The Association of California School Administrators

is the largest umbrella organization for school leaders in the United States, serving more than 17,000 California educators.

ACSA's top priority is advocating for public school students in kindergarten through grade 12, as well as adult learners. Our mission is to be the driving force of education in California and beyond.

ACSA Region 17: 1,200 Members Strong; The Place to Be, The Place to Belong, The Place to Become!

Spring 2023

Pages 1-3
AOY 2023: Celebration of Excellence
Page 2
ACSA Reg. 17: Then and Now... and Into the Future
Page 3
AOY 2023: Photo Collage
Page 4
ACSA Business Partners Spotlight
Page 5
Sylvia Mendez: Read Across America Week
Page 6
ACSA Reg. 17 & OCSBA Joint Dinner
Page 7
ACSA Reg. 17 12th Annual Conference
Page 8
Retirement Committee Moulton Museum
Reg. 17 Introduces Network Only Nights
Page 9
Classified Leaders ACSA Membership
Page 10
La Veta Vikings GATE Success
Page 11-12
Investing in Leaders
Page 12
ESS: Student Recipients
Page 13
Vista View MS: School to Watch
Page 14
La Habra CSD: Dream Big, Shine Bright
Random ACSA Kindness
Page 15
ACSA Legal Support Team
Page 16
ACSA Corporate Business Partners

Follow Us! Like Us!

For more information about ACSA Region 17 contact:
Jan Billings, Ph.D.
janicebillings6@gmail.com
or Wendy Rincon
acsaregion17@gmail.com
acsa17.com

Administrators of the Year 2023

By Dr. Amy Nagy

On May 8, 2023, we held our annual *Celebration of Excellence* to honor our Administrator of the Year recipients. The dinner and awards event was held at the Irvine Marriott. In addition to the honorees, the room was filled with colleagues, families, ACSA Board Members, and ACSA Business Partners. We had almost 300 people in attendance!

Each year, ACSA recognizes a select group of individuals for their outstanding performance and achievement as school administrators in a variety of categories. We had over sixty leaders that were nominated by colleagues in their districts. It is not easy to select just one recipient from each category when the nominees are all so amazing! Our nineteen recipients were selected with the following criteria in mind: strong support for the school management team; exceptional leadership in managing school programs; commitment to educational quality and student achievement; creativity and innovation in dealing with the challenges in public education; and a commitment to professional growth.


Dr. Jan Billings

We closed the event honoring Dr. Jan Billings. As a life-long educator, friend, mentor, and legendary school leader in Orange County, Dr. Billings has served in this field for over 60 years, including 20 years as a teacher, 20 years as an administrator, and 20 years as a leader and Executive Director of ACSA Region 17. More importantly, throughout her

Continued on Page 2



2023 ADMINISTRATORS OF THE YEAR

Elementary Principal
Kathy Martin (Saddleback USD)

Secondary Principal
Laura Rubio (Fullerton Joint UHSD)

Special Education Administrator
Dr. Sue Singh (Orange USD)

Business Services Administrator
Scott Martin
(Centralia School District)

Technology Administrator
Michael Morrison
(Laguna Beach USD)

Classified Champion of the Year
Gabriel Camberos (not pictured)
(Santa Ana USD)

Superintendent
Dr. Robert Pletka
(Fullerton School District)

Middle Grades Principal
Dr. Christa Glembocki
(Huntington Beach City SD) *

Secondary Co-Administrator
Dr. Monica Luther (Orange USD) *

Curriculum & Instruction Administrator
Dr. Julienne Lee
(Fullerton School District)

Central Office Administrator
Christopher Michael Knowland, Jr.
(Los Alamitos USD)

Elementary Co-Administrator
Agnes Vasquez (Tustin USD)

Career Technical Education Administrator
Don Isbell
(Santa Ana USD)

Student Services Administrator
Elsie Briseno Simonoski, Ph.D.
(Buena Park SD)

Personnel/HR Administrator
Dr. Chad Hammitt
(Fullerton School District)

Continuation / Educational Option Administrator
Jose Lara (Anaheim UHSD)

Professor of Education
Dr. *Marilou Ryder (University of Massachusetts Global)*

Valuing Diversity Award
Dr. Sonia Rodarte Llamas
(Santa Ana USD)

Tracy Gaffey Award
Dr. Jan Billings
(Director of ACSA Region 17)

*Denotes State ACSA AOY Winner

ACSA Region 17: Then and Now…*and Into the Future*

By Dr. Jan Billings,
Retiring ACSA 17 Executive Director

I suppose it is natural to look in the "rearview mirror" when certain parts of your life are coming to an end. But, as I have just learned, the analogy goes on to say that rearview mirrors are small, but windshields are big. So, for myself, and for ACSA 17, the windshield is our view.

It is interesting to note, however, that this organization did not always look like this. So, here is a little history. In May of 1971, the presidents of seven statewide associations from varied professional groups formed an umbrella organization which they named the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA). It became the first operative organization of united administrators in the nation. Today, ACSA, with 17,000 members, is the largest umbrella organization for school leaders in the United States. It serves administrators in 19 regions throughout California – from Eureka to San Diego – each uniquely different in demographics, geography, and size of population.

