



## LEADERSHIP SPOTLIGHT:

### **Mr. Brock Falkenberg—Lake County Superintendent of Schools**



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

I appreciate this question, because it reminds me of the most important aspect of my job, kids. It reminds me of learning. It reminds me of growth.

When I entered education, I never considered the prospect of leaving the classroom and moving into administration. I planned to teach and coach until retirement. However, I soon took on leadership opportunities such as department chair, athletic director, etc. In a short period of time I had made the decision to pursue administration and expand my impact. It seems that with advancement, administrators get further away from kids. So I have always strived to remind my colleagues and coworkers that regardless of what your job is, if you work for an education agency, the bottom line is that your job is about supporting kids. This is what has led me to County Superintendency; to support kids.

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

I had a career in manufacturing prior to entering education. I was a lead manager at a mid-size manufacturing facility on the North Bay. I enjoyed my job. In my opinion, one of the key characteristics of a good manager is the ability to teach others. This might be what I enjoyed most about my job. When the company decided to relocate the facility, I decided that my roots in the community were too strong to move. So I took stock of my situation and my career path and decided to change direction and pursue a teaching credential. I am still proud to call myself a teacher.

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

If I were to choose one core value, it is that every child can learn and succeed. This is true in every classroom and school in the county. However, although every child can learn and succeed, they cannot do this in the same way on the same day. As such, I am advocating for rich, relevant, and diverse learning opportunities, meaningful access to technology, and outstanding teachers for all students.

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

As I am just beginning my first term as a County Superintendent, I am still in the process of forming the specifics around some of my objectives, but in a nutshell I plan to focus on a few key areas:

1. Student Readiness: Kids need to be ready for transitions in schooling. They should be ready to start kindergarten; transition to middle school and high school successfully; and upon graduation, be career and college ready.
2. 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills: I hope to support our teachers and schools to assure our students learn the skills they need to thrive in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
3. Partnership and Collaboration: As the County Superintendent, I hope to work alongside schools and districts to share and coordinate resources that support student growth and continuous improvement.
4. Accountability: I hope to support schools in closing the achievement gap by supporting realistic yet challenging local accountability plans.

#### ***What are your interests?***

I enjoy woodworking and construction. I always have a project or two going. Of interest might be the fact that my wife and I (with some assistance from family and friends) built the house we live in. We did everything from foundation to finish. It took a few weekends, but we finished in time for the family to move in before I left for my final deployment in 2008.

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

The special people in my life are my colleagues and coworkers during my 22 years in education and the fellow soldiers whom I served alongside during my 21 years in the Army. The LCOE team continues to provide outstanding support to the community, the schools, and the kids of Lake County, as well as to me. Of special note is my wife of 18 years, Joni, and our sons Cord, Nate, and Bron.

## FROM THE DESK OF:

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

On behalf of CCSESA, and CCSESA staff, I want to welcome the newly elected county superintendents who took office this January. At the upcoming General Membership meeting in Monterey, I am confident you will experience the extraordinary collaborative spirit of county superintendents, plus our active engagement in a wide range of important educational issues.

Although there are many issues of concern to county superintendents, three are particularly exciting as we begin the new year: ESEA reauthorization, school accountability and career technical education.

It appears that Congress will seriously address the issue of ESEA reauthorization for the first time in years. After our recent success on increasing E-Rate funding, we are organizing to make sure CCSESA has a strong voice in the debate over the future of federal K-12 education policy.

The article in this newsletter about the recent State Board of Education meeting makes it clear that school accountability is moving to the forefront of the education policy debate. On Wednesday morning of the General Membership meeting, State Board member Sue Burr will meet with the county superintendents to discuss these issues further.

The Governor's budget proposal to appropriate \$250 million per year for three years for CTE transition grants provides a remarkable opportunity to build and protect quality CTE programs, while allowing county superintendents to successfully transition to the new funding model without an ROCP maintenance of effort requirement. Both in terms of the legislative proposal and program implementation, this will be an important issue for county superintendents across the state.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### January Quarterly Meeting:

The next Quarterly Meeting will take place at the Intercontinental Hotel in Monterey from January 26—28. Please contact JaConya Merchant with any questions at [jmerchant@ccsesa.org](mailto:jmerchant@ccsesa.org).

### Practice Like Pros Football Clinic:

On February 4 and 5, NFL Hall of Famers will headline a *Practice Like Pros* football clinic, presented by Safe Kids Worldwide. The clinic, endorsed by the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) will demonstrate progressive techniques to the high school football community. Click [here](#) for more information.

### Equity Leaderships for Superintendents:

CAAASA will present a professional development series for district superintendents and selected school district leadership. For more information about the events, and to register, click [here](#).

## CCSESA STAFF

### [Peter Birdsall](#)

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## STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION UPDATE

The State Board of Education meeting on January 14 provided initial indications of the future of school accountability in California. The discussions on the following items highlighted the initial steps towards building the accountability system.

**Item 2** on the agenda dealt with CDE's recommended amendments to the state's Federal Accountability Workbook for 2015 AYP determinations. While there were seven recommended amendments, two generated the most discussion:

- Replace STAR Program Assessments with Smarter Balanced Assessments for Grades Three Through Eight (Workbook Critical Element 1.3, pages 12–13)
- Replace the Grade Ten CAHSEE with the Grade Eleven Smarter Balanced Assessment (Critical Element 6.1, page 48)

**Item 3** was an Update on Developing a New Accountability System Using Multiple Measures consistent with Education Code Sections 52052

through 52052.9. This item led to a lengthy discussion regarding the following topics:

- Options for moving the state accountability system from a single index to using multiple measures that parallel the state priorities;
- Options for an alternative point scale for the new accountability system; and
- A recommendation on the appropriate timing for the release of the next accountability reporting cycle.

Ultimately the discussion points towards a shift from a single measure/index (current API model) to a system that uses multiple measures aligned with the state priorities. At this time the State Board has asked for recommendations on the three topics outlined above at the March State Board of Education meeting. These efforts are the initial steps on the path to a coherent statewide accountability system.

If you have any comments or questions please contact Efrain Mercado at [emercado@ccsesa.org](mailto:emercado@ccsesa.org).

## CCSESA ARTS INITIATIVE -

### UPCOMING EVENTS IN NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

**CREATE CA Convening:** Arts leaders, creative economy business partners, and community arts advocates will be convening on January 30 and 31 in Oakland at the Oakland School of the Arts for the CREATE CA convening entitled *Destination: Creative Schools from Blueprint to Action*. Participants will receive the soon to be released *California Blueprint for Creative Schools* and hear from a wide variety of arts and education leaders. Governor Brown will be one of the featured speakers, along with Randy Nelson from Apple University. The event will include breakout sessions featuring a wide range of arts related topics. Hear about new developments in the field, new collaborative opportunities, and deepened cross-organizational relationships. To register, click [here](#).

**Creativity at the Core Convening:** Join us for a one-day convening in Sacramento to be held at the Sacramento Sheraton hotel on March 17. Regional Arts Leads and their identified arts organization partners will share the modules that they have been developing and piloting in 2014-15 as part of the new Creativity at the Core program funded by the California Arts Council and the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation. Hear from exciting keynote speakers, participate in powerful breakout sessions provided by regional arts leads and partners. Student performer, Sean Oliu, and children's author Maya Gonzales will also be presenting. For more information on the event, and to register, click [here](#).

## BIIG WINNERS AROUND THE STATE

The California Department of Education (CDE) and K-12 High Speed Network (K12HSN) recently announced that 227 school sites have been awarded Broadband Infrastructure Improvement Grants (BIIG) to enhance their network connectivity. These school sites will share in almost \$27 million for this work.

As a result of the Smarter Balanced field testing last spring, the state identified approximately 300 school sites that needed additional infrastructure to be able to leverage technology for teaching and learning and specifically to allow their students to engage in the new computer adaptive California assessments.

At this time, the K12HSN is continuing to explore connectivity solutions for the remaining

sites that were not funded. Many of these did not receive bids from service providers and thus could not receive an award at this time.

Dr. Todd Finnell, Imperial County Superintendent of Schools, was quoted in CDE's press release stating that, "While school sites with the most need were selected to receive the grants, this process has provided further data to help those schools that didn't receive funding at this time." Dr. Finnell also stated, "Additional work is needed to secure funding and identify possible solutions for these schools." The K12HSN is administered by the Imperial County Office of Education.

The list of awardees can be found [here](#). The list of sites that didn't receive a bid can be found [here](#).

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## LEADERSHIP SPOTLIGHT:

### **Ms. Margie Bulkin—Tuolumne County Superintendent of Schools**



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

When I interview candidates for the teaching profession, I'm most interested in the first question of the interview because while it is sometimes seen as the "ice-breaker" question, for me, it sets the pace for the rest of the interview. That question is typically "Why did you want to become a

teacher?" In my experience, there is really only one answer to this question. I'm always hopeful to hear the prospective teacher simply say: "Because I love kids." In my mind, this is the single most important element that is not teachable. You either have it, or you don't. Like so many administrator colleagues I respect, having compassion, empathy and love for kids has been and still is my motivation.

