

LEADERSHIP SPOTLIGHT:

Ms. L. Karen Monroe — Alameda County Superintendent of Schools

I grew up in the Bay Area, Berkeley to be specific. When I was young I wanted to be an actress/singer, veterinarian, airline pilot, architect, or entrepreneur. While clearly having diverse interests and passions – the one thing I was certain of was having absolutely *no* intention of becoming a teacher. My mother began

teaching for Berkeley Unified in 1964 and I grew up in her classroom. She went on to become an award-winning principal having tremendous success at narrowing the achievement gap. Despite this exposure to the power of education to make a difference, I remained determined to leave my mark on the world in what I thought were more exciting and significant ways.

I entered the University of Southern California as a performing arts major, but graduated with a degree in Public Administration. In the early 80's I had the singular experience of working as a legislative intern for Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm – a history maker and teacher turned politician. I went on to work for non-profits, became a corporate trainer, and started two small businesses – a consultancy writing and designing training materials and co-founding the Educational Technology Training Institute (ETTI) for teachers in Emery Unified funded by the Sybase Corporation. During this time I also worked as a substitute teacher and itinerant computer teacher. At the tender age of 40, I finally turned in my emergency permit for a teaching credential and spent several more years as a teacher, principal, and district coordinator for Oakland Unified.

I came to the Alameda County Office of Education as director of student programs and was asked at the time of my interview if I would ever consider running for Superintendent. And though I had *no* intention of becoming a county superintendent, I soon realized the deep and critical difference the role could have in the lives of students most in need of advocacy and support.

During my particularly challenging race for superintendent, I was inspired by a quote from Malala Yousafzai, the Pakistani girl who became the youngest ever winner of the Nobel Peace Prize. When asked why she wanted to be a politician she said, "By becoming a doctor I can only help my community, but by becoming a politician I can help my whole country." I found this encouraging as I looked to move from the relative familiarity of education administration to serving as a public official. The promise of the daily impact we can have on our schools and communities and the children and families who engage within them continues to drive me. I am honored to be where I am – a voice and a force for high quality education in the most diverse region in the country.

So while I continue to love art, animals, design, and yes, even flying – all of which are made even better when I am with my two amazing adult children and close-knit extended family – I am happy to use it all to bring my best self to the work I do... the work we all do, to help create the conditions for the learners we touch today to be the leaders who touch us tomorrow.

FROM THE DESK OF:

Peter Birdsall, CCSESA Executive Director

Now that the Governor has completed his actions on legislation for the regular 2015 state legislative session, it is time to start the process of setting priorities for the coming year. **We are operating under the direction that the top priority for CCSESA is to obtain ongoing funding to support the ongoing work for county superintendents related to the LCAP process.**

Through the process of Legislative Committee, Board action, and other discussions, we must determine other legislative priorities for the coming year. Issues we expect to return from the 2015 legislative session include teacher evaluation and the reserve cap. Continuing issues include support for preschool and early education, teacher and administrator induction, special education, and student assessment.

It is likely that a petition drive will be underway this holiday season for an initiative to extend the temporary income tax on high income taxpayers, and a school facilities bond measure has already qualified for the November, 2016 ballot through the initiative process.

County superintendents care about all these issues and the CCSESA Legislative Committee will take positions on various legislative proposals as they are introduced. The question is whether there are issues where CCSESA wants to particularly devote time and resources to become proactively involved during the coming year.

Please discuss these issues in your regions and share them with us directly, or through your Board and Legislative Committee members.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

California Collaborative for Educational Excellence (CCEE):

The CCEE is now hiring the following positions:

[Director, Education](#)

[Director, Outreach and Communications](#)

[Director, Research and Data Assessment](#)

The deadline to apply is October 30, 2015.

In Case You Missed It: This month, CCSESA released two COE Spotlight articles which highlighted LACOE’s Road to Success Academy and CCSESA Arts Initiative’s *Creativity at the Core*. [Click here](#) for details.

CA LMI Regional Convening:

The next Labor-Management Initiative (CA LMI) meetings will be held on November 16, 2015 in Los Angeles and December 14, 2015 in Oakland. For more information, [click here](#).

Upcoming CISC Events:

CISC will be holding its last [CISC/CDE Joint Meeting](#) of 2015 on November 19-20 at the Sacramento County Office of Education (SCOE). CISC will also be putting on [LCAP Calibration Training](#) on December 16 at SCOE’s Education Conference Center.