In 1972, the founding Executive Director of ACSA 17, (then called a Region Consultant), was Tracy Gaffey, a former teacher, principal, and superintendent in Orange County. At that time, Tracy was a professor of School Administration at Cal State Fullerton and was the instructor for many of us who went on to be administrators. He was a dedicated mentor to all of us.


Dr. Carol Hansen and Dr. Jan Billings

ACSA was, and is, run from Sacramento and did not have as many regions as there are now. ACSA 17 was small and basically a network for administrators to get together and share ideas and build camaraderie. As Orange County grew, so did ACSA 17. When Tracy retired in 2002, some of the events we recognize today had been inaugurated: Administrator of the Year, Every Student Succeeding, a unique program of Joint Dinners/Speakers with Orange County School Boards Associations and more.

When Tracy and the ACSA 17 Board asked if I was interested in succeeding him, I had just retired as superintendent of the Anaheim Union High School District and thought it would be a good way to stay connected to the profession. As I look into that "rearview mirror," it was one of the best professional decisions of my life. These twenty years have been a gift of getting to know and admire the many outstanding administrators in Orange County. As I often remind them, they are the best educated, most dedicated and caring leaders anywhere! In these twenty years, I have seen many different approaches to successful leadership, but a basic commonality is the absolute commitment to providing the best educational experience for our students. I have seen, first hand, the true courage, tenacity, patience and understanding, most notably, during the last few historically challenging years. And I could not be prouder to have been in their midst!

Through the work of outstanding teams of leaders, ACSA 17 is now an organization of over 1000 members providing high quality professional development; programs celebrating students and new/aspiring/seasoned administrators; and valuable opportunities for leaders to interact and learn with and from their colleagues across Orange County.

As I retire from ACSA, my vision is focused on the "windshield" – family, volunteering, exploring this state and country, and who knows what else? The new generation of leaders will take Region 17 to unimaginable heights as they strive to provide the children of Orange County and California an educational experience second to none.

I pass the baton to one of those amazing leaders, Dr. Carol Hansen, recently retired superintendent of the Ocean View School District, who will help lead the ACSA 17 team into the future.

AOY 2023 Continued from Page 1

career, Jan has been committed to leadership and work that best serves our students, especially those students who have overcome obstacles or have been unable to advocate for themselves. To honor her legacy, Region 17 was proud to announce that beginning in 2024, we will award the *Dr. Janice Billings Award*. This special award will celebrate and honor an administrator who demonstrates exceptional leadership in the area of student advocacy, especially in advocating for students who face exceptional circumstances and obstacles.

This special group of educators thrives on the challenge of educating today's children for a future we can't even imagine. They help students realize their dreams and instill in them the hope of a strong and stable future. They develop strong connections and relationships with others and find innovative and creative ways to support the needs of the students and staff they serve. They are dedicated professionals who have earned our respect and admiration. This was truly an outstanding group of administrators and a wonderful night of celebration!


Agnes Vasquez


ACSA Board


Dr. Chad Hammitt


Dr. Christa Glembocki and her family


Chris Knowland


Don Isbell


Elsie Simonoski


Dr. Marilou Ryder


Dr. Carol Hansen & Dr. Jan Billings


Gabriel Camberos


Raphael Plascencia & Dr. Jan Billings


Dr. Jan Billings & her Family


Kathy Martin


Jose Lara


Laura Rubio




Dr. Julienne Lee


Dr. Monica Luther




Dr. Robert Pletka


Michael Morrison


Scott Martin


Dr. Sonia Llamas




Dr. Sue Singh

ACSA Business Partners Spotlight

By Jennifer Shepard
ACSA Region 17 Business Partner Director

ACSA Region 17 is proud to announce the addition of two new business partners who are committed to supporting school and district leaders throughout Orange County! We are thrilled to welcome Equitable Advisors and Stone Soup Child Care Programs to our group of esteemed organizations who partner with ACSA Region 17 to support high quality administrator professional learning, networking and special events such as, the recognition of students via the Every Student Succeeding event and recognition of leadership via the Administrator of the Year banquet. Please read on to get to know our new partners and familiarize yourself with all of our incredible partners listed on the final page of this newsletter so you can be sure to welcome them with a hello, interest email, and/or a connection at an upcoming ACSA Region 17 activity or event!!!

Equitable Advisors

Our new partner, Equitable Advisors, operates in the financial services industry, specifically to help educators in California be prepared for retirement, enroll in college savings plans, tackle loan forgiveness, and provide holistic financial planning at large. Equitable strives to ensure that every educator is not only set up for future financial health and stability, but also maintains a knowledge of the products and strategies they are implementing for personal growth in financial literacy. We are most grateful to our new partner Equitable Advisors for joining forces with ACSA Region 17 this year.

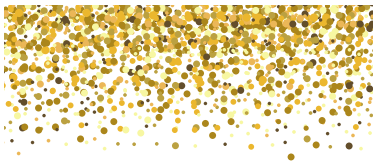
Stone Soup Child Care Programs

Stone Soup Child Care ("Stone Soup"), operating since 1985, is a non-profit 501©(3) organization that provides before and after school child care in communities and is looking forward to building relationships across Orange County. Known for its low staff to student ratio of 14:1 (and 10:1 for TK and Ks), the curriculum includes a strong homework component, art and science programs, enrichment activities and field trips during the full day summer sessions. Stone Soup is a fee-based program but the goal is to provide this program for all children regardless of ability to pay.