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

I grew up in Latin America. I went to elementary school in Argentina, and completed most of my high school years in El Salvador. My dad was an international school teacher and then administrator of American schools abroad. When I was in 5th grade in Argentina in a small town outside of Buenos Aires, my dad was my teacher. Until this time, I had never seen him engaged in his daily work. I remember having such admiration for his gift and talent to inspire all of us towards learning. He made learning relevant and engaging. He taught us to think critically and creatively. I knew then that I wanted to do the same for others when I 'grew up'. He was the best teacher I ever had. I still aspire to the standard he impressed me with.

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

I'm deeply interested in outcomes for students once the K-12 experience is over. I have watched us chase math and ELA performance levels as a function of accountability with little or no attention to the accountability for readiness for college and/or career. It is so refreshing to see the direction shifting towards preparation for careers and/or higher education with a focus on developing pathways for students to be prepared for college and/or careers by seamlessly transitioning between high school and post-secondary education, training programs, and gainful employment.

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

I have advocated for the following three areas of focus:

1. Expand and integrate support services for early childhood education. Students who receive a quality early childhood experience and education are more likely to realize success in school and in life. Early literacy is equally important. Just as a child develops language skills long before being able to speak, the child also develop literacy skills long before being able to read.
2. Implement, deliver and support professional development and improvement of teacher quality. We know that there is a very strong correlation between high quality instruction and student success. Our county office continues to be a dynamic "collaboratory" aimed at improving instruction aligned to state standards and assessments.
3. College and/or career readiness. I want every student who graduates from our high schools to be prepared for college and/or career. I hope to improve the transition to college/ career through robust partnerships with our local community college and business partners.

A capstone to these three areas is to infuse the arts into every aspect of learning. Art animates what is learned and helps students develop an aptitude towards expression and interpretation of meaning.

#### ***What are your interests?***

I enjoy gardening, skiing (when there is snow), walking, knitting, reading and playing with my grandchildren. My husband and I spent five years building our own home in the foothills of the Mother Lode in a small town called Twain Hare. Building and constructing this home together was extremely gratifying. It is truly amazing what our hands can craft. We are currently building a large playground area on the property for our grandchildren to enjoy.

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

My husband, Gary, and I have known each other since childhood and have been married for 33 years. He is the center of my life. We have four grown children ages 21 - 31 who are an inspiration to us, and three very active grandchildren who keep us young.

## FROM THE DESK OF:

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

CCSESA supports the Governor's budget proposal to appropriate \$250 million per year for the next three years for Career Technical Education (CTE) Incentive Grants. However, we also are advocating for changes in the proposed budget language:

1. The Administration proposes that the funds be allocated as competitive grants. CCSESA believes the program should instead be designed to support regional programs that cover all districts in the state. The end goal of what the Governor's budget terms a "transition" program should be to ensure that all students have access to quality CTE programs. This means it

is appropriate to establish quality standards for any grant to be awarded, but it is not appropriate to implement a competitive grant program where significant areas of the state don't have access to the needed resources.

2. The budget proposal would require a dollar-for-dollar match for the grants, but allows state Pathways Grant funding to be used for the match. Allowing state grants to be used to match new state grants does not lead to a sustainable program when the state funding goes away.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**CCBE Board Member**

**Training:** The County Boards of Education are holding a training geared towards new and first term board members on Saturday, March 7. Please contact Heidi Weiland at CCBE if you would like more information:

[heidiweiland@gmail.com](mailto:heidiweiland@gmail.com).

**Don Olson to Retire in July:**

Del Norte County Superintendent of Schools Don Olson has announced his plans to retire at the end of July. The Del Norte County Unified School District has begun the search for a replacement.

**In Memory Of:** Bill

Cornelison, former Lake County Superintendent of Schools, passed away on January 29 at the age of 78. For those wishing to give in Bill's memory, donations may be sent in his name to the Clearlake Rotary Club (P.O. Box 549, Clearlake, 94522) for scholarships, or to the Lake Community Resource Center (530 Main Street, Kelseyville, 95451).

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**ACCOUNTABILITY TASK FORCE HOLDS FIRST MEETING**

On February 24th, 2015 CCSESA convened its initial Accountability Task Force call, chaired by Chris Frazier (Kern), CCSESA's President-Elect. The purpose of the Task Force is to promote a coherent vision for how assessment and accountability systems should be structured in California. While these discussions and decisions on assessment and accountability are complex and interrelated, many of these issues are being considered by different groups at different times.

The task force is structured to bring together a representative group of county superintendents and county office staff involved in these discussions, so that they can keep each other informed and facilitate a common approach since so many county office representatives are at the forefront of this work.

Given the focus on "coherence" the content of the initial call focused on a review of the current efforts and issues related to accountability and assessment. The discussion covered the four major topics of Accountability, Assessment, Communications, and the Coherence of these Systems.

**Accountability**

- The current work of the Public School Accountability Act (PSAA) Advisory Committee related to the API
- Current Status of Alternative Education Accountability with a particular interest in making sure that any accountability systems reflect the unique circumstances of alternative education programs like court

- and community schools
- Development of the LCFF Evaluation Rubrics
- The current status of the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence
- The potential impact of ESEA Reauthorization on our state level accountability system and the alignment between the state and federal systems

**Assessments**

- Current Status on the Use of Interim Assessments and Formative Assessment Practice
- The Future of the CAHSEE
- The potential impact of ESEA Reauthorization on the state mandated testing systems

**Communications**

- The current messaging needs for SBAC/CAASPP Implementation
- The current status of the state's Accountability system (API/rubrics and state v local) and the potential for the SBE to suspend the API for 2015

**Coherence of Assessment and Accountability System**

The next crucial step for the task force will be to begin to provide direction on how the various pieces outlined above work together. The topics discussed by the Task Force clearly indicate there are a significant number of moving parts that need to be aligned. If you have any comments or questions please contact CCSESA's Policy Director, Efrain Mercado, at [emercado@ccsesa.org](mailto:emercado@ccsesa.org).

**A BLUEPRINT FOR CREATIVE SCHOOLS**

*A Blueprint for Creative Schools: A Report to State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson by the Arts Education Task Force* was released in January 2015. This document is a summary report culminating over two years of work by over 100 contributors, dedicated to making a creative education possible for all of California's students by making the arts a central component of the curriculum. This streamlined document, highlighting the task force's important work, is divided into sections that address the following: a) Supporting visual and performing arts curriculum; b) Enhancing educator quality,

preparation and professional learning in the Arts; c) Producing high quality arts assessment, research, and evidence; d) Ensuring equity and access for all California students; e) Strengthening collaborative relationships; f) Expanding the role of business and industry in the creative workforce, and g) Providing adequate funding for arts. Click [here](#) to download the *Blueprint for Creative Schools* (PDF) Published January 29, 2015. Click [here](#) to download a two-page summary of the *Blueprint for Creative Schools* (PDF). This document was released at the recent CREATE CA convening held in Oakland, CA on January 30-31, 2015.

**CSBA 2014 GOLDEN BELL AWARD RECIPIENTS**

We would like to commend the following county office of education-operated programs that won CSBA Golden Bell Awards:

- *Madera County Office of Education Foster Youth Services*—Madera County Office of Education
- *Model Truancy Prevention Program*—Monterey County Office of Education
- *Champions for Leadership*—Santa Clara County Office of Education
- *Seal of Biliteracy and Pathway Award Program*—Santa Clara County Office of Education
- *Educational Resource Services Common Core Implementation and Support*—Tulare County Office of Education
- *Literacy and Mobile Book Services*—Riverside County Office of Education
- *Preschool Bridging Model Plus*—Sacramento County Office of Education
- *Teacher Dinner Series on Technology*—Napa County Office of Education
- *Fit for the Future*—Tuolumne County Office of Education

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**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 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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## LEADERSHIP SPOTLIGHT:

### **Mr. James Mousalimas—San Joaquin County Superintendent of Schools**



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

The definition of an architect is “Chief Builder.” I was in a master’s program, pursuing a degree in architecture when I took a year off to join the Peace Corps. While my interest in building monuments that would form lasting impressions did not wane, my tools and focus did. I entered the world of education and it became my dream to help build our future leaders. I felt a responsibility to run for County Superintendent and build upon the outstanding work SJCOE has done for so many years.

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

Two West African boys, Diallo and Abdullai. I was a Peace Corps Volunteer in West Africa, teaching high school and coaching basketball. I had never formally taught students prior to the Peace Corps. The more time I spent with my young West African students, the more I saw the wonder in their eyes as we discovered a new lesson, as we shared a meal, or when I taught them a new basketball skill—I learned that I had a passion for teaching. I returned to California, taught mathematics at Richmond Unified (now West Contra Costa USD) and never looked back.

