



# CCSESA *Leadership Link*

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## Executive Director's Corner

One of several interesting topics at the April General Membership meeting will be a presentation and discussion on Tuesday morning concerning the CORE waiver request that was submitted to the U.S. Department of Education. If approved by the federal government, the provisions of the waiver request would allow other districts in California to join and operate under those provisions.

We expect that county superintendents will want to be in a position to explain the waiver to their local districts and help advise them on whether it can help meet their local needs. Key elements of the waiver request address issues that county superintendents have discussed often: school accountability; collection and use of data; intervention and technical assistance; and teacher evaluation (see page 2 for more information on the waiver request).

With regard to CCSESA staff, Kate Osborn will not be joining us at our April meeting because she is rapidly approaching the projected delivery date for her second child. With any luck, I will have an even more current update for you when we meet in Riverside! Look forward to seeing you there.

Peter Birdsall  
Executive Director

## Leadership Spotlight: *Dr. Joe Ovick, Contra Costa County Superintendent of Schools*



I decided that I wanted to become a teacher when I was a senior in high school. Throughout my schooling I was extremely fortunate to have wonderful teachers as role models that I thought I could emulate. There were also a few weak teachers that taught me what not to do as a teacher! In college, I majored in Social Science (U.S. History and Political

Science). It wasn't until my senior year in college that I discovered special education. I knew early on that I wanted to work with children with special needs. After teaching for a few years, I was encouraged to apply for an administrative position, so I went to graduate school for a new credential and a master's degree. Later, I received my doctorate.

I have served as an assistant principal, principal, SELPA director, college faculty member, county director of special education, assistant superintendent of student services, associate superintendent of business and, since 1996, Contra Costa County Superintendent of Schools. Regardless of my position, my focus has

always been, and continues to be, what is best for the children we serve to prepare them for the future. I rely heavily on positive working relationships with a myriad of individuals who share my passion, and I am relentless, though diplomatic, in influencing others to join. I am pleased to be the superintendent of a quality organization, and am thankful for the quality staff I get to work with daily.

In my free time, I enjoy golf, music, reading and the San Francisco Giants and 49ers. The special people in my life include my family and my friends. Laughing is very therapeutic and I practice it daily!

## CCSESA Arts Partnerships in Action

CCSESA partnered with the California State PTA to host the Celebrating Arts Learning in California Schools Luncheon on March 12 at The California Museum in Sacramento. Over 70 district, county, and state leaders attended. CCSESA President Michael Watkins provided a welcome along with California State PTA's Mary Galuska, Co-Chair, Special Committee for Arts Education. The Honorable Carol Liu addressed the group, and Assembly-member Ian Calderon presented the 2013 Arts Education Month Resolution. Craig Cheslog, Principal Advisor to the Superintendent of Public Instruction, provided the keynote which previewed the soon-to-be-released *Blueprint for Creative Schools Task Force Report*. Lastly, students from Twin Rivers Unified School District gave

a lively performance.

As an outgrowth of a statewide training by CCSESA Arts Initiative, CCSESA partnered with Sacramento County Office of Education, Lesley University, and Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts to present at the Arts Education Partnership 2013 National Forum in Washington D.C. last week. The session presented was "Building on Collective Impact: Deepening and Expanding Partnerships" which highlighted collaborative work and capacity building efforts of the CCSESA Arts Initiative. Session participants worked on a collaborative asset scan and discussed cultivating and sustaining deeper collaborations and partnerships in schools and communities.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**April General Membership.** Our next meeting is scheduled from April 14 through April 16 at the Mission Inn in Riverside. Topics to be discussed include the CalPERS litigation (in closed session), the Legislative update, ACSA's One Voice Initiative, Region 10's Best Practices, and the California Office to Reform Education's NCLB Waiver. For more information, please contact Grace Vote in the CCSESA office at [gvote@ccsesa.org](mailto:gvote@ccsesa.org) or (916) 446-3095.

