

## LEADERSHIP SPOTLIGHT:

**Mr. Jeff Harris— Del Norte County Superintendent of Schools*****What led you to become County Superintendent?***

In my twenty years serving students as a teacher and administrator, I've been privileged to work in three counties with outstanding county superintendents, and much of what I do now as a county superintendent is because of their leadership. I was able

to see the far reaching impact that each of them had on the students, families, and communities within their counties, and when I was approached with the opportunity to take on the superintendency of Del Norte county, I recognized the offer as my chance to work positively and productively with a community, in the same way.

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

It was really very incidental. I began my college career as a pre-med major, and then shifted to English, with the intent of either teaching at a collegiate level or entering the legal field. After graduation, I entered my master's program in English, focused on an eventual Ph.D. There weren't many prospects, though, for a 23 year old college professor, so, at the prompting of a friend, I entered a teaching credential program, where I met my wife and began my career in education.

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

My overall goal is finding the means to make education for each student meaningful, relevant, valuable, and engaging. Too often, education is geared toward those traditionally prepared for school and college work. We have children, however, who are divergent thinkers, English learners, special needs, culturally diverse, homeless, etc. but who have the capabilities to be the doctors, mechanics, programmers, artists, farmers, engineers, teachers, and so on. I see my job as one that helps open the doors to future success to all students by providing an equitable education for

each child, enhanced by high expectations, access to visual, performing, and industrial arts, and caring, supportive networks of highly engaged adults.

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

In the short term, we hope to build on our outstanding CTE work by creating capstone classes in several pathways and partnering with our community college partner to provide students with certifications that they can use after high school. We want to build a more robust instructional program that celebrates the diversity of Del Norte county and meets the specific needs of our students and families and that honors the cultural diversity of our region. We also want to ensure that each student has access to high quality social emotional counseling and support, as well as academic counseling and career planning.

***What are your interests?***

Personally, I enjoy collecting rare books and first edition signed books by well-known authors. As a family, we enjoy taking time to hike, go to the beach, visit with extended family and enjoy the outdoors. With world class rivers in our backyard, my son and I are starting to learn more about fishing, too.

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

The most special people in my life are, of course, my family. My wife and I have been married almost 21 years, and we have two wonderful children, both of whom will be in high school next year, which makes me feel old! My sisters and their families live in central California, as does my dad and his wife. My dad didn't graduate high school, but he made sure that all three of his children finished their college degree, which was one thing he always regretted never attaining. He finally did finish college when he was in his fifties- not because he needed to but because it was his dream, and his dream for his children to all have a better life, ultimately, is what brought what I am today into being.

## FROM THE DESK OF:

**Peter Birdsall, CCSESA Executive Director**

The discussions about the LCFF/LCAP evaluation rubrics and their relation to California's school accountability system are becoming more urgent as we begin the new year. CCSESA has been actively engaged in these discussions and it seems useful to provide an update on our efforts in this regard. Further, it is relevant to our upcoming meeting in Monterey because we are planning several discussions about the LCAP/accountability issues at the January meeting.

With regard to the rubrics specifically, the state has established a "User Acceptance Testing" group and we worked with State Board staff so that representatives from eight county offices form a large portion of that group. Among the county office representatives are several leaders from CISC and BASC.

Work on the rubrics, along with other relevant issues, is regularly discussed by our CCSESA Accountability Task Force. That Task

Force is chaired by CCSESA President Chris Frazier (Kern) and is intended to share information and keep our work aligned on all the parallel discussions going on with regard to accountability.

CCSESA is not alone on these issues and we have worked to keep our communications open with ACSA. Just this past December we met with leadership from ACSA to discuss the various issues and we intend to meet again 2-3 times each year to share concerns and perspectives.

Recognizing there are a variety of important perspectives on the rubrics, we have also met with a group of advocacy organizations, such as ACLU, Public Advocates and EdTrust-West. We also plan to continue to meet with this group 2-3 times during the coming year.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

2016 CCSESA Chief Business Officials (CBO) Conference February 17-19:

Registration is now open. [Click here](#) for more information.

Credentials Training Academy on Feb. 24-26 and April 6-8:

The deadline to register is February 1. [Click here](#) for more information.

Parent/Guardian Overview Brochures Now Available:

Guides that provide insight into what students will learn in ELA and Mathematics, covering multiple grade levels. [Click here](#) for more information.

CCSESA Arts Initiative Professional Learning Development - January 29:

It's not too late to register! For complete details, [click here](#).