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

“An educated citizenry is a vital requisite for our survival as a free people,” is a quote that has been attributed to Thomas Jefferson. I believe in the value of public education; it is an essential component of our democratic society. We have to continue to improve public education and address the inequities that exist within the system. I am committed to working to improve public education so that every child has an opportunity to receive a high quality education.

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

Our first goal has been to reestablish trust and forge partnerships with our 14 school districts and charter schools in San Joaquin County. It is essential that all of us in public education are working together to provide the best education possible for all children. In addition to providing direct programs to students, SJCOE is a service organization that can and should positively impact public education in our county. We have also focused on improving STEM and Career Technical Education. We are developing an outstanding STEM center and programs that will provide training, support and opportunities for teachers, administrators and students. Finally, our Teachers College of San Joaquin is an essential tool in preparing effective teachers and administrators for our region. TCSJ provides credential, masters degree and certificate programs to help address the shortage of qualified educators.

#### ***What are your interests?***

I love to travel and experience new cultures, cuisines and languages. My wife and I worked at American International Schools for seven years and had the opportunity to travel extensively. We were able to travel to Western Europe with our daughters in 2013 and seem to be always planning our next trip.

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

My wife, Diane, and three daughters, Ariane, Gianna and Paris. Diane and I have been married for 25 years; she was an English and Drama teacher and now runs her own jewelry design business. My oldest daughter, Ariane, is graduating from UC Davis in June; my middle daughter, Gianna, will be a freshman at UC Berkeley this fall; and Paris is a freshman at Tracy High School. I am truly blessed to have such a wonderful family.

## FROM THE DESK OF:

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

As I write this column there are several important issues in flux as the Governor and Legislature work towards an agreement on the 2015-16 state budget. By the time we meet in Pasadena in late June, we should have answers on most or all of these issues.

It appears there is agreement on the \$40 million in funding for county offices of education to support our work on LCAPs. That is great news and sets the stage for our continued efforts to strengthen the capacity of county superintendents to support their school districts in the LCAP process, and to work with the Administration to obtain ongoing funding for this important work.

Less clear is where the Legislature and Governor are going on teacher and administrator quality issues. The Senate approved \$800 million for “educator effectiveness” that was not in the Governor’s proposal. There are serious concerns, however, that this funding is politically linked to efforts to approve legislation to expand the scope of collective bargaining to address teacher and administrator evaluation. Interestingly, \$190 million was approved by the Assembly for BTS and PAR, two former categorical programs which also were not part of the Governor’s budget proposal.

There is agreement that major funding will be made available for Career Technical Education (CTE) grants, but significant disagreements remain about how that funding will be allocated. Both the Senate and Assembly took action to make allocations on a per ADA basis, rather than pursuant to competitive grants. It is unclear how the new grants are structured in terms of supporting regional programs or in terms of meeting the quality standards that the Governor included in his proposal. Clearly these are critical details both in terms of reaching a political agreement on the funding, and in terms of how county superintendents and school districts move forward to support quality CTE programs.

We are actively involved in discussions about each of these topics. By the time of our June meeting, we expect to be in a position to have substantive discussions among the county superintendents about how to move forward on each of these critical issues.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### June General Membership

**Meeting:** CCSESA General Membership will meet in Pasadena from June 28-30. Registration is now open. Contact JaConya Merchant if you have any questions; [jmerchant@ccsesa.org](mailto:jmerchant@ccsesa.org).

### CCSESA's Cindy Ridley to

**Retire in May:** After nearly 10 years with CCSESA, Cindy Ridley will move on to new adventures in retirement. Her last day with CCSESA will be May 29. We thank Cindy for her tireless support to the Association's financial matters and the CCSESA Arts Initiative, and we wish her all the best.

### Welcome to Alex DeCaprio!

We are pleased to introduce our newest Executive Assistant, Alexandra DeCaprio. Alex comes to us from U.C. Berkeley, and will provide support to the Executive Director and on the CCSESA budget and steering committee finances.

## CCSESA STAFF

### [Peter Birdsall](#)

Executive Director

### [Sandra Morales](#)

Assistant Executive Director

### [Sarah Anderberg](#)

Arts Initiative Director

### [Efrain Mercado](#)

Policy Director

### [Amanda Dickey](#)

Project Coordinator

### [Christina Marcellus](#)

Project Coordinator

### [Cindy Ridley](#)

Business Services Coordinator

### [Jessie Kroll-Yoas](#)

Executive Assistant

### [JaConya Merchant](#)

Executive Assistant

### [Alex DeCaprio](#)

Executive Assistant

## ESEA REAUTHORIZATION—WE'LL KNOW MORE SOON

In early May, a group of county superintendents and CCSESA staff went to Washington, D.C., to urge members of Congress to take action on the critical issue of ESEA reauthorization. Veteran consultants and staff in Washington are split on how likely it is that ESEA will be reauthorized this year, but they are all in agreement that June will be a critical month.

During the coming month, the Senate is scheduled to debate and take action on the Senate version, the Every Child Achieves Act, which passed the Senate policy committee unanimously earlier this year. Although the bill clearly had bi-partisan support in committee, the issue in June will be how Senators take action on a wide range of amendments that will likely be offered on the Senate floor. Some are amendments that, if approved, would likely

make it more difficult to get the votes to pass the amended package off the floor.

On the horizon is the House of Representatives, which so far has failed to approve its own version of an ESEA reauthorization bill, H.R. 5 (also known as the Student Success Act). In meetings with House majority staff during the CCSESA advocacy trip, it was clear that they have not given up the fight for H.R. 5. However, leadership in the House has been conspicuously silent on the bill, indicating that, at least for now, ESEA reauthorization is not a top priority for the majority party in House.

It is unclear how a Senate bill with bi-partisan support will be received in the House. However, it is fairly clear that nothing will be enacted this year if a Senate bill fails to make it out of the Senate in June and move over to the House.

## NEWS FROM THE CCSESA ARTS INITIATIVE

### NEW WEBSITE LAUNCH

CCSESA Arts Initiative launched its newly designed website on May 1, 2015. The site includes a new repository of professional learning resources focused on arts learning and Common Core State Standards produced by Regional Arts Leads and their arts organization partners as part of the Creativity at the Core Grant program sponsored by CCSESA and funded by the California Arts Council and The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation. Hats off to Christina Marcellus, CCSESA Project Coordinator, and the Honey Agency for the yearlong process of redesigning the web site. Please take a look: [www.ccsesaarts.org](http://www.ccsesaarts.org).

### OTIS CREATIVE ECONOMY REPORT

The results of the 2014 Otis Report on the Creative Economy of California were recently unveiled in a hearing before the Legislative Joint Committee on the Arts. The Otis Report (available [here](#)) highlights California's competitive advantage in the creative sector and underscores the need to bolster the talent pipeline through support for the arts and arts education. The Otis Report has become a powerful advocacy tool and catalyst for change by clearly articulating the economic benefits of the creative industries, quantifying their financial

impact in the economy, and putting real numbers to the creative workforce. Significant findings in the 2014 Otis Report include:

- Creative industry output totaled \$293.8 billion (direct, indirect, and induced).
- The creative industries generated 1,447,100 jobs (direct, indirect, and induced), or nearly one in ten of all wage and salary employment; \$113.5 billion in total labor income, and \$12.1 billion in taxes to California state and local governments.
- Direct, indirect and induced jobs in the creative economy accounted for 9.6% of the state's total workforce.
- The largest direct job counts by creative sector in California were entertainment (164,000), publishing and printing (131,200), and fashion (120,100).

"The Otis Report leaves no doubt that creativity is a powerful economic driver both regionally and statewide," said Otis' Interim President Kerry Walk. "With jobs in the creative industries projected to grow 4% statewide - an increase of more than 27,000 - it is critical that leaders from the public, private, and nonprofit sectors work together to develop and sustain the talent pipeline that feeds the creative economy of California."

## JEFF HARRIS TO ASSUME DEL NORTE SUPERINTENDENT SEAT

As Del Norte County Superintendent of Schools Don Olson prepares to retire in July, Jeff Harris, current superintendent-principal of North Cow Creek Elementary School, has been selected to take the helm. The Del Norte County Unified School District Board of Trustees is now working to finalize the formal agreement with Mr. Harris. Prior to his current position, Mr. Harris served as a principal in the Corning Union Elementary School District in Tehama, and Delano School District in Kern. We look forward to working with

Mr. Harris when he takes office this summer. Additional information is available [here](#).

Don Olson has been the county superintendent in Del Norte since 2011. Among other initiatives, Mr. Olson has focused on improving student access to both educational technology and arts learning, in addition to addressing the chronic absenteeism and truancy rates in the county. He will be missed, but we are pleased to wish him a happy retirement.

