

## LEADERSHIP SPOTLIGHT:

### ***Ms. Krystal Lomanto—San Benito County Superintendent of Schools***



***What led you to become County Superintendent?***

Honestly, when I first started my educational career, I did not think I would become a County Superintendent or even go into administration. Students have always been my passion and being a high school teacher and coach was exciting, challenging, and was the perfect career choice. I truly planned on retiring as a teacher. After 12 years in the classroom, I was offered a position as a teacher on special assignment in charge of the district's new teacher program. I quickly had to adjust to not being in a classroom and found myself in a leadership role. As I continued as an educational leader for the district, I realized how important it was to have a clear vision and how that vision helped the greater good of the school community. After 4 years of being an assistant principal and 7 years of being a principal of a large comprehensive high school with 3,000 students, I realized that I eventually wanted to become the County Superintendent. I was born and raised in San Benito County and I care deeply about my community; therefore running for the County Superintendent position was the perfect career choice.

***What inspired you to enter the field of education?***

I originally attended college to become a physical therapist. During my college career, I worked as a an after school tutor for low income/at risk youth. I was also coaching at the junior high and high school levels. I recognized I thoroughly enjoyed being around youth. It was at that point that I decided to become a teacher and changed my major. Interesting enough, my mother was a long-time school librarian and special education aide. She was a role model for me and she was very supportive of me "changing" my college major and moving into an educational career.

***Do you have a particular goal that drives you?***

If I was to choose one core belief, it would have to be that every child deserves a quality education every day in every classroom. All students, parents and staff should take pride in their schools and the academic achievement of their students. I am passionate about my community and will continue to provide leadership and support to school districts to ensure continuous improvement.

***What objectives do you hope to achieve?***

I started my first term on January 5, 2015 and have been completing program evaluations and reviews as I move forward in my new role.

I plan to focus on the following areas:

1. Building Partnerships with districts and the community: Because working with the districts and local agencies plays such a vital role in improving the educational environment for all students, it is essential I work to build trust and collaboration. As a county, building a common vision and mission for all students must take precedent.
2. Instructional Support and Academic Accountability: I feel strongly about providing leadership and support to school districts to ensure continuous improvement within the classroom by utilizing engagement strategies, in the development of common core standards-based instruction and providing ongoing professional development.
3. Fiscal Accountability: With the newly formed LCFF, it is essential I work with the districts to support their efforts to maintain fiscal solvency by providing information, workshops and open communication in regards to expectations. LCAP support and training is also a priority.
4. Building Equity for all: I am passionate about the students in our community and will work to ensure that when every student graduates at the high school level, they have been prepared to attain their post-secondary goals. For many students that may be college or junior college, for others trade school or even the military. It is critical that as a community, we embrace our students and the many paths they may embark upon once they graduate high school.

***What are your interests?***

I am an active person who loves the outdoors. I enjoy hiking, gardening, fishing, dancing, and water and snow skiing. My family is a huge part of my life and I enjoy hosting BBQ's. When I have time I also enjoy horseback riding and traveling.

***Who are the special people in your life?***

My husband and I have known each other most of our lives and we will be celebrating 25 years of marriage this July. He is a wonderful husband and father and I would not be where I am without his support. I am also blessed with two amazing sons Tanner and Dylan, (22 and 20) who are attending UC Davis. They are my pride and joy and I have enjoyed watching them grow into such remarkable young men. My parents have also been a special part of my life and a fantastic support over the years.

## FROM THE DESK OF:

### ***Peter Birdsall, CCSESA Executive Director***

As Sue Burr remarked at our General Membership meeting in January, this is a watershed time for county superintendents. County offices of education are the key links between the state and school districts in the LCAP process, and all eyes will be on the quality of our work in this effort.

The good news is that the Governor has indicated his support for our work through the proposal to appropriate \$20 million to county offices to fund LCAP technical assistance and review. The education community, through the Education Coalition, has expressed its support for this proposal. In addition, we are being contacted by

various foundations, interested in potentially working with county superintendents to support the LCAP process. The reality, however, is that the quality of work done by county offices depends primarily on the leadership of county superintendents and their key staff. We are working with the CCSESA Executive Committee to make sure the agenda for the April General Membership meeting is as useful to county superintendents as possible in supporting county superintendents in this high profile role. If you have specific ideas or concerns that should be discussed, please contact me or Gary Jones.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

**April General Membership Meeting:** CCSESA General Membership will be meeting in San Francisco from April 26 -28. Registration is now open for county superintendents and steering committee chairs. Please contact JaConya Merchant if you have any questions: [jmerchant@ccsesa.org](mailto:jmerchant@ccsesa.org).