Stone Soup takes its name from the Napoleonic fairy tale that tells the story of how a nearly destitute community pooled its resources. Three starving soldiers donate a pot and a stone while each villager contributes an ingredient for soup resulting in a collaboration benefiting everyone. In the same manner, Stone Soup collaborates with school/district leaders and communities by combining: 1) its curriculum, training and program management services, 2) on-school site resources provided by partnering school districts, 3) tuition contributions from participating families based on ability to pay, and 4) foundation funding that bridges the financial gap.

For 38 years, Stone Soup has grown into an important resource in the Los Angeles area and other communities for young students and their families and has received national recognition from the U.S. Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, UCLA and The Rand Corporation. Stone Soup "works" because of administrator involvement and through this combined effort we are able to enhance the educational goals of the schools and the students.

Stone Soup is honored and delighted to be accepted as a partner of ACSA Region 17, and looks forward to networking with other partners to further enhance the educational experiences of students and to introduce the Stone Soup Programs to school districts in Orange County.





CIVIL RIGHTS LEADER SYLVIA MENDEZ AMPLIFIES "READ ACROSS AMERICA" WEEK WITH MESSAGE OF KINDNESS & INCLUSION AT EMERY ELEMENTARY

Q and A with *Mendez, et al v. Westminster SD (1947)* plaintiff's daughter, Sylvia Mendez, gives Buena Park students a personal, behind-the-scenes look at the case that desegregated California schools

Buena Park, CA — The third graders who file into the library at Charles G. Emery Elementary School are dressed like storybook characters in honor of Read Across America week. They sit expectantly in rows on the carpet facing the woman in the chair up front. Sylvia Mendez smiles at them and scans her audience. "How old are you?," she asks. "Eight!" "Nine!" the students shout out. She nods and leans forward: "I was about your age when the story that I'm about to tell you took place." With the illustrations from *Separate is Never Equal* by Duncan Tonatium as her guide, Ms. Mendez describes what it felt like when the white elementary school near her home refused to enroll her, and she was forced to trek to the school for non-white children further down the road. She remembers looking through the fence and crying over the beautiful playground that she wasn't allowed to play on.

The children nod. Although unfamiliar with the court case, this particular indignity is something they can understand. In the end, her story holds a powerful message for these students: be kind and use your voice when others need help.



Sylvia Mendez poses with Emery Elementary librarian Mrs. Bone.

Most Californians recognize the story of *Mendez v. Westminster*, the landmark court case that integrated California schools seven years before *Brown v. Board of Education* integrated the rest of the country's schools. Most of us know the basics: Sylvia Mendez and her family moved to Westminster to lease and preserve a farm belonging to a Japanese=American family who had been forced into an internment camp during World War II. When Ms. Mendez was denied access to the nearby school that her lighter-skinned cousins—who did not tell anyone they were Mexican—were able to attend, her parents sued the school district. But what makes this particular retelling so poignant is the questions from the third graders, none of whom have prior knowledge of the court case and most of whom have their hands up. These questions capture the heart of her experience.



Sylvia Mendez calls on a student at Emery Elementary School.

"Did the school for Mexican students have swings?" asks a girl dressed as the conductor from Polar Express. "No," replies Ms. Mendez, "it didn't have a playground or swings, which were my favorite." In fact, her eight-year-old self thought her parents were fighting so that she could go to a school with swings, which in a way was true. Another boy wants to know what it was like being segregated. Ms. Mendez considers for a moment: "It was horrible. The school was so bad, and I couldn't swim in the swimming pools or play at the public parks – and in the movie theaters, I had to sit upstairs." A girl dressed as Pikachu is curious about the non-white school: "Were the teachers strict?" Ms. Mendez responds, "The teachers were nice, but we weren't allowed to speak Spanish—even the kids who didn't speak English couldn't speak Spanish – and if we spoke Spanish, they hit us on the hand with a ruler or made us stand in the corner with a dunce cap on." A shocked ripple runs through the rows of students as they poke their neighbors and whisper.

However, Ms. Mendez's message of kindness and self-empowerment is louder than the painful story of growing up in racially segregated Orange County. She tells these students that everyone has the right to be treated justly, and everyone has the responsibility to treat others justly as well. In other words, "We can't be mean to each other. We have to be kind, don't we?" She also amplifies the message of Read Across America week and its celebration of books and learning by giving her audience a charge: "I want you to stay in school and go on to college. If I went to college after all that and became a nurse, there's nothing stopping you." She leans forward and confides that at first, she was scared to share her story and talk to people, and that she only started speaking to groups because it was her mom's dying wish. "It's okay to be scared," she tells them.

Just before the bell rings, she adds: "So guess what, my favorite warriors! Let nothing stand in your way!"

There is no better way to sum up the morning.

ACSA Region 17 & OCSBA Joint Dinner

By Renae Bryant Ed.D

ACSA Region 17 and the Orange County School Boards Association held their Joint Dinner Meeting on March 8, 2023. The evening began with guests enjoying both the ACSA17 and OCSBA receptions. The dinner program honored Lauren Brooks, First Vice President, OCSBA, with the Marian Bergeson Award.