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## LEADERSHIP SPOTLIGHT:

### **Mr. Warren Galletti—Mendocino County Superintendent of Schools**



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

When I completed my teacher credentialing program, I truly thought that I would spend my career in education as a teacher and coach. After about five years of teaching I was approached by administration to take on different administrative duties such as athletic

director, student discipline, etc., and found much joy in these leadership roles. After finding this passion for leadership and professional growth, I pursued a career in administration with a strong belief I could have a greater impact on more individuals and to this day find this to be true. The thought of supporting every student, employee, school and district in Mendocino County led me to become County Superintendent.

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

I've always enjoyed teaching and working with others. The legendary John Wooden once said, "well, your greatest joy definitely comes from doing something for another, especially when it was done with no thought of something in return." This is what teaching and coaching is all about, the return is seeing growth in another individual. I basically got into education to make a positive impact on as many individuals as I possibly could.

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

Making a positive impact for every student in the county. With this in mind, we have to develop outstanding educators as we all impact each and every student. As a county we need to focus on educating all students to achieve academically and socially to the very best of their abilities. We must remember that all students don't learn with the same teaching modalities. When I walk into classrooms throughout the county it is such a pleasure when I observe all students actively engaged in the lesson.

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

This being my first term as County Superintendent, I'm still in the process of assessing needs that will support all students. I am focusing on a few objectives at this time.

- Support the growth of "Moving Forward Mendocino" educational initiative in support of student achievement and implementation of Common Core.
- Pursue resources for CTE programs that lead to career pathways for students and young adults in Mendocino.
- Develop proactive systems to successfully implement LCFF; district LCAP reviews and the Mendocino County Office of Education LCAP.
- Provide professional development opportunities that meet the needs of M.C.O.E. and district staff based on information received from visiting districts and M.C.O.E. programs.
- Advocate for public education by engaging technology, media and personnel.
- Develop a Communications Plan with a focus on two way internal and external communication and branding M.C.O.E. in the public eye.

#### ***What are your interests?***

I truly enjoy the outdoors (hiking, projects around the house, yardwork, fishing, etc.). I also enjoy spending time with family just visiting, laughing and enjoying each other.

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

My wife and best friend Jennifer is very special to me along with our daughters, parents and our entire family. I also appreciate all of the M.C.O.E. employees, the M.C.O.E board, and school employees county-wide as they all make a difference in the lives of our students in the county. As a leader, "I'm only as good as those around me, I appreciate and thank all of you!"

## FROM THE DESK OF:

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

Several CCSESA regions have suggested that we need to devote more time as a group to sharing and discussing LCAP-related issues, ranging from the complexity and length of the LCAPs to the use of concentration and supplemental grant funding. Important related topics are how county offices are organizing themselves to support school district LCAP work and our discussions with the Governor's Administration about obtaining ongoing funding for that work. A significant portion of our General Membership agenda this June in Pasadena will be devoted to LCAP topics.

We are also putting together an LCAP Coordinating Committee that is intended to review issues and prepare guidance materials for county superintendents throughout the state. The committee will

consist of county superintendents and members of BASC, CISC and SPSSC. It will be chaired by Stan Mantooth (Ventura) and we will have technical writing assistance provided by FCMAT. Initially we will be organizing the committee around the three statutory criteria based on which county superintendents approve school district LCAPs. Anne Campbell (San Mateo) will chair the subcommittee on adherence to the State Board of Education template; Stacey Adler (Mono) will chair the subcommittee on sufficient expenditures in the budget to implement the LCAP; and Dave Gordon (Sacramento) will chair the subcommittee on adherence to the State Board of education expenditure regulations.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### June General Membership

**Meeting:** CCSESA General Membership will meet in Pasadena from June 28-30. Registration is now open. Contact JaConya Merchant if you have any questions; [jmerchant@ccsesa.org](mailto:jmerchant@ccsesa.org).

### Upcoming Superintendents

**Symposium:** The 30th Annual Superintendents' Symposium, sponsored by SSDA and ACSA, will be held from July 19-21 in Sacramento. Contact and registration information is available [here](#).

### CCSESA/AESA Annual Award

**Period Opens:** The nomination period for the four CCSESA/AESA annual awards is open. The award categories are available [here](#). Awardees will be recognized at the October General Membership Meeting in Napa County. If you have any questions, or would like to submit a nomination, please contact Christina Marcellus, [cmarcellus@ccsesa.org](mailto:cmarcellus@ccsesa.org).

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## MEANINGFUL PROGRESS ON TOP BUDGET PRIORITIES

Two years ago, the Legislature and Governor enacted the Local Control Funding Formula. Among other things, that legislation fundamentally changed the roles of county superintendents of schools.

Out of that legislation came three pressing needs for county superintendents: (1) financial support for the work related to support and review of school district LCAPs; (2) relief from the "maintenance of effort" requirements for regional occupational centers and programs (ROCP), and; (3) funding to help facilitate an effective transition from the former categorical model for ROCPs and teacher/administrator induction to ongoing operation under the LCFF model. The 2015-16 state budget agreement makes significant progress on each of these issues.

The budget includes \$40 million in one-time funding to county superintendents for LCAP work. That funding will be allocated based a formula of \$30,000 per school district in the county, but not less than \$80,000 for any county, plus the remainder distributed as an equal amount per unit of ADA in each county (our estimate is about \$1.60 per ADA). This funding is one-time, but the Governor's Administration

acknowledges that the work is on-going and has committed to work with CCSESA on an ongoing funding adjustment.

The ROCP maintenance of effort requirement expires at the end of this month. Beginning in July, the new Career Technical Education grant program will be in place for three years. Among other provisions, it requires that applications demonstrate "a three-year plan for continued support of career technical education programs after the grant funding expires." In short, it facilitates the kind of transition plans that are necessary in every county and school district that had previously relied on ROCPs to support quality CTE programs.

The \$500 million for "educator effectiveness" will be allocated based on the number of certificated staff in each school district, county office of education, or charter school in 2014-15. The funds may be expended for, among other things, "beginning teacher and administrator support and mentoring". These funds may be expended over a three-year period, according to a locally adopted plan. Here also, the new funding can facilitate the transition that is necessary as school districts and county offices adjust to supporting this critical work under the LCFF model.

## CREATIVITY AT THE CORE SUMMER INSTITUTE

CCSESA Arts Initiative is pleased to announce that it will offer a summer institute for teachers and administrators on the beautiful campus of Loyola Marymount University (LMU) on August 4-6. This 3-day institute will include presentations and workshops by California's arts and education leaders as part of CCSESA's *Creativity at the Core* program featuring newly developed professional learning modules that link the visual and performing arts with other California

State Standards including Common Core. CCSESA has partnered with CDE, the California Association for Bilingual Educators, and LMU on this innovative new program funded by The California Arts Council and The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation. Arts organizations from across California have partnered with regional art lead county offices of education in creating a suite of valuable tools and resources which will be featured during the institute. For the informational flyer, click [here](#). To register, click [here](#).

## COUNTY SUPERINTENDENTS MOVING ON

Through retirements and relocations, the roster of the 58 county superintendents continues to change. This year is no different. Scotia Holmes-Sanchez, Yuba County Superintendent of Schools, will retire at the end of this month, and Micheline Miglis, Plumas County and Unified School District Superintendent of Schools has accepted a position as superintendent of Carpinteria Unified School District in Santa Barbara. We also announced last month that Del

Norte's Don Olson will retire at the end of June. Mr. Olson will be replaced by Jeff Harris, and Ms. Holmes-Sanchez will be replaced by Josh Harris, currently serving as Yuba County's SELPA Administrator.

Mr. Olson and Ms. Holmes-Sanchez took office in 2011, followed by Ms. Miglis in 2012. We have enjoyed the opportunity to work with them, and wish them nothing but the best in the future.

## EDUCATION WEEK ADDRESSES CALIFORNIA'S DROUGHT

We thought you might want to view an *Education Week* [story](#) and [photo gallery](#) highlighting the challenges that school districts are facing as a result of California's drought.

Lesli Maxwell, Assistant Managing Editor of *Education Week* contacted CCSESA about the story and commented, "Education Week contributing writer Karla Reid explores the hardships that school districts are facing because of the

drought that far exceed having to cut back on water use, though that is a real challenge for educators. In addition to less than ideal conditions for having school--such as 'dust days' in Alpaugh, for example--educators in these small districts are seeing farmworker families under even greater anxiety as worries about their jobs disappearing with the water become more intense. We hope you'll find the story and the powerful images by Exeter-based photographer Matt Black of interest."

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## LEADERSHIP SPOTLIGHT:

### *Mr. Todd Finnell—Imperial County Superintendent of Schools*



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

I've been fortunate in my career to always find myself in a position where I can serve the needs of others. While in college, I worked for the Probation

Department in our local juvenile detention facility. It was there that I began to see myself working with youth and helping them to see a better life for themselves. After finishing college, it was an easy transition for me to begin teaching in the court school program operated by the County Office of Education. It was there that I discovered my passion for the "craft" of teaching. I went on to teach at the elementary, middle, and high school levels before returning to the county office of education. After serving in various administrative roles at the County Office, I left in 2010 to serve as a Vice President for our local community college. This experience was extremely rewarding and provided me with a comprehensive and renewed view of "college readiness" and "college and career" for our schools and students entering higher education. Becoming County Superintendent was never something that I considered until I was approached by people in the education and business community who expressed a need for change. I was honored and humbled to learn that they felt I was the person to bring about this change.