**Federal Advocacy Trip to Washington D.C.** This year's trip is scheduled from April 23 through April 25. Key issues will be the budget and sequester, federal funding for education and ESEA reauthorization. For more information about the trip, please contact Christina Marcellus at [cmarcellus@ccsesa.org](mailto:cmarcellus@ccsesa.org).

**CORE Waiver Webinars.** The CA Office to Reform Education (CORE) scheduled three webinars to discuss the CORE districts' waiver request to the U.S. Department of Education (USDE). April 4 and April 10 webinars discussed the waiver and will be archived at [www.coredistricts.org](http://www.coredistricts.org). The third webinar is scheduled for May 2 at 9:30 a.m. to share updates on feedback and negotiations with USDE. CCSESA is co-sponsoring the webinars with ACSA, CSBA and CORE.

### CCSESA

Executive Director  
*Peter Birdsall*

Assistant Executive Director  
*Gaye Smoot*

Director, Business Services  
*Kate Osborn*

Director, Government Relations  
*Sandra Morales*

Director, CCSESA Arts Initiative  
*Sarah Anderberg*

Legislative Assistant  
*Christina Marcellus*

Business Services Coordinator  
*Cindy Ridley*

Member Services Coordinator  
*Grace Vote*

## Education Coalition Supports Governor's Funding Proposal

The Education Coalition (EdCo), comprised of nine statewide education groups, including ACSA, CSBA, CTA and State PTA among others, has taken a position in support of the Governor's proposed county office of education funding model. EdCo has also adopted a position of opposing any further cuts to school district or county office funding levels. This should be welcome news to basic aid counties that are at risk of losing access to their excess property taxes. EdCo's support of the COE funding model is

certainly good news for CCSESA.

The Education Coalition has also adopted positions supporting the Governor's proposals to pay down the massive wall of debt that has developed over years of deferrals and funding reductions, and to count all Proposition 39 revenues toward the Proposition 98 minimum guarantee. The Coalition would like to see Governor Brown's proposals vetted in the necessary policy committees.

## Summer is Right Around the Corner

Across the state, a growing number of superintendents are bringing summer learning programs to their counties; programs combining academics and enrichment to support school-year learning. As momentum swings in support of summer learning, programs are increasingly working towards minimizing the impact of summer learning loss – that disturbing loss of reading and math skills which contributes dramatically to the achievement gap. As you talk to superintendents in your county, take the time to highlight

the importance of summer learning. You can point them to concrete data, funding ideas and planning tools through this link <http://summermatters2you.net>. To profile your county's summer success stories or get more information about how the statewide Summer Matters campaign can help your county, please contact Katie Brackenridge at [katie@partnerforchildren.org](mailto:katie@partnerforchildren.org). Katie will be joining us at the April meeting.

## Districts Apply for No Child Left Behind Waiver

Working together as a collaborative called the California Office to Reform Education (CORE), nine California school districts are moving forward with a high profile request to waive key provisions of the federal No Child Left Behind law. If the waiver is approved, CORE is proposing to extend to all districts and charter schools in the state the opportunity to operate under the waiver, provided they agree to the waiver's conditions. Key elements of the waiver request include:

- "Under CORE's new accountability model, only test scores from the highest grade level of each individual school will be used for the purpose of accountability... As a result, CORE's model focuses the use of most grade-level assessments to diagnostic use..."
- ...the consequence for a school or district being classified as a focus or priority school is support and technical assistance provided by a Partic-

ipating LEA's School of Distinction team who are realizing success with similar students as measured by CORE's accountability metrics. This is a paradigm shift away from a compliance-based accountability system to one driven by the mutual responsibility to adhere to a new set of guiding principles, based on shared responsibility and support building...

- The waiver application identifies student achievement growth as one of multiple measures in the process of evaluating educator effectiveness. The specific way that teacher effectiveness is measured will be different in each LEA participating in the CORE waiver... Participating LEAs will collaboratively engage in a three-year teacher effectiveness pilot and implementation timeline."