CCSESA STAFF

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YEAR END LEGISLATIVE WRAP UP

Governor Brown has finished signing and vetoing legislation sent to him by the Legislature this year. This was the first of a two-year legislative session, meaning that significant bills that stalled this year will likely be back in 2016. For county superintendents, key issues to expect will return next year include teacher evaluation, the reserve cap, and changes to the Medical Administrative Activities (MAA) program.

Bills that were signed into law will take effect on January 1, 2016 unless otherwise noted. There were a number of such bills that will be of interest to county superintendents.

Signed by the Governor

Increased Support for Foster Students: AB 854 requires county offices of education to focus their Foster Youth Service program on coordinating services for students. The law also changes the funding formula, which now supports existing programs. Funding for this program increased by \$10 million to \$25 million in the 2015-16 budget, and the law takes effect immediately as an urgency statute. CCSESA staff have prepared a more detailed summary of this measure, [available here](#).

Educational Rights for Homeless and Foster Youth: AB 379 offers a mechanism for foster and homeless youth to lodge complaints if they feel their educational rights have been violated. These include the right to stay at their school of origin, transfer partial credits to a new school and immediately enroll in a comprehensive school.

Dual Enrollment: AB 288 authorizes the governing board of a community college district to enter into a College and Career Access Pathway partnership with the governing board of a school district, with the goal of developing pathways from high school to community college in order to offer or expand dual enrollment opportunities for students who may not be college bound or who are underrepresented in higher education.

High School Exit Exam Suspension: SB 172 suspends the administration of the high school exit examination as a condition of graduation from high school and allows former high school students who failed the exam to be awarded diplomas, as long as they met all other graduation requirements.

CONGRATULATIONS TO CCSESA’S 2015 AWARD WINNERS



Left: Michael Watkins (Santa Cruz) accepts the 2015 CCSESA Champions Award from President Gary Jones (Modoc)

During CCSESA’s general membership meeting, several awards were given to both superintendents and steering committee members to recognize their service to the students of California and their dedication to their roles.

Physical Education Complaints: AB 1391 subjects complaints regarding compliance with instructional minute requirements for physical education to the Uniform Complaint Procedures (UCP), and takes effect immediately as an urgency statute.

Instructional Time: AB 1012 forbids school districts from assigning 7th to 12th grade students to courses with no educational content. This measure is in response to the Cruz vs California lawsuit, which alleges that the state failed to address the loss of state-mandated instructional time in some high poverty area schools.

Mathematics Placement Act: SB 359 requires governing boards of local educational agencies to develop and adopt a fair, objective and transparent policy for math placement for students in grade 9.

Indirect Cost Rates: AB 1064 deletes the January 1, 2016 sunset date on an existing law which requires the state department of education or any other state agency that administers a grant or allocation of federal or state funds to a local educational agency to allow an indirect cost rate that is no less than the indirect cost rate established by the California Department of Education, unless a lower rate is required by law.

School District Reorganization: AB 148 updates statutory provisions and financial calculations regarding school district reorganization to reflect the state funding transition from revenue limit funding to the local control funding formula (LCFF).

Vetoed by the Governor

Training New Teachers: AB 141 would have prohibited local educational agencies from charging a fee to a beginning teacher to participate in certain beginning teacher induction programs. The Governor clearly leaves that issue to local discretion, but in his veto message he also specifically mentions that part of the funding provided for the Educator Effectiveness Block Grant in this year’s budget should be used to support new teachers.

Preschool for All: AB 47 would have set a deadline of June 2018 for granting all low income 4 year olds access to state preschool, contingent on a sufficient appropriation. The Governor in his veto message commented that the discussion on expanding state preschool should continue to be considered in the budget process.

This year’s STAR awards were presented to:

- BASC — **Geri Cox** (Madera)
- CISC — **Valerie Chrisman** (Ventura)
- PASSCo — **Sue Weiser** (San Mateo)
- SPSSC — **Roger Rice** (Ventura)
- TTSC — **Luis Wong** (Imperial)

Later that day, the Napa County Office of Education hosted the CCSESA Awards dinner where awards were presented to:

- Judy Flores** (Shasta) - CCSESA Publication Award
- K12 High Speed Network** (Imperial) - CCSESA Technology Innovation Award and the AESA Brian L. Talbott Award
- Michael Watkins** (Santa Cruz) - CCSESA Champions Award