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

I'm driven each day by the desire to make Imperial County a better place to live, learn, and work. When I took office in January, there were some immediate priorities for the organization that needed our collective focus. At the top of the list was stabilizing the budget and addressing the largest deficit in the history of the organization. Just behind this priority was working with our districts, our community, and our employees to redefine our mission and values as an organization. On these two priorities, we are extremely proud to be where we are in only six short months.

Looking ahead to the next several months, we aim to work closely with our community to build out our services and programs to focus on improving the quality of life in our community by

promoting strong families and students who are prepared for life, college, and career. In order to achieve this, we've outlined the following strategic priorities for our organization:

**College and Career Readiness** - Ensuring our students are ready to work and learn in the global economy.

**Comprehensive Student Success** - Meeting the academic, social, emotional, and physical needs of our children.

**Promoting healthy families** - Providing programs and services that enrich the capacity of families to improve their quality of life and contribute to our community.

**Positive inter-agency relationships leading to meaningful collaboration** - Partnering with local and other agencies to strengthen our impact in areas of common purpose.

**Technology in support of teaching, learning, and community advancement** - Establishing technology-rich practices and approaches in support of our efforts.

#### **What are your interests?**

The last few years, as I was completing my doctoral studies, I felt as though many of my interests, hobbies, and "free time" had gone into hibernation. Thankfully, I am just now beginning to reawaken my interests, which include performing music with my country and classic rock bands, DIY building and construction projects, travel, exercise, and supporting my youngest daughter who plays year-round club soccer and has begun searching for colleges.

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

My wife of 25 years, Lillian, has been my best friend and strongest supporter. She makes me a better person each and every day. My three children Kayla, Jonathan, and Camryn (23, 19, and 15) give me purpose and passion for life, and are true reflections of the values and character we had hoped to develop in each of them. Most importantly, my faith keeps me grounded and focused on the things that matter. I am truly blessed to serve as County Superintendent, and am fortunate to be surrounded by others who encourage, challenge, and believe in creating better opportunities for others.

## FROM THE DESK OF:

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

A new report seems to come out almost weekly on LCAPs or the LCAP process. Of all the interested parties, however, it is county superintendents who are truly at "ground zero" of the LCAP process. County superintendents don't just review a sample of LCAPs, and they don't focus on just one issue area or one student population.

Right now we have the unique advantage of county offices throughout the state reviewing school district LCAPs and identifying real-time, real world issues and questions regarding LCAPs and the LCAP process. This information is very important to us, and to the many state policy makers who are seeking CCSESA's perspectives. As you and your staffs identify problems and concerns, and successes, it would be very helpful if you could share those experiences with me, or with Efrain Mercado, who is coordinating our work in this area. I can be reached at [pbirdsall@ccsesa.org](mailto:pbirdsall@ccsesa.org). Efrain can be reached at [emercado@ccsesa.org](mailto:emercado@ccsesa.org).

CCSESA is working on multiple fronts to make sure we both perform our LCAP review role in a consistent, high quality manner, and at the same time move the system toward its intended purpose of a locally-driven system of continuous improvement. These efforts include:

- Ongoing conversations with the State Board of Education, Governor's staff, the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence, and other interested groups about the current LCAP process and needed improvements,
- Working with various foundations to create and support professional networks,
- Development of the LCAP Approval Manual,
- Calibration workshops for county office staff, and
- Formation of the CCSESA LCAP Coordinating Committee, consisting of county superintendents and members from three CCSESA Steering Committees (BASC, CISC, and SPSSC).

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### JCCASAC Mini Conference:

The Juvenile Court, Community and Alternative School Administrators will hold its annual Mini Conference on October 8-9 in Yosemite. To register, click [here](#). Contact Patricia Gutierrez in the Fresno County Office of Education with any questions:

[pgutierrez@fcoe.org](mailto:pgutierrez@fcoe.org).

### August CCSESA Board of

#### Directors Meeting:

The Board of Directors will meet on August 10 in Sacramento.

Please contact JaConya Merchant if you have any questions:

[jmerchant@ccsesa.org](mailto:jmerchant@ccsesa.org).

### Welcome to Amanda

#### Taggart!

CCSESA is pleased to welcome our Communications Assistant, Amanda Taggart. Amanda will provide support on managing CCSESA's various communications platforms, including the website, email blasts, newsletter and other printed publications.

## CCSESA STAFF

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Executive Assistant

### [Alex DeCaprio](#)

Executive Assistant

### [Amanda Taggart](#)

Communications Assistant

## ESEA REAUTHORIZATION BILLS PASS BOTH CHAMBERS

After nearly eight years of stalemate, the House and Senate both passed ESEA reauthorization bills this July. While this is certainly cause for celebration, there is still significant work to be done before the bills reach the President's desk. There are several controversial discrepancies between the Senate's Every Child Achieves Act (ECAA), the House's Student Success Act (SSA), and the President's positions on ESEA reauthorization. Still it is very encouraging that all involved parties appear to want to reach agreement this year. The bills are expected to go to conference in late August or September.

Overall, we are very pleased with the success of the reauthorization movement and the role that the CCSESA Federal Task Force played in moving it forward. Both ECAA and SSA abolish many of the burdensome federal regulations imposed by No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and return control to where it belongs- the local level. Some of the more significant changes to NCLB would

include: elimination of the AYP and the mandate on 100% proficiency by 2013/14; elimination of federally prescribed intervention methods at low-performing schools; easing of mandatory "school-choice" and penalty provisions for low-performing schools; and flexibility for states to adopt their own standards and accountability systems.

Last year, CCSESA created the Federal Task Force in an effort to engage more effectively in D.C. policy making. Since forming, the Task Force has made two highly productive trips to Washington under the leadership of Chair, Gayle Garbolino-Mojica, to advocate for ESEA reauthorization and increased federal funding for schools. Next week, the Federal Task Force will meet to discuss the unresolved issues of ECAA and SSA and to plan CCSESA's next moves as the bills continue through conference negotiations. For additional information on ESEA reauthorization or other federal legislation, please contact Amanda Dickey, [adickey@ccsesa.org](mailto:adickey@ccsesa.org).

## RUBRICS AND ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM DEVELOPED IN TANDEM

The most significant topic at the July State Board meeting was the deadline extension for the Evaluation Rubrics that was granted in the Budget Trailer bill. Not only will this provide more time to complete the rubrics, but it also allows the Rubric and New State Accountability system discussion to occur in parallel. This is beneficial to the state since indications are that the new accountability system will have the eight state priorities and the rubrics at its foundation.

Reflecting the David Conley and Linda Darling Hammond presentations at the May State Board meeting, the discussion at the July meeting has

shifted to key clusters (currently outlined as basic services, graduation, and college and career readiness). The concept is that there are indicators/metrics that can be applied across many of the state priorities and serve as indicators of an LEA's progress towards the clusters.

The State Board expressed hope to have the policy framework for the Rubrics set by the November Board meeting and their alignment to the new state accountability system more clearly defined.

If you have further questions about the discussions at the July State Board meeting please contact Efrain Mercado, [emercado@ccsesa.org](mailto:emercado@ccsesa.org).

## GRANT DOLLARS FLOW CCSESA ARTS INITIATIVE

On July 14, The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation announced that it has authorized funding of a three-year grant in the amount of \$1,100,000. The funding will continue to support CCSESA Arts Initiative work at the national, state, and regional levels to strengthen and expand arts education. In addition, The California Arts Council committed \$150,000 to support the next phase of CCSESA's *Creativity at the Core* program. In addition, The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation in a separate grant committed \$300,000 (\$100,000 for three years) to assist CCSESA Arts Initiative with dissemination of the recently released professional learning modules developed by regional arts lead county

offices of education in partnership with arts organizations from across California. Funding will be provided again to regional arts lead county offices and partner arts organizations.

### Summer Institute Registration Still Open!

CCSESA Arts Initiative is pleased to announce that it will offer a summer institute for teachers and administrators at Loyola Marymount University (LMU) on August 4-6. This 3-day institute will include presentations and workshops by California's arts and education leaders as part of CCSESA's *Creativity at the Core* program. For the informational flyer, click [here](#). To register, click [here](#).

## REPORT IDENTIFIES LCAP EARLY IMPLEMENTATION PROBLEMS

During the LCAP discussion at the June Quarterly Meeting, many superintendents expressed frustration with the LCAP template and the size of LCAP plans. We thought you might be interested in a recent paper released by Michael Fullan on *Problems and Corrections* for the LCAP process,

which identifies three problem areas in early implementation of the LCAP process: 1) Making complexity complicated; 2) overdoing front-end process, and 3) making the plan the goal. The report is available for download [here](#).