Lauren Brooks

The program continued with honoring Dr. Jan Billings for her twenty years of service as the ACSA Region 17 Executive Director. She remarked it was the beginning of her "farewell tour" and shared a little about her years leading in ACSA Region 17.



AUHSD with Dr. Jan Billings

The night's keynote speaker: Nada Lena Nasserdeen (entrepreneur, author and speaker), encouraged us to identify our top five values and have the self-confidence to honor them. She recommended we explicitly teach our scholars the four areas of emotional intelligence: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management; and the eighteen competencies which fall under the four. She encouraged the audience to consider our strengths and opportunities for growth in emotional intelligence. The joint dinner, which was generously underwritten by SchoolsFirst Federal Credit Union, gave administrators and board members an opportunity to break bread together and further build relationships.





OCSBA



BPSD and FJUHSD



Nada Lena Nasserdeem with Jay and Renae



Irvine USD Team

ACSA Region 17

Leading in a Culture of Change

12th Annual Conference

By Renae Bryant, Ed.D.

We had an INCREDIBLE *ACSA Region 17 Leading in a Culture of Change 12th Annual Conference* on Saturday, January 28th, at Concordia University with over 200 educators in attendance from all over California! The morning started with a continental breakfast, as well as ACSA17 and partner "schwag". Author, consultant, and keynote speaker, Michael Fullan, spoke to the importance of positioning relationships and trust first by really engaging the community, increasing coherence, empowering scholars as change makers, and keeping a systems orientation (build the unengaged base, mobilize the middle and intrigue the top). He spoke directly to leaders' hearts and advocated for two qualities to bring back hope for the future of education: "spirit work" and the science of collaboration. He said, "Spirit work centers love and care for students, staff, and communities as the impetus for creating a positive culture, while collaboration is the vehicle for manifesting that spirit work."

We had breakout sessions on various topics: self and career care, leadership capacity building, empowerment, equity, UPK, design thinking, collective leadership, social influence, relationships, and the arts. These sessions were facilitated by leaders and educators: Dr. Rebecca Pianta, Dr. Marilou Ryder, Dr. David Gago, Dr. Rebecca Spady, Dr. Renae Bryant, Cynthia Covarrubias, Dr. Kimberly MacKinney, Ayele Dodoo, Norma Martinez, Lamiya A. Hoque, Kimberly Govea, Maria Villegas, Dr. Stacy Chang, Dr. Dominic Nguyen, CarlottaRhea Clark, Gina Hickerson, Dr. Vicki Wong, Lynette White, Dr. Brad Baker, Dr. Manoj Mahindrakar, Priscilla Rodriguez, Kerrie Torres, Todd Hatfield, Megan Brown, Jim Coombs, and Cameron Miller.

HUGE kudos to Amy Nagy, Ed.D. and Kari Adams for their excellent planning and organization of the conference, as well as everyone who presented breakout sessions and volunteered behind the scenes! So proud of #ACSA17! Thanks to all who spent their Saturday morning with us building their capacity to serve and lead!


Michael Fullan with Dr. Jan Billings

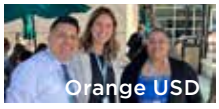

Dr. Amy Nagy


Xxxxx Xxxxx


Dr. Kimberly MacKinney


Dr. Kimberly MacKinney, Dr. Renae Bryant, & Cynthia Covarrubias


Lucky Winners


Orange USD


Xxxxx Xxxxx

Retirement Committee Outing
Moulton Museum

By Greg Rankin

At the December Retirement Committee meeting, members attended a tour of the Moulton Museum, Laguna Hills. It's a historical road trip honoring the pioneer spirit from 1874. This is real California, as well as South Orange County, history. They showcase artifacts and pictures. We saw landmarks that we didn't know existed. These pioneers went through some very difficult challenges. The committee also enjoyed lunch at Outback Steak House. Jared Mathis is Moulton Museum President and family member of the Moulton historical family. They are open only on Tuesdays.











Donna Sievers and Lee Apel

Please visit their website:
www.moultonmuseum.org

25256 Cabot Rd. Laguna Hills, CA 92653 (949) 257-2205

If you wish to make a donation, it would be greatly appreciated by the Museum. Our committee members donated $250 which were matched by a donator.

Region 17 Introduces *Network Only Nights*

At the end of each school year, your ACSA board and leadership team gather together to elicit input for the following year's calendar of events. Last June, at this gathering, we used a Thought Exchange and the results were clear: our members were interested in rebuilding community and connection after the isolation our administrators felt throughout the pandemic. Members wanted to hang out, relax, and get to know each other again. With many other opportunities for professional development provided by ACSA Region 17 throughout the year, we agreed that time for team building and bonding would re-energize our members. With this in mind, our fall and spring *ACSA Region 17 Network Nights* became just that; time to network.

Our Fall Network Bowling Night was a big hit, hosting over 100 administrators throughout Orange County for a night of bowling and bonding at Lucky Strike Bowling Alley in Orange last September. We even had our ACSA President, Erin Simon, stop in to join the fun. We ended the year with our Spring Network Night on May 3rd, at Cha Cha's Latin Kitchen in Tustin, where administrators came together to celebrate the end of the school year and build new relationships while eating comfort food and relaxing on the patio. Both of our network nights provided some much needed connection.

