

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:

heiduweiland@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.

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

CCSESA BUSINESS PARTNERS