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## LEADERSHIP SPOTLIGHT:

### **Ms. Patty Gunderson—Lassen County Superintendent of Schools**



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

My path to County Superintendent was nontraditional. Early in my teaching career, I was very fortunate to have site principals and district superintendents who allowed me to take active roles in site administrative activities. Being able to provide leadership at the site level gave me the incentive to pursue my Administrative credential. I loved teaching but felt I could give students my support in a larger way by becoming a site principal. After spending eleven years as the site principal of a middle school, I returned to the classroom to teach Transitional Kindergarten. I was born and raised in Lassen County, and I have a passion and love for this area and the communities that surround it. The people of Lassen County voted for me and shared an educational vision for their children. I plan to do my very best to help all of the schools in the county achieve that vision.

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

I have always wanted to be a teacher. I was the little girl who played school with her stuffed animals and then later with the neighborhood children. I had some extremely talented, caring, and inspiring teachers in my life, several who encouraged me to follow my dream.

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

I am driven each day to make Lassen County a place where learning truly is a lifelong goal. My passion for doing what is

"right" for all students, individually and collectively, guides me each day.

#### ***What objective do you hope to achieve?***

Working with our community partners and redefining our goals in the next few months will allow us to help meet the needs of our students, not only academically but socially, emotionally, and physically.

Specific goals focus on College and Career Readiness, which includes all areas of learning, vocational trades, and skilled labor, as well as traditional college attendance. Additional coaching and mentoring for teachers and administrators in our county is also a priority.

#### ***What are your interests?***

My interests include reading, playing with my three grandsons, camping and shooting with my husband, and participating in community activities. Relaxation and enjoying life at its simplest is a priority. Coffee on the deck in the spring and summer, and watching it snow in the winter listening to the fire crackle and pop in the wood stove are two of my favorite pastimes.

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

My husband of 25 years, Clayton, has been my biggest supporter and champion. My three children, Gabriel, Keegan, and Kirsten have given me laughter, tears, and even guidance during my career, and my three adorable grandsons, Collin, Beau, and Joey provide my biggest push each day as I see the excitement for life and learning in their eyes.

## FROM THE DESK OF:

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

Late last week PACE and the USC Rossier School of Education released a poll that showed 63% of voters support reauthorization of at least a portion of the Proposition 30 temporary taxes that have allowed California to eliminate its deficits and invest in education. As you recall, Proposition 30 provided for temporary increases of the sales tax and the income tax on high income taxpayers.

The poll also showed that the percentage of voters who believe public schools are improving increased from only 7% in 2012 to 17% now. During that same period, the percentages saying the schools had gotten worse declined from 45% in 2012 to 34% now.

These topics are particularly relevant because the temporary tax increases will begin to expire in 2016-17. Specifically, the sales tax increase will expire over 2016-17 and 2017-18, and the personal income tax increase will expire over 2018-19 and 2019-20.

The general assumption among political analysts is that an extension of Proposition 30 (or some variation) will not be placed

on the ballot by the Legislature. That means it will need to go through the initiative process, which now requires a long lead time.

A proposal needs to be formally reviewed and approved for circulation, then signatures need to be collected, and the signatures counted in time to appear on the ballot. In fact, to place a measure on the November, 2016 statewide ballot, a group would need to start in September, 2015 (now) to allow the maximum time for each of these steps.

In other words, the clock is ticking. Given the importance of recent increases in funding for schools, this issue is critical to schools across the state. Polling and discussions are actively taking place and we expect the October General Membership meeting will be an excellent opportunity to discuss these issues in greater depth.

Note: You can find the PACE/USC Rossier poll at <http://edpolicyinca.org/node/534>

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### New Superintendents

**Appointed:** Mike Martin will replace Gary Jones as Modoc County Superintendent of Schools on December 8, 2015, and Terry Oestreich has been appointed acting superintendent of Plumas County Office of Education to replace Micheline Miglis. Gary Jones has accepted a position as Associate Superintendent with the Alameda County Office of Education, and Micheline Miglis is the new superintendent of Carpinteria Unified School District in Santa Barbara.

### October General Membership Meeting:

CCSESA General Membership will meet in Napa from October 4-6. Registration is now open. Contact JaConya Merchant if you have any questions: [jmerchant@ccsesa.org](mailto:jmerchant@ccsesa.org).

### Green Schools Summit 2015:

Get the latest on topics ranging from Prop 39 best practices to water conservation, funding and incentives and curriculum. For details on the concurrent session program on October 29-30, [click here](#).

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### [Sandra Morales](#)

Assistant Executive Director

### [Sarah Anderberg](#)

Arts Initiative Director

### [Efrain Mercado](#)

Policy Director

### [Amanda Dickey](#)

Project Coordinator

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### [Amanda Taggart](#)

Communications Assistant

## TWO WEEKS AND FOUR BILLS TO GO

Although hundreds of bills are still active in the state legislative process, four remaining bills are of particular interest for CCSESA. Friday, August 28, was the last day for the Senate and Assembly Appropriations Committees to pass bills out of committee. The measures that passed are headed to the Assembly and Senate floors, while the bills held in committee are now effectively dead for the year. The Legislature has until September 11 to act on bills, and the last day for the Governor to sign or veto bills is October 11.

Of the four bills, three seem likely to reach the Governor's desk. The fate of the fourth is less certain. **SB 799 (Hill)** was amended on August 20, proposing various reforms of the school district reserve cap. SB 799 is sponsored by CSBA and has broad support among public interest and education management groups including CCSESA. However, no agreement has been announced with legislative leadership or the Governor.

The other bills of interest moving through the legislative process include:

**AB 854 (Weber):** Foster Youth - This bill would make changes in the Foster Youth Services Coordinating Program. The foster youth grant would provide supplemental funding to county offices of education, or a consortium of county offices of education, to coordinate and ensure that local educational agencies within its jurisdiction are coordinating services to foster youth pupils, with the purpose of ensuring positive educational outcomes. The state budget included a \$10 million augmentation for these programs, contingent on legislation being enacted.

**SB 172 (Liu):** CAHSEE Suspension - This bill would suspend the high school exit exam requirement as a condition of receiving a high school diploma through July 2018. Students who have met all other high school graduation requirements will be able to graduate.

**AB 141 (Bonilla):** This bill would require local educational agencies that hire a new teacher to provide them with a beginning teacher induction program and prohibits them from charging the teacher a fee to participate in the program.

## CAASPP RELEASE IS AROUND THE CORNER

The long awaited release of the CAASPP results is finally within reach. There have two major components of this release that are occurring in parallel. One component is the public release of the CAASPP results that will allow the public to review the results of Counties, Districts, and schools across the state as well as by subgroup.

Currently the public release date is tentatively scheduled for September 9<sup>th</sup>. LEAs will have a chance to review the results as a part of an embargoed private preview that is tentatively scheduled for September 3<sup>rd</sup>. The private preview information will be sent to your LEA CAASPP Coordinator. This preview will allow the LEAs to review the data for errors as well as to prepare the appropriate press releases for the county, districts, etc.

The second component of the release is the shipment of the Individual Score Reports to districts. These shipments began in mid-August and will continue into September. The districts are then required to send out the Individual Score Reports within 20 working days to the student's parent or guardian. These individual score reports will likely be the first tangible piece of information that many parents and communities will have with regard to California's new standards and assessment system. There will likely be a significant level of support needed by districts, schools, and educators to help explain the new reports to students, parents, and the community. There have been a number of resources developed by CDE and County Offices that can be used to support the rollout of these reports. Contact Efrain Mercado, at [emercado@ccsesa.org](mailto:emercado@ccsesa.org) for further information.

## LCAP COMMITTEE WORKING ON GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

The LCAP Coordinating Committee (led by Stan Mantooth) has been hard at work discussing the emerging trends and issues that County Superintendents and their offices are grappling with as they support, review and approve LCAPs. The initial phase of this work will result in practical guidance for County Superintendents that can be applied in their local context.

Some topics the committee is working on are how to support meaningful stakeholder engagement and developing year round support for districts to help with the implementation of

the LCAP's Goals, Actions and Services. The ultimate goal of this committee is to ensure that the LCAP process does not become a burdensome compliance document but instead helps to maximize the LCAP as a vehicle for locally driven continuous improvement.

The committee is working to prepare a draft document for review and discussion at the October General Membership Meeting.

If you have any comments or questions please contact CCSESA's Policy Director, Efrain Mercado, at [emercado@ccsesa.org](mailto:emercado@ccsesa.org).

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## CREATIVITY AT THE CORE SUMMER INSTITUTE RECAP

Over 100 administrators and teachers attended the Creativity at the Core Summer Institute at Loyola Marymount University on August 4, 5, and 6 in Los Angeles sponsored by CCSESA Arts Initiative. Representative regional arts leads and their partner arts organization leads provided

breakout sessions which focused on the Creativity at the Core professional learning modules developed through funding from The California Arts Council and the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation. To access the Summer Institute presentations and meeting materials, please click [here](#).