If you haven't joined one of our network nights, we encourage you to come to our 2023 Fall Network Night. Get to know your ACSA 17 community, build new friendships, meet a new mentor or mentee, and of course know we will always have an opportunity drawing filled with fun giveaways! We are sure it will help you reset and re-energize for a new school year.

A Message About Supporting Classified Leaders Through *ACSA Membership*

By Victoria Webber and Dr. Michael Keller

As a leader it is important to remember that all staff, whether they are certificated or classified, are invaluable members of our school communities. Classified staff members are critical support in various roles within business services, human resources, facilities, instructional services, nutrition services, operations, safety, and transportation. Leaders play a key role in relaying information to their teams to reinforce the message that everyone plays a part in the success of students. Our ultimate leadership mission is to support collective efforts and a positive culture among all staff to support students on their journeys of growth and learning.

One powerful way to support classified leaders and aspiring classified leaders is through membership and engagement with the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA). Involvement with ACSA demonstrates a commitment to professional growth and continuous improvement in public education.

ACSA is dedicated to meeting the needs of all educational leaders, including classified leaders, with high-quality member services and benefits. In addition to strong professional growth support, ACSA provides multiple ways to cultivate nurturing relationships and friendships that may last a lifetime. When certificated and classified employees work together to make educational programs successful, everyone feels a level of engagement, contribution, and professional accomplishment.

Here are a few great reasons for classified leaders to join ACSA:

- Support for career search and advancement efforts
  - ACSA Career Center
- Specialized professional development activities, including
  - Classified Educational Leaders Conference (CEL)
  - Specialized academies
- Lobbying efforts to improve the quality of education in California
  - Legislative Policy and Advocacy
- ACSA Legal Services
- ACSA Resource Hub (examples below)
  - Receive valuable member benefits including; group insurance plans, discount purchasing programs, and family entertainment & travel benefits
  - Keep current on education news and issues through special publications and periodicals, such as:
    - EdCal, ACSA's weekly newspaper, which includes the Job Information Survey (JIS), a listing of education job openings throughout California and the nation
    - Leadership, the association's professional magazine, featuring articles by and for school leaders
- District management team assistance



La Veta Vikings SAIL Into GATE Success: *Our Voyage and Story*

By Hana Brake and Lorena Rubio

At La Veta Elementary School in Orange Unified School District, Principal Lorena Rubio met with teachers and launched a pilot program expanding the Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) curriculum experience beyond the current program offered to fourth through sixth-grade GATE-identified students at her school.

La Veta's GATE teacher-trainer holds bi-monthly coaching and debriefing sessions with a cohort of six volunteer teachers interested in working to expand the GATE curriculum experience as a schoolwide signature practice, by offering Depth and Complexity icons to the primary grades and other non-GATE classes.

Depth and Complexity icons are strategies used in the GATE curriculum that provide structure and guidance to help students to think in a more profound and complex way when thinking critically. There are eleven unique icons, each representing a thinking strategy that students can use to take concepts to new levels of depth and complexity. This is not only helpful to visual learners but also assists second-language students and students with learning disabilities by providing a framework to follow for higher-level thinking. Over time, these strategies become ingrained habits that students can rely on as they navigate higher education, college, and careers.

With the use of depth and complexity icons schoolwide, all students will have access to advanced learning in critical thinking skills, which has been shown to increase students' achievement in all subject areas.

The cohort of teachers in the pilot integrate the icons in various academic subjects to advance and enhance learning for students schoolwide. The idea is to delve into this curriculum with hopes that more teachers will want to participate and help to grow the program.

For more information about the GATE program at La Veta Elementary, please visit:
orangeusd.org/la-veta-elementary-school/gate









Investing in Leaders

By Priscilla Rodriguez

School and district leaders matter now more than ever. As districts grapple with developing and retaining high quality leaders, offering them opportunities to refine their leadership is a priority. At the 12th Annual ACSA Region 17 Conference, two districts shared their story of developing leaders. Each partnered with WestEd to offer Lead the Learning: The Leadership Playbook. This professional learning series offers leaders opportunities to apply the Professional Standards for Educational Leadership to personal leadership, relationship management, building teams, and effective facilitation. The conference panel included leaders from Ocean View School District and Newport Mesa Unified School District. While each system had a particular need for taking on this effort, both were able to share an immediate impact on their system.

Below is a slice of the conversation from leaders in these two districts.

What was the impetus for your district's participation in the Playbook?

Dr. Julianne Hoefer, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services, Ocean View School District:

We made the decision to invest in our leaders here at Ocean View because 70% of our principals were either in their first year or their second year when the COVID Pandemic hit. So for two years, they were asked not really to lead, but to implement consistent protocols and practices. As we started to reopen schools, we invested in our principals by providing them an opportunity to refocus on their leadership and regain the confidence to take over their schools.