**Federal Advocacy Trip Planned for May:** County superintendents are invited to participate in the upcoming advocacy trip to Washington DC, planned for May 11-14. If you are a county superintendent interested in attending, please contact Amanda Dickey, [adickey@ccsesa.org](mailto:adickey@ccsesa.org).

**JCCASAC Conference:** The 46th Annual JCCASAC Conference is being held from May 13-15 in Napa Valley. If you have any questions about the event, please contact Telka Walser, [twalser@stancoe.org](mailto:twalser@stancoe.org).

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INDIVIDUAL STUDENT REPORTS OF ASSESSMENT RESULTS

On March 10th, a new era of assessment officially began in California with the launch of the testing window for the first full administration of the CAASPP, which includes Smarter Balanced Assessments. Over three million California students will be taking these assessments this spring, and their results will be sent to their districts and parents.

With the reporting of the assessment results comes enormous communications opportunities and challenges. One key vehicle for communication regarding the new assessment system will be the Individual Score Report that every parent will receive for his or her child. For many parents this will be their first tangible experience with our state’s new system, and with that comes a great need for the score reports to be clear and understandable. Some features of the Individual Score Report were debated at the recent State Board of Education (SBE) meeting, and the final structure and language of that report should be finalized shortly. County superintendents and school

districts will need to act with urgency to prepare school boards and school staff to respond to the questions that will be generated by the reports.

In addition to the individual student reports, the reports for teachers, schools, districts, and counties will be available shortly after the testing window closes. The data in these reports will serve many purposes. While the SBE has acted to suspend the API for this year, the new assessment results will provide important information on the success of current implementation efforts and help identify areas where additional attention is required.

Given that summative assessment data has historically comprised the bulk of the accountability system, many educators are heartened by the recent actions of the SBE to move from a single index to multiple measures (aligned with the state priorities). There has been a significant amount of discussion on the state accountability system being aligned with the LCFF state priorities and the potential role of the LCFF evaluation rubrics. If you have any comments or questions please contact Efrain Mercado, [emercado@ccsesa.org](mailto:emercado@ccsesa.org).

COMMUNICATIONS TOOLS FOR NEW ASSESSMENTS

Under the organization of the Californians Dedicated to Education Foundation (CDEF), several stakeholder groups, including CDE, CTA, ACSA and CCSESA, have been meeting to discuss communications strategies around the new statewide assessments. In a united effort to prepare the field for what to expect with the new assessments, the CDE, CDEF and State Board of Education have created tools for stakeholders to use when communicating about the new tests. In addition, CCSESA has produced talking points for county superintendents to employ when

discussing the assessments with and within their districts. The communications materials may be accessed [here](#). On the page, you will also find an article from Superintendent Tom Torlakson on the benefits of the new assessments, as well as a template article that can be personalized and submitted to your local news outlets. We will continue to provide communications tools during this time of transition. If you have any questions or specific communication needs in your county, please contact Christina Marcellus, [cmarcellus@ccsesa.org](mailto:cmarcellus@ccsesa.org).

REPORT ROUNDUP

Three recent reports warrant attention, particularly by county superintendents.

**Lessons Learned from Failure of CLAS assessment program in mid-1990’s:** In a report titled *Still Learning From the Past: Drawing on California’s CLAS Experience to Inform Assessment of the Common Core*, the California Collaborative on District Reform provides findings and recommendations related to communications to “build on the success and avoid the pitfalls” of the California Learning Assessment System (CLAS) that survived for only two years in 1993-94. The report can be obtained [here](#).

**Discussion of Issues in County Funding Formula:** In *Proposition 98 Education Analysis*, the LAO devotes eight pages to the county funding formula, particularly as it relates to local property taxes. The report can be obtained [here](#).

**Report on LCFF/Foster Youth Implementation:** Funded by the National Center for Youth Law, this study, *Foster Youth and Early Implementation of the Local Control Funding Formula*, discusses early implementation issues related to foster youth and the LCFF. The study includes a section on the “Complicated and Evolving Role for County Offices of Education.” The report can be obtained [here](#).

SUPERINTENDENT WELCOMES ARTS CONFERENCE ATTENDEES

On March 17 educators from across the state attended the *Creativity at the Core* Conference in Sacramento. Regional Arts Leads and their Arts Organization Partners showcased the professional learning modules that they have been developing and piloting throughout the state. Superintendent Tom Torlakson opened the conference, along with Sarah Anderberg, Director of CCSESA Statewide Arts Initiative and

CISC Visual and Performing Arts Chair, Fresno County Office of Education Deputy Superintendent Dr. Kathryn Catania. Amy Charlevoy, Director of K-6 Education for The College Board, provided a compelling keynote address and Maya Gonzalez, children’s book author and illustrator provided the closing. CREATE CA leads from the California Arts Council, PTA, CDE, and CCSESA also addressed the attendees.

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