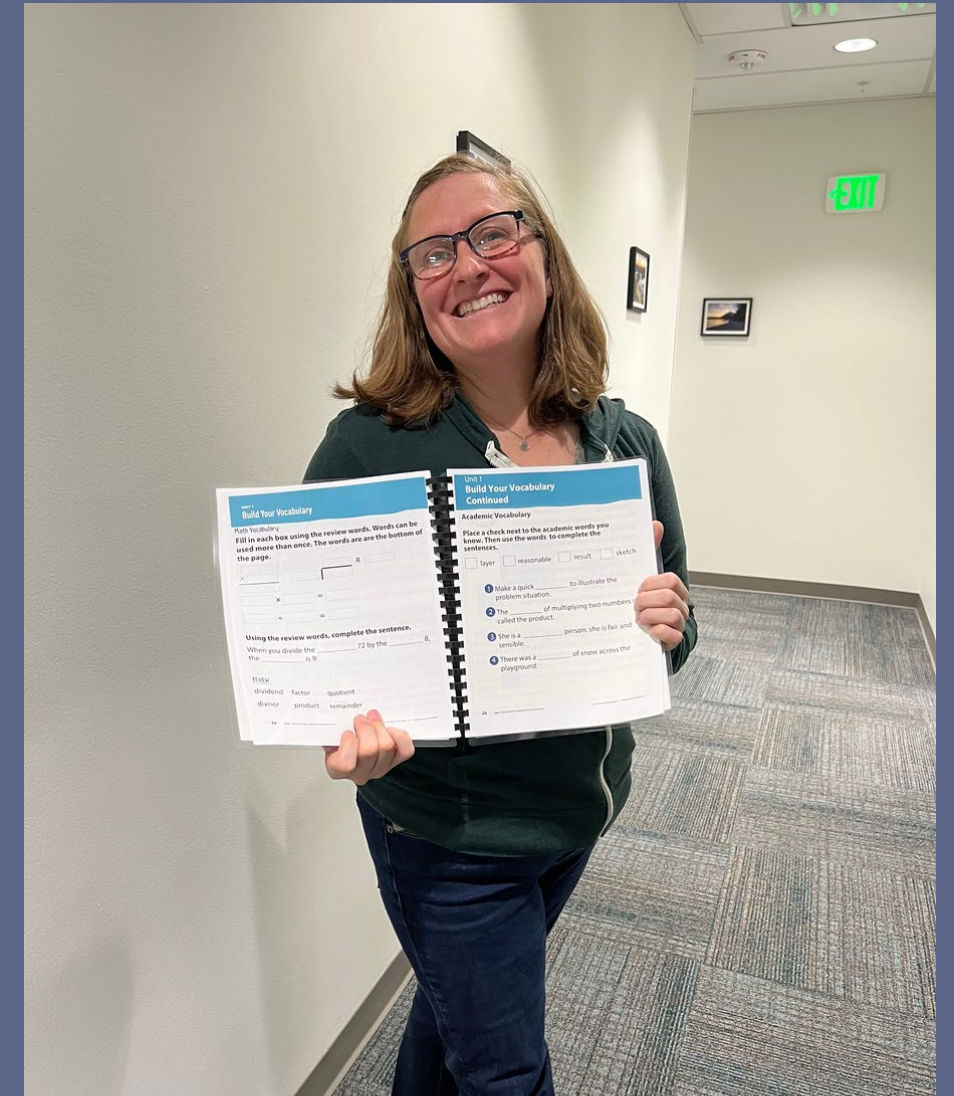


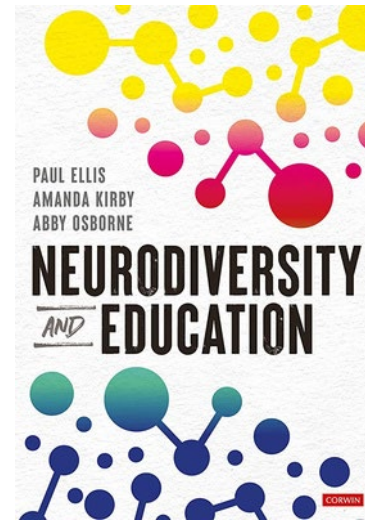
Photo Caption 3: A blond woman in glasses holds an open book that has been enlarged

The Alaska Deafblind Project, The Alaska Autism Resource Center, and the Alaska Center for Accessible Materials have also been busy. Whether it's training other SESA staff members, getting the word out at community events or creating accessible materials, their work will benefit Alaskans across the state.