Dr. Kerri Torres, Associate Superintendent of Secondary Education, Newport Mesa Unified School District:

When we emerged from the pandemic, we had a shift in leadership that created a lot of dialogue and discussion about where we were as a leadership team and as a district. We know that our principals are the ones who execute the work and they are at the forefront of the students and they are the leverage point for what we're trying to achieve. We wanted to make sure we were doing whatever we could to support them. We started to think about how this might look and whether we wanted to do the work internally or externally and that's how we landed on WestEd. Their Leadership Playbook laid out some of those domains that we as a cabinet had brainstormed were opportunities to develop our leaders. When we looked at the six sessions of the Leadership Playbook, we felt like these were really the core competencies of the work we wanted to develop.

How did you decide who would participate in this effort?

Dr. Hoefer:

In Ocean View, we decided to bring our certificated leaders, our classified leaders, & our cabinet to learn together as one team. It was powerful for us to go through the experience together. It really created a common language and common practices.

Dr. Megan Brown, Director of Certificated Personnel, Newport Mesa Unified School District:

Continued on Page 12



The 12th Annual ACSA Region 17 Conference: Associate Superintendent of Secondary Education, Kerri Torres and Megan Brown, Director of Certificated Personnel at Newport Mesa Unified School District sharing their experience with WestEd and *Lead the Learning: The Leadership Playbook.*

Investing in Leaders Continued from Page 11

We are really benefiting from our configuration of being aligned with what the principals are learning but having our own separate network. One of the things that came out of our session about competencies was the creation of an ad hoc committee to continue the onboarding process for new leaders at their sites or their departments. This is one of those things that came out of our learning and it will impact the sites, but it is work that is very specific to the directors.

How did the Leadership Playbook impact leadership in your system?

Dr. Hoefer:

Each time we came together to learn, we walked away with tools that we could use between that learning session and the next. One of the tools that I see within our system are norms and the process of developing norms as a team. When I learned about norms in the past, I didn't really understand the why. What was great about the session on teams is that we spent time talking about how we create an environment in which the collective group does business. So creating norms together allows me, as an individual, to show up at my best to do the work with my team. When we developed norms together, it also helped me know other folks better.

Dr. Brown:

Coming out of the pandemic, this has helped re-energize that relational leadership and the learning itself for me. I also took the Four Domains of Emotional Intelligence from the first session and used it with our Supervisors in Human Resources. It was completely new to them and they loved it. They supervise small teams as well and they are now using this tool with their teams.

There has never been a more important time to nurture and sustain leaders in our schools and districts. Ocean View SD and Newport Mesa SD both found a way to bring leaders from across their system together to establish a common language for leading and learning, strengthen personal leadership and build capacity to impact their systems.

Every Student Succeeding

By Dr. Carol Hansen

ACSA believes every student deserves equal opportunities to succeed. On every school day throughout California, dedicated educators and courageous students overcome tremendous obstacles to reach their goals of academic excellence.

Their success is our success; Their powerful stories are our inspiration.

Each year, ACSA recognizes students across California for overcoming the odds and achieving success through the Every Student Succeeding Awards.

On March 3rd, ACSA Region 17 held our annual Every Student Succeeding Awards Breakfast at the Bowers' Museum in Santa Ana. We were pleased that 30 school districts were represented and over 250 staff, students, and families attended to celebrate our wonderful students. Each student was given a medal, special certificate, Chromebook, $100 gift card, a lawn sign and more goodies. ACSA Region 17 extends a heartfelt appreciation to our partner STS Education for their generous donation of the Chromebooks.

STUDENT RECIPIENTS ESS March 3, 2023

Marharyta Gusarova *(LBUSD)*
Kyland Nicholas *(LJSD)*
Sydney Zaizar *(BOUSD)*
Taylor Craig *(LOSAL)*
Michelle Vergara *(AESD)*
Danielle Pabon *(MSD)*
Samantha Runge *(AUHSD)*
Jaxon Hostetler *(OUSD)*
Kendyn Beaver *(IUSD)*
Kateryna Savitska *(OVSD)*
Scarlit Schultz *(CAPOUSD)*
Gabriel Perez *(PYLUSD)*
Alice Aguilar *(CES)*
Eduardo Mora *(SAUSD)*
Amy Ayala *(OCDE)*
Timothy Kim *(LHCSD)*
Christopher Catalan *(BPSD)*
Cruz Melendez *(SVUSD)*
Christopher Alaniz *(NOCROP)*
Mark Bravo *(TUSD)*
Esmeralda Alcala Jimenez *(NMUSD)*
Andrew Tran *(WSD)*
Joseph Lopez *(FJUHSD)*
Blake Freeman *(FVSD)*
Kameron Mahuad *(FSD)*
Alivia Ortiz-Barraza *(SAVSD)*
Phuoc James Nguyen *(GGUSD*
Cody Glunt *(CSD)*
Kelli Ma *(HBCSD)*
Ethan Melendraz *(HBUHSD)*



Vista View Middle School

School to Watch

By Julianne Hoefer, Ed.D.

Have you ever heard of Vista View Middle School? The school recently gained recognition for its efforts in creating career and technical education (CTE) pathways for middle-grade students. In February 2023, Vista View was designated as a School to Watch for its exceptional academic performance, developmental responsiveness, and social equity. This recognition was earned in part because of the innovative programs offered to students through their elective course offerings.