**LEADERSHIP SPOTLIGHT:*****Dr. Jim Brescia — San Luis Obispo County Superintendent of Schools******What led you to become County Superintendent?***

Since receiving my doctorate, my writing and research interests have included school leadership, instructional leadership and problem-solving-based training of educational leaders. My predecessor, Julian Crocker and I have worked together for almost 25 years both at the district, county, and university levels, so I was fairly familiar with the position's importance and broad reach. Consequently, he asked me to consider serving as the county superintendent after his retirement. I discussed the situation with my family, the district superintendents, community college president, and local university president. After receiving their support, I decided to run for the office.

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

While completing my undergraduate degree at the University of California San Diego and preparing to enroll in a Clinical Psychology Pd.D., I was required to participate in a year-long internship program. After completing about three-quarters of the internship, I discovered that I did not want to become a therapist and began to ask myself, "What now?" My family offered suggestions such as to become an engineer (like my father), or a priest (grandma's wish), or enter the human resources arena like my mother. I turned to a former teacher from my high school for advice. Brother Jerome had dedicated his life to teaching mathematics and had been the one who encouraged me to work in the math lab at my high school and tutor other students. He had a way of responding to my questions with another question designed to make me think. Brother Jerry asked me why I continued to work in the math lab long after my required elective was completed. I responded that I enjoyed helping others and that as a tutor my passion for learning was nurtured. He simply responded that he thought I had my answer. The next week I

applied to the teacher education program and completed my credential a year later.

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

I believe that the children who sit in our classrooms today are our future. They will determine what type of world we inherit as the stewardship for humanity passes from our hands to theirs. Schools and educators have a daunting mission to ensure that our future is one of promise and hope. Education is a more than simply a profession, but a calling that must be approached with respect, dignity, dedication and accountability.

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

I see County Offices as strategically positioned to lead throughout the county in strengthening our profession. In collaboration with universities, districts and the community, I hope to assist in rebuilding our humanities-based programs, mentoring the next generation of educational leaders, providing resources for our underserved and vulnerable populations, as well as maintaining good stewardship of taxpayer monies.

***What are your interests?***

I enjoy teaching organizational theory, educational leadership, educational finance, school site leadership, and instructional evaluation. My writing and research interests include school leadership, instructional leadership, and problem-solving-based training of educational leaders. I have peer-reviewed articles published in both national and international journals. My wife and I enjoy traveling, spending time with family and cooking. I am an avid chess player and can often be found in local coffee shops waiting for a willing chess partner.

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

My family, friends, fellow parishioners and colleagues make living on the central coast very enjoyable.

**FROM THE DESK OF:**

**Peter Birdsall**, CCSESA Executive Director

"Consistency" and "capacity" are the two words that keep recurring as we discuss with others the experience working with county offices during this second year of the LCAP process. What is CCSESA doing to support consistency and capacity of county offices in their critical role of supporting LCAP development and providing LCAP review and approval?

This question was an important focus of the State Board of Education discussion earlier this month and we have heard the same questions from some school district superintendents through ACSA.

The formation of the LCAP Coordinating Committee, consisting of county superintendents and representatives from BASC, CISC and SPSSC, is an important part of our answer. The purpose of the

committee is to allow critical issues to be reviewed across the steering committees of CCSESA, and with county superintendents directly engaged in these questions. Documents and policy positions of CCSESA will continue to be approved by the CCSESA Board of Directors.

LCAP topics will be an important part of our agenda at the October General Membership meeting. This year we need to provide guidance and support to strengthen the consistency and capacity of county offices, while at the same time doing the development and policy work to revise the LCAP template and adopt evaluation rubrics, so that the LCAP process truly becomes a vehicle for continuous improvement rather than a new name for another compliance document.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Digital Instructional Materials:** CCSESA and the ACLU have collaborated to develop a guidance letter entitled "[Digital Instructional Materials and the Williams Sufficiency Standard.](#)" It is intended to help outline different approaches by which LEAs can meet the sufficiency requirement of Williams AND adopt digital materials.

Many LEAs will be looking to adopt new instructional materials for ELA/ELD after the State Board of Education takes action in November on the recommendations from the Instructional Quality Commission.

**October General Membership Meeting:** CCSESA General Membership will meet in Napa from October 4-6. Registration is now open. Contact JaConya Merchant if you have any questions: [jmerchant@ccsesa.org](mailto:jmerchant@ccsesa.org).

**JCCASAC Mini Conference:** The Juvenile Court, Community and Alternative School Administrators will hold its annual Mini Conference on October 8-9 in Yosemite. To register, click [here](#). Contact Patricia Gutierrez in the Fresno County Office of Education with any questions: [pgutierrez@fcoe.org](mailto:pgutierrez@fcoe.org).

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## AESA'S EDUCATORS' CALL TO ACTION CONFERENCE



Pictured: Amanda Dickey (CCSESA), Congressman Jared Huffman (CD-2), and Gayle Garbolina-Mojica (Placer)

Last week, representatives from CCSESA traveled to Washington, D.C. for AESA's Educators' Call to Action Conference. CCSESA joined with state education associations from across the nation in a three-day lobbying effort for increased Title I funding and ESEA reauthorization. Although not much progress has been made on ESEA since Congress adjourned in July, rumors are abuzz on the Hill that members will be appointed to the conference committee in October and will soon

begin the process of aligning the Senate and House bills. Conversations with Senators Lamar Alexander and Patty Murray affirmed that they remain optimistic that ESEA will be reauthorized this year; however, members of the House expressed less confidence, citing significant political issues between and within the parties. One thing is certain - in order to achieve reauthorization in 2015, there will need to be a strong bipartisan effort in the House.

While in D.C., CCSESA had the privilege of presenting AESA's 2015 Legislator of the Year award to Congressman Jared Huffman. Congressman Huffman played an active role earlier this year in obtaining Secure Rural Schools funding and is currently leading the effort in the House for full IDEA funding. CCSESA and AESA are grateful for the Congressman's leadership on behalf of California's students and will continue to work closely with his office on K-12 issues.

## ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK TAKES SHAPE

The September State Board of Education (SBE) meeting provided a comprehensive look at the state's accountability framework.

The "Mega-Accountability" item was presented on the second day of the meeting and included presentations by SBE staff, WestEd, CDE staff, the CORE Districts and CCSESA representatives. Peter Birdsall and Dave Gordon (Sacramento) presented on LCAP Year Two learning and their presentation was very well received by the SBE members, staff, and audience.

At this point it is evident that the LCFF Evaluation Rubrics will be the foundation for the state's new Accountability system. SBE staff and WestEd presented a significant amount of work on the framework for the both the Evaluation Rubrics and the new State Accountability System.

CCSESA is looking forward to the October SBE memos and November SBE meeting to review the implementation plan.

Click [here](#) to watch Day Two of the SBE meeting.

## SBE HOLDS OFF ON ADDRESSING ESEA SCIENCE ASSESSMENT

One of the key items originally scheduled for the September State Board of Education (SBE) meeting wasn't even discussed at the meeting. CDE's ESEA Science Assessment recommendation to the board was pulled from the agenda at the eleventh hour. There were concerns expressed by many in the Science community regarding the initial content focus being on biological sciences for the high school assessment. The CISC Science subcommittee was engaged and they also expressed this

concern and highlighted that this path would have wide-ranging ramifications on Science instruction in our state. There was broad-based concern that having the high school assessment focused on only biological sciences would be the antithesis of the Next Generation Science Standards and that there would be a narrowing of the curriculum.

CCSESA will continue to engage our CISC Science Subcommittee and others that are interested to help identify the best path forward for our state.

## USING CAASPP TO IMPROVE TEACHING AND LEARNING

In 2013, when CCSESA supported the legislation implementing the new student assessment program, a key reason for our support was the commitment to making interim and formative assessment resources more readily available for the purposes of improving teaching and learning.

It is encouraging that CDE has asked the Sacramento and Ventura County Offices of Education to design and implement a series of institutes on this important topic.

The first "Train the Trainer" session for County Offices of Education will occur in October. Click [here](#) to view the 2015-16 Train the Trainer Calendar.

This is the critical next step in making the assessment system meaningful—helping local educators learn practical strategies to use the CAASPP system to improve instruction, with a focus on interim assessments and the Digital Library of formative assessment resources. If you have any comments or questions, please contact [emercado@ccsesa.org](mailto:emercado@ccsesa.org)

## REGIONAL ARTS LEADERS CONVENE IN SACRAMENTO

On September 16, CCSESA and the California Department of Education convened arts leaders from county offices. Presenters included Dr. Kathryn Catania, VAPA Subcommittee Chair and Deputy Superintendent from Fresno COE,

Steve Venz from Orange COE, and Kristine Alexander, Executive Director of The California Arts Project. County Office leaders shared exciting plans for 2015-16 in support of arts education.