# The Anne Freitag Library



## Books



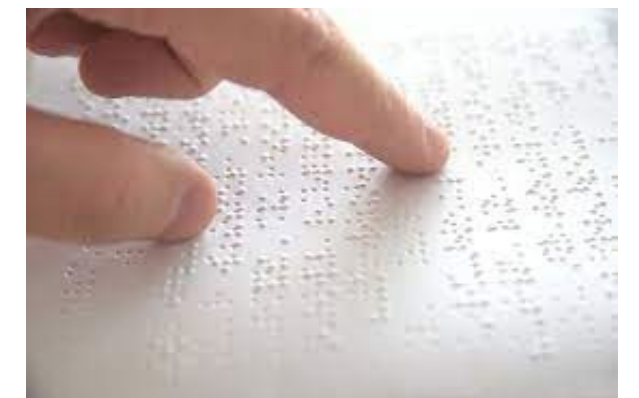
## Sensory Materials



## Toys & Games



## Accessible Reading Materials



[www.sesa.org/library](http://www.sesa.org/library)

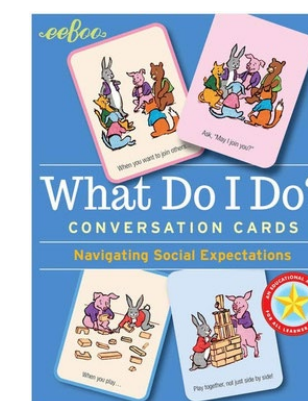
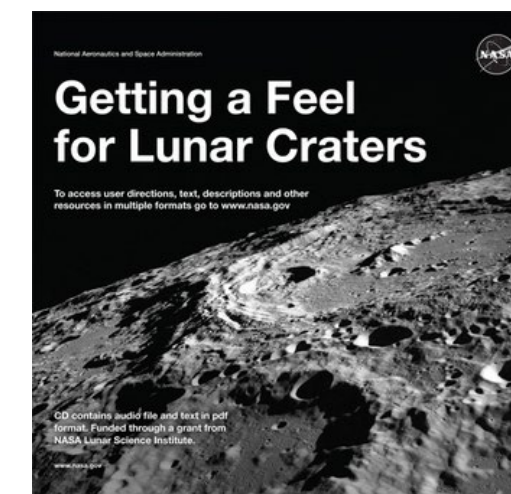
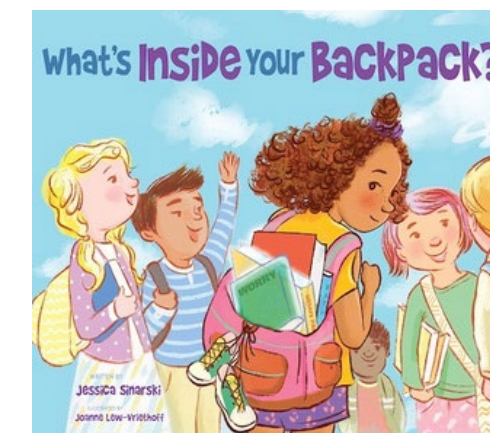
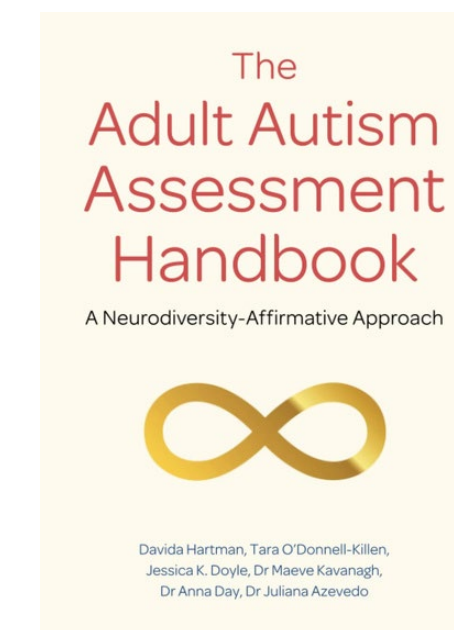
[cagni@sesa.org](mailto:cagni@sesa.org)

# The Anne Freitag Library



## Collections

- Autism
- Deafblind
- Braille
- AKCAM
- Multiple Disabilities
- Low-Incidence Disabilities
- Journals
- Juvenile Fiction
- Juvenile Non -Fiction
- Large Print
- Foreign Language
- Audio/Visual
- Assessments
- Curriculum Kits
- Equipment (including white canes, brailers, switches, magnifiers, and much more)
- Games and Toys



# The Anne Freitag Library

## Booklists

Interested in a certain subject? Take a booklist!

Topics include, but not limited to:

### Autism

- Activities for children with autism
- Autism and aging adults
- Employment for adults with autism

### Communication

- Characters who are non-verbal
- Deafblind Communication
- Consent and body autonomy for children

### Behavior

- Children feeling angry
- Children with big feelings
- Managing meltdowns
- Positive Behavior Support

### Social Emotional

- Children and grieving
- Children experiencing depression

**THE ANNE FREITAG LIBRARY**  
Recommended Reading  
**WHAT IS AUTISM?**  
For Adults

**AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS: CHARACTERISTICS, CAUSES AND PRACTICAL ISSUES** BY JILL BOUCHER  
From historical information to methods of assessment, and from intervention to education and support, this informative and accessible text explores theories at the psychological, neurobiological and 'first cause' levels.