In September 2022, Vista View was invited to attend a luncheon to learn more about the Schools to Watch (STW) program. This national network seeks to identify high-performing middle schools who have a collaborative leadership culture and are academically excellent, developmentally responsive, and socially equitable. Several middle schools are invited to these events to learn about the process of becoming a School to Watch. Despite only having a week turnaround, Vista View's innovative elective course offerings demonstrated their readiness to pursue this distinction. To complete the application process, partner engagement meetings were held with site leadership, parents, and staff.



This school year, Vista View Middle School reopened at a newly modernized facility. The school features an eSports room with Omen gaming computers and a panel of monitors in the hallway facing the library to enable spectators to view the competitions, a culinary arts room with a ceiling-mounted camera and two monitors above the teaching table to enable students to easily view cooking demonstrations. The development of CTE pathways like these was intentional. The school staff embraces the importance of student voice in shaping their educational programs. Over the past four years, student surveys were conducted, which indicated student interest in gaming, visual arts, and technical classes focused on digital art, movie-making, and coding. To address the student input, Vista View now offers elective pathways in various fields, including string orchestra, band, eSports, computer science/robotics, culinary arts, leadership, yearbook, marine biology, environmental science, Google tech, digital art, and visual art. These course offerings provide students with academic rigor, creativity, and innovation, while being accessible to students from diverse backgrounds and abilities.



In recognition of its efforts to provide CTE pathways and opportunities for all students, Vista View Middle School was officially designated a School to Watch. This award highlights the school's dedication to meeting the diverse needs and interests of its students while providing high-quality education. Vista Falcons, SOAR!

Dream Big, Shine Bright!

Emily Flesher and Sheryl Tecker, Ed.D



Walt Disney aptly stated, "Our greatest natural resource is the minds of our children." In the La Habra City School District, we focus on applying this philosophy at every opportunity, busily tapping into the minds of our children. This year, with the addition of the Expanded Learning Opportunities Program (ELOP) funding, our districtwide offerings have increased dramatically.

All district students have been invited to participate in our before and after school EPIC (Engaging Programs Impacting Children) programs, which are offered at each of our school sites. Our varied and diverse activities include cooking classes, athletics, music, computer science, dance and tutoring. Our dedicated teaching and classified staff, along with the Boys and Girls Club of La Habra and a number of contracted vendors, have enabled us to provide these programs for all.



In addition to our EPIC before and after school programs, all students have the opportunity to join in our BRIDGE (Building Relationships & Innovation to Develop Growth in Education) days offered during the summer, on Saturdays, and intersession dates when school is not in session. These nine hour days are uniquely fun-filled and packed with once- in-a-lifetime experiences, thus ensuring that the minds of our students are expanding beyond what they ever imagined possible. District staff and community partners provide our students with engaging, hands-on activities both on and off campus, and transportation provided to and from outside venues. For example, students have toured college campuses and attended college athletic events to experience the rich atmosphere of the college environment. Others have participated in campus and beach cleanup efforts to learn the value of service to the community and the surrounding environment, thereby better understanding their impact through service. Additionally, students will explore many varied field trip excursions in the surrounding area.

Walt Disney also famously said; "You can dream, create, design, and build the most wonderful place in the world, but it requires people to make the dream a reality." LHCSD has partnered with many people to make our EPIC and BRIDGE programs a reality. We will continue to dream and build more exciting programs to stimulate our students' minds as we enter 2023. We hope this short article has provided you with some ideas for your school and/or district. As always, we are eager to collaborate with our colleagues in Region 17 as we all and learn and grow in our ELOP implementation.

RANDOM ACSA KINDNESS

Thank you so much for my random ACSA kindness! I was so surprised and grateful to receive it! I passed forward the gift of kindness to Dr. Justin Sherrill, Westminster School District's Student Services Coordinator, for his tireless support of students and staff.
Thank you again! What a sweet surprise!
Sincerely, Jennifer Solano
Director, Westminster School District



Dr. Rebecca Pianta did her first random act of kindness visit today and it was so nice surprising the amazing Assistant Principal at Santa Ana Virtual Academy Jesus Nunez for his work of developing systems of supports for our new Virtual School. The visit was the highlight of my day! Thanks for such an uplifting recognition program!
-Dr. Rebecca Pianta



member assistance & legal support team



Professional Advice

Regular ACSA membership gives you access to trained and experienced Member Assistance Advocates to protect your due process rights. Our advocates have a proven track record in resolving work-related concerns before they become a lawsuit. **Call 800.608.ACSA**

Know Your Rights

Ask yourself the following questions. If any of your answers are yes, chances are you could use ACSA's help!

- Have my due process rights been violated?
- Does this problem/situation pose a threat to or significantly affect my career?
- Are my employers treating my situation unfairly?

Advocates are available to assist members with problems concerning, but not limited to:

- Breach of employment contract
- Complaint investigations
- Contract review
- Credential problems
- Demotion
- Dismissal
- Salary policy disputes
- Settlement agreements
- Tenure rights
- Retirement

Direct Legal Assistance

We've got you covered! If necessary our Advocates will authorize two hours of direct legal assistance with one of ACSA's panel attorneys at no cost to you. Our lawyers are experienced in school law and can help determine if further legal action or litigation is necessary. If that's not enough, ACSA can provide:

- $1,000 in additional legal assistance to members based on a 60%/40% split.
- Up to $4,000 in protracted legal assistance for cases in litigation, which is also based on a 60%/40% split.
- Free professional liability insurance in excess of your mandated district coverage.