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## 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.

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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.

**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 7<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> 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.

## CONGRATULATIONS TO CCSESA'S 2015 AWARD WINNERS



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

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

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## LEADERSHIP SPOTLIGHT:

**Mr. Josh Harris— Yuba County Superintendent of Schools**

**What led you to become County Superintendent?** I came to be the county superintendent in a roundabout way. I was working as the SELPA Director for my county when the current superintendent decided she was ready to retire. This job was not on my “To Do” list; however, since my entire educational career has been in Yuba County, I felt I had a good background to take on this immense challenge. I learn something new everyday and am able to work with an outstanding staff of dedicated people. This is a very challenging job, but the staff makes the Yuba County Office of Education a great place to work.

**What inspired you to enter the field of education?** When I was in middle school in the 1970’s, my school was chosen to begin integrating students with disabilities. These students became my friends and it was so natural to work with them side-by-side in class. I was not happy with my chosen profession after being an attorney for 8 years, so I completely switched careers to something I thought would be more in line with my personality: I became a special education teacher. I haven’t regretted a single moment since then. Education is my passion. My career change proved to me that if you follow your heart, you can be happy every day.

**Do you have a particular goal that drives you?** My goal is to increase the number and variety of opportunities for Yuba County students so that they can lead a productive and successful life. I have worked with Yuba County families for 17 years – I want the best for their children.

**What objectives do you hope to achieve?** We are improving how we meet our goals through Professional Learning Communities. Using that structure, we want to increase achievement at our various school sites, add additional opportunities to our county charter school and increase opportunities for the unique learning needs of students.

**What are your interests?** Reading fiction and non-fiction and spending time with my family take up most of my time outside of work. I have trained and competed in 2 different martial arts disciplines over the last 14 years and am trying to make time to be more involved again. My wife tries to talk me into doing Yoga instead.

**Who are the special people in your life?** The special people in my life are my wife Dawn and my children Alex, Joseph, Kate and Nick. My extended family and my friends are also important in my life. The educators in Yuba County who have been my mentors (Sally Sokoloski, Dennis Bissel, Ric Teagarden and Scotia Holmes-Sanchez) will always be special to me.

## FROM THE DESK OF:

**Peter Birdsall, CCSESA Executive Director**

This issue of the CCSESA newsletter reflects both the impressive accomplishments of the year just ending and the exciting possibilities for the coming year. After years of frustrating impasse, ESEA was finally reauthorized when the President signed the Every Student Succeeds Act into law on December 10 (see related article on page 2). In 2016 we now move to working with the State Board of Education, California and U.S. Departments of Education, and other interested groups and agencies, to develop a coherent and effective accountability and support system for California’s schools.

We began December with news that the Bechtel Foundation has approved a planning grant for us to develop a 3-year plan to support quality implementation of the California math and science standards in grades K-8 (see related article on page 2). This represents an increasing awareness by

foundations and policy-makers that county superintendents are the most direct, ongoing support and connection with local school districts throughout the state. It also represents a recognition of the importance of collaborative efforts to build capacity and consistency across all the counties in California.

Finally, at its December meeting the CCSESA Board approved the first edition of the LCAP Guide for county superintendents. Scheduled for release in January, this guide builds on the lessons of the fiscal accountability system and creates an important mechanism for us to continue to share issues and effective practices. A common term in Sacramento policy discussions now is “continuous improvement.” CCSESA can be proud both of the progress made in 2015 and the potential for continuing improvement in the coming year.



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### January Quarterly Meeting:

The next Quarterly Meeting will take place at the Monterey Plaza Hotel from January 25-27. The last day to register is January 11. Please contact [JaConya Merchant](#) with any questions.

### CCSESA Joins the California Equity Leadership Alliance:

The California Equity Leadership Alliance (CELA) is a new collaborative effort made up of organizations that are committed to promoting policies and practices that eliminate gaps in opportunity, access, and achievement throughout the state. For more details, [click here](#).

**In Case You Missed It:** CCSESA has released a number of spotlight stories featuring innovative programs established by county offices of education. [Click here](#) to read more.

## CCSESA STAFF

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## EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT

Nearly eight years after the expiration of "No Child Left Behind" (NCLB), CCSESA is excited that the Elementary and Secondary Education Act was reauthorized last week. On December 9, 2015, after largely bi-partisan votes in both Houses (359-64 in the House, 85-12 in the Senate), the President signed the "Every Student Succeeds Act" (ESSA) into law. This bill is the result of years of advocacy by state and national education associations, including CCSESA, and impressive leadership by Senate Education Chair Lamar Alexander (R- TN) and Co-chair Patty Murray (D-WA). CCSESA is proud of the role our members played in urging reauthorization and wants to thank all those who participated in the Federal Task Force, joined one of our three advocacy trips to Washington D.C., or made calls to their local Congressman or Senator.

Among other things, ESSA eliminates the Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) standards, repeals many of the federally mandated interventions imposed by NCLB, and scales back the federal

government's role in local decision-making. Under ESSA, states will be required to identify and improve student learning at the lowest performing 5% of Title I schools and those schools where the graduation rate falls below 67%; however, LEAs will have the authority to develop and implement their own comprehensive support and improvement plans while the states provides technical assistance and support. While there are still many details to be ironed out, particularly with regard to the state's accountability system plan, CCSESA is pleased overall with the compromise achieved by ESSA and looks forward to the additional flexibility afforded by the bill.

As we move into 2016, we anticipate extensive discussions with the State Board of Education and other interested parties regarding California's implementation plan. In addition, we expect that our federal advocacy trip this coming spring will focus in large part on the implementing policies and regulations that must be adopted by the U.S. Department of Education. We will provide additional information on trip dates and details as they become available.

## BUILDING CAPACITY FOR STANDARDS SUPPORT

We are excited to announce that CCSESA has received a planning grant from the S.D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation to develop a long-term (3 year) plan to build County Office of Education (COE) capacity to deliver impactful science and math professional development to district partners with a high degree of consistency and quality across the state. This work will focus on grades K-8.

Potential components of the statewide system of support would be:

**County Office of Education Communities of Practice for Math and Science:** (1) Include representative content leaders and experts from each COE, with the support of experts from other organizations and agencies as appropriate to the issues being discussed at each meeting. (2) Meet quarterly for two days to receive professional learning and develop action plans for how county offices can most effectively work with the school districts in their jurisdiction to strengthen implementation of the math and science standards. (3) Serve as a feedback loop from the field to the state and other organizations and agencies at the state policy level regarding resources, materials, policies, etc. (4) Identify and share common problems and exemplary

practices from across the state. (5) Build the consistency of practice across the state for COEs delivering math and science professional learning. (6) Focus on strategies to increase/strengthen local use of Interim and Summative Assessment as well as Formative Assessment practices.

### Math and Science Collaboration Committees:

(1) Collaborate with the California State Board of Education and California Department of Education to establish common language and understanding with a common message for the state. (2) Engage with districts to determine the needs from the field. (3) Detail the topics that need to be covered in resource development and training and the timelines for those activities. (4) Work to connect the curriculum/instruction issues and messages with the assessment issues and messages, so that they reflect a coherent statewide implementation plan.

Our goal is to develop the long term plan to submit it to the foundation by the middle of April 2016 for potential funding. This project will be led by Efrain Mercado (CCSESA) with the support of CISC members- Valerie Chrisman (Ventura), Sue Stickel (Sacramento), Ellen Barger (Santa Barbara) and Jane Steinkamp (San Joaquin). All county offices will have an opportunity to participate and offer feedback and recommendations to the long term plan that is submitted.

## ARTS INITIATIVE UPDATE

On January 29, 2016 CCSESA Arts Initiative and Sacramento COE School of Education, in partnership with the California Department of Education, will be hosting **Creativity at the Core: Integrating the Visual and Performing Arts with English Language Arts** - a Professional Learning Offering which will take place at the Sacramento COE Conference Center.

This event provides an opportunity for administrators and teachers to work with national arts integration expert, Lisa Donavon and receive a copy of her book. This innovative professional learning day will help you build academic achievement, enthusiasm for learning, and student motivation. View the event flyer [here](#), and you may register [here](#).

## IT'S TIME FOR SUMMER... ALMOST

At our quarterly meeting in April, we heard an update from the *Summer Matters* campaign, including the exciting momentum of summer programming in districts and county offices across California. This past summer, more and more districts invested in innovative summer learning programs and helped tens of thousands of students stay engaged and energized about learning all summer long.

County Superintendents can play a helpful role in this decision-making process by providing information and resources about strategies – like summer learning – that meet district and LCFF goals.

In the next few weeks, each County Superintendent will receive an email from the *Summer Matters* campaign containing new helpful resources for summer learning.

For more information, please contact [Katie Brackenridge](#) at the *Summer Matters* campaign.

Though it doesn't feel like summer, now is the time for districts and county offices to pick their

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