**WORLDS OF AUTISM: ACROSS THE SPECTRUM OF NEUROLOGICAL DIFFERENCE** EDITED BY JOYCE DAVIDSON AND MICHAEL ORSINI  
This book features a range of perspectives on autistic subjectivities and the politics of cognitive difference, confronting society's assumptions about those with autism and the characterization of autism as a disability.

**IN A DIFFERENT KEY: THE STORY OF AUTISM** BY JOHN DONVAN & CAREN ZUCKER  
Nearly seventy-five years ago, Donald Triplett of Forest, Mississippi became the first child diagnosed with autism. Beginning with his family's odyssey, In a Different Key tells the extraordinary story of this often misunderstood condition, and of the civil rights battles waged by the families of those who have it.

**THE LITTLE BOOK OF AUTISM FAQs** BY DAVIDA HARTMAN  
Empowering and practical, this guide is the perfect companion for parents who are finding it difficult to tell their children about their autism diagnosis. It provides a realistic yet uplifting approach to autism, treating it not as a disability but as a difference.

**IS THIS AUTISM?: A GUIDE FOR CLINICIANS AND EVERYONE ELSE** BY DONNA HENDERSON  
Though our understanding of autism has greatly expanded, many autistic individuals are still missed or misdiagnosed. This highly-readable book clarifies the many ways that autism can present, particularly in people who camouflage in order to hide their autistic traits.

**THE ADULT AUTISM ASSESSMENT HANDBOOK: A NEURODIVERSITY-AFFIRMATIVE APPROACH** BY DAVIDA HARTMAN, ET. AL  
This accessible and comprehensive handbook covers the most up to date research and test practice around adult autism assessment, centering the person's internal experiences and sense-making in clinical assessment.

2600 Denali Street, Suite 200 Anchorage, AK 99501  
907-343-1301 | cagni@sesa.org | sesa.org/library

**THE ANNE FREITAG LIBRARY**  
Recommended Reading  
**CHILDREN WITH BIG FEELINGS**

**I'M HAPPY-SAD TODAY** BY LORY BRITTAIN  
This friendly picture book helps young children make sense of mixed-up emotions. Happy, and also sad. Excited, but nervous too. Feeling friendly, with a little shyness mixed in. Mixed feelings are natural, but they can be confusing.

**SOAR** BY HILLARY DAECHEER  
Ramone, a shy hummingbird, is about to leave the nest for the first time. But his anxiety and fear keep him from taking off. Full of kind words and encouragement, Ramone's mother gives him room to work through his emotions, building his confidence and letting him set his own pace.

**MONSTER EMOTIONS** BY KAREN KILPATRICK  
When Monster accidentally steps in a mess, he sparks a series of events that cause him to feel a lot of different emotions. But Monster keeps swallowing these emotions, making him sick. Will Monster learn to express his feelings?

**THE BOY WITH BIG, BIG FEELINGS** BY BRITNEY WINN LEE  
Meet a boy with a heart so big, his feelings glow from his cheeks, spill out of his eyes, and jump up and down on his chest.

**AN EMOTIONAL MENAGERIE: FEELINGS FROM A-Z** BY THE SCHOOL OF LIFE  
Children experience all sorts of emotions: sometimes going through several very different ones before breakfast. Yet they can struggle to put these feelings into words. An Emotional Menagerie is an emotional glossary for children.

**THE BIG FEELINGS BOOK FOR CHILDREN** BY SHARON SELBY  
It's normal for kids to experience feelings so big that they're hard to manage! This book is filled with engaging exercises that show kids how to use mindfulness to work through tough emotions and feel happier fast.

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Online Booklist Collection



# Upcoming Events

Join Us for a FREE Webinar Training!

## **Needs Assessment for Technology - Monday, Oct. 28, 2024**

This Workshop will introduce a Needs Assessment process for matching technology to student's needs and how to use technology to gather data.

## **Show and Tell for Learning Through School Years - Tuesday, Oct. 29, 2024**

This Workshop will explore instructional strategies for supporting literacy and numeracy concepts from deafblind students.

## **Switch-Based Learning, Getting Started and Beyond - Wednesday, Oct. 30, 2024**

This Workshop is will provide guidance and resources on how to get switches set-up and how to plan for instruction beyond cause and effect activities.



[www.sesa.org](http://www.sesa.org)

**Alaska  
Deafblind  
Project**

**Registration Coming Soon**



# Connect With Us

2600 Denali Street  
Suite 200  
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Business Hours:  
Monday - Friday  
8:00am – 4:30pm

(907) 334-1300

[sesa@sesa.org](mailto:sesa@sesa.org)



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