Eligibility for Legal Assistance

A person requesting attorney assistance must have been a Regular member in good standing for six months at the time his/her problem arose. Retired members are eligible for attorney assistance only if the matter occurred while they were a Regular member. You must be an ACSA member to receive this benefit.

acsa.org/legalsupport

Directory of ACSA 17 Corporate Business Partners

BENCHMARK EDUCATION
Attn: Mechelle Pedregal
Educational Sales Consultant
(619) 395-0668
mpdregal@benchmarkeducation.com

Attn: Linda Hansen
Educational Sales Consultant
(310) 384-9290
lhansen@benchmarkeducation.com

Tamison Anderson
Educational Consultant for Pedregal/Hansen
(714) 785-5387
tamison2@yahoo.com

BOWERS MUSEUM
Attn. Kelly Bishop
Vice President of External Affairs
KBishop@bowers.org

CALIFORNIA CASUALTY
Attn: Jana Charles
(714) 679.8496 JCharles@calcas.com

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY
Attn. Tanya Tarbutton
Program Director, Educational Administration
(714) 984- 0146
tanya.tarbutton@cui.edu

Kent Schlichtemeier, EdD
Director, Servant Leadership Institute
Concordia University Irvine
949.214.3256 kent.schlichtemeier@cui.edu

DANNIS WOLIVER KELLEY
Attn: Sue Ann Salmon Evans
sevans@DWKesq.com

Attn: Ashley Vitti,
Office Coordinator/Marketing Assistant
(562) 366-8500 avitti@DWKesq.com

EDLIO
Attn: Johan Cerrato, Joe Cerda, Kelsey Petersen
Lead Client Success Specialist
johan@edlio.com
joe.cerda@edlio.com
kelsey.petersen@edlio.com
www.edlio.com

ELEVO (Formerly SPORTS FOR LEARNING)
Attn: Nick Telford and Trey Thompson
Pn: (760) 687-3764 Fx: (760)452-7509
nick@elevolearning.com
trey@elevolearning.com
https://elevolearning.com

ENGIE
Attn: Suzanne Gentillini
Senior Manager Business Development
Engie Services US
suzanne.gentilini@engie.com
(714) 745.0031 www.engieservices.us

IMAGINE LEARNING
Attn: Douglas Reznicek, Eunique Johnson
www.imaginelearning.com
eunique.johnson@imaginelearning.com
(619) 743-1789
douglas.reznicek@imaginelearning.com
(949)324-9649

LAKESHORE LEARNING
Attn: Joshua Hilliger, Mark Funston
(800) 421-5354 (office) 714.290.1389 (cell)
jhilliger@lakeshorelearning.com
mfunston@lakeshorelearning.com

EQUITABLE ADVISORS
Attn: Franklin Chelebian
p. (310) 954-4846 | c. (310) 433-5663
Web: www.equitable.com
franklin.chelebian@equitable.com

LIFE TOUCH
Attn: Francie Bouchee-Flores
Sales Professional, School Photography
(949) 660-0528 (office) (714) 454-1243 (cell)
fflores@lifetouch.com

MULTICARD
Attn:Janiece Wieland - *OC Representative:*
jwieland@multicard.com
(619) 565-5080

Attn: Matt McDaniel - *CEO*
(303) 324.4869
Email: mmcdaniel@multicard.com
Web: www.multicard.com

SALAMON ART, INC.
Attn: Guy and Jennifer Salamon
(714) 342-5938 – cell
salamonartinc@gmail.com

SCHOOLS FIRST
Attn: Kristin Crellin
(714) 466-8400
kcrellin@schoolsfirstfcu.org

Carol Chaney
Specialist, School & Community Relations
(714) 466-8572
cchaney@schoolsfirstfcu.org

Joshua Smith
Vice President, School &Community Relations
(714) 914-8538
jsmith@schoolsfirstfcu.org

STONE SOUP CHILD CARE PROGRAMS
Attn: Judy Brandlin and Renee Valencia
(818) 905-1441 stonesup@aol.com
www.stonesoupchildcare.org/

STS EDUCATION
Attn: Marc Netka and Fran Irwin
(866) 499-2580 x1817 (O) (805) 490-7430 (M)
Web: stseducation-us.com
Email: marc.netka@ststechnology-us.com
fran.irwin@stseducation-us.com

WORKING WARDROBES
Attn: Ashley Baribeault-Vlcan
Director of Client Services
(714) 210-2460
Web: http://www.workingwardrobes.org/
Email: ashleyv@workingwardrobes.org

Directory of ACSA Partners for Purpose

Edmentum (Melissa Aday, Brandy Sick, Jason Mitchell)

F3 Law Firm (Kelli Moors)

Newsela (Sonya Hooks, Georgia Ellen Lee)

Right at School (Cindy Lawson, Donalie Hampton, Sarah Noffert)

Thank you

ACSA REGION 17 BUSINESS PARTNERS FOR SUPPORTING OUR ADMINISTRATORS AND STUDENTS!