**New Release!** The California Collaborative on District Reform identifies some of the challenges that undercut the LCAP's effectiveness in their recent brief: [Implementing LCFF: Possible Solutions to Emergent LCAP Challenges](#).

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TWO NEW ARTS MODULES TO BE DEVELOPED

The CCSESA Arts Initiative is pleased to announce that two new professional learning modules will be developed to contribute to the suite of resources created by county offices of education and arts organization partners from across California. Alameda County Office of Education, in partnership with Youth Radio, has been selected to develop a module called **Media Arts in Your 6-12 Classroom** which will focus on integrating arts, media and entertainment, CTE elements, and STEAM into existing classroom curriculum.

Monterey County Office of Education, in partnership with Hartnell College, has been selected to develop a module called **Arts, Media and Entertainment on the Cutting Edge: Creating an Innovative Pathway for Your School** which will provide guidance for schools

and districts to assess and plan a CTE program in Arts, Media and Entertainment by using indicators provided in the module to determine where they are on the continuum and what they should pursue as their next steps.

Currently 15 modules exist in the CCSESA Arts suite of resources, which can be adapted to California's different teaching environments and are available online for any who desire to use them – teachers, administrators, teaching artists, parents, and the general public. Through a competitive grant process, two county offices were selected to develop the new modules with funding from the California Arts Council and The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation.

The two new modules will join the current suite of modules available on the CCSESA Arts website, [www.ccsesaartsorg](#), on **August 1, 2016**.

ACCOUNTABILITY

The passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) was a major topic at the January State Board of Education (SBE) meeting. More specifically, the discussion concerned the new law's impact on California's current plans for accountability.

The state has made it clear that they would like to develop the best accountability system for the state and then align to the federal requirements, as opposed to building a system based on the federal law.

A key piece in this discussion is the continued development of the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) Evaluation Rubrics. The State Board members requested that WestEd and SBE staff bring more examples of quality standards for the metrics under the state priorities

(e.g. Pupil achievement on CAASPP, suspension rates, attendance rates). One example of a "quality standard" for graduation rates was shared, which is modeled after Alberta, Canada's accountability system.

A crucial piece of the development process for the rubrics is the User Acceptance Testing (UAT) group that includes LEAs from across the state (including nine county offices) that are working closely with WestEd and the SBE staff to serve as a response/feedback group.

Due to the passage of ESSA, the State Board anticipates approving the rubrics at the September 2016 meeting as opposed to the July meeting. The State Board will be reviewing the state plan under ESSA in November 2016 but has until January 2017 to approve the plan and meet the federal deadline.

If you have any questions, please contact [Efrain Mercado](#).

NEW MEMBERS OF THE CCSESA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Welcome to the newest members of the CCSESA Board of Directors, whose terms began in 2016:

- ◇ Ms. Bettina Blackwell (Trinity) Region 2
- ◇ Ms. Kathy Northington (Calaveras) Region 6
- ◇ Dr. Steve Gomes (Merced) Region 7
- ◇ Mr. Ted Alejandre (San Bernardino) Region 10
- ◇ Ms. Misty Key (Ventura) BASC Chair

- ◇ Dr. Kathryn Catania (Fresno) CISC Chair
- ◇ Mr. Steve Hovey (Riverside) PASSCo Chair
- ◇ Ms. Carmen Barnhart (Kings) SPSSC Chair
- ◇ Mr. Luis Wong (Imperial) TTSC Chair

We also welcome Mr. Tom Changnon (Stanislaus) to the Executive Committee as President-Elect, as well as Mr. Jim Vidak (Tulare) as the 2016 Legislative Committee Chair. We look forward to a productive year ahead.

CSBA 2015 GOLDEN BELL AWARD RECIPIENTS

Congratulations are in order to the following County Offices of Education that were recognized by CSBA for their exceptional student-oriented programs. In 2015, Golden Bell Awards were presented to:

- ◇ Napa County Office of Education, *Digital Early Learning, It's a Game Changer*
- ◇ Yolo County Office of Education, *Project SOLAR Energy Academy*
- ◇ Orange County Office of Education, *Inside the Outdoors – Project Zero Waste*

- ◇ Santa Clara County Office of Education, *STEAM Initiative: Leading with Imagination, Innovation, and Integration*
- ◇ Los Angeles County Office of Education, *Teacher Creativity with Common Core Standards*
- ◇ Riverside County Office of Education, *Riverside COE Fiesta Educativa*
- ◇ San Diego County Office of Education, *Leading Edge Certification for the Online and Blended Teacher*
- ◇ Sacramento County Office of Education, *The Foster Database System*

Additional information is [available here](#).

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