



# CCSESA *Leadership Link*

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## Executive Director's Corner

### Waiting for the May Revision

We are waiting expectantly for the release of the Governor's May Revision on May 14. It appears that current year revenues are more than \$4 billion over the projections in the budget enacted this past summer. To the extent that some of these revenues may be "one time" in nature, education organizations, including CCSESA, have advocated for a major investment of one-time, discretionary funds to help districts and county offices implement the common core standards and the Smarter Balanced assessments.

We are approaching the final stages of this year's budget debate. With a little luck, and some effective advocacy, by the June General Membership meeting we hope to be discussing how to operate in a new era of school finance that allows more resources, greater flexibility, and a new focus on local collaboration. Our plan is to organize the June meeting around these important changes. If you have ideas for specific topics, please contact me.

Peter Birdsall  
Executive Director

## Leadership Spotlight: **Kermith Walters, Siskiyou County Superintendent**



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

Since beginning my career in education, I've been a teacher, district superintendent/principal, and for five years, Superintendent of the Shasta Valley Consortium. Those were big jobs, but some of my most challenging school experiences were as a cook, bus driver, custodian, coach, referee and school secretary. Each role has been a piece of the whole, and has led me to my current position, which I am honored to have, as County Superintendent.

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

My high school Agriculture teacher, Jim Elsea, was my inspiration. He was the kind of teacher that taught you something without you even knowing it. As a senior, I was in a group that visited local elementary schools and gave presentations on the agriculture programs that the high school offered. After that, I was hooked. It took me a few more years than I had originally planned (17, to be exact) but I've had some great experiences that made me a better teacher.

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

I want to make a difference in the lives of the students in my county, and to make sure they have the same educational opportunities as every other student in California.

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

I would like to build the capacity of the county office so that we can meet the needs of our districts. With the move to Common Core State Standards and a new assessment system, our districts are looking to us for guidance and help in implementation. All of my districts are considered small and rely heavily on the county office.

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

I enjoy working on and restoring old vehicles, especially old pickups. I grew up during the muscle car era and still have a love for listening to the rumble of a big engine.

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

My family, including my wife of 33 years Shawn, our daughter Janessa and our son Jared.

## Intern Credentialing and English Learners

The California Commission on Teacher (CTC) credentialing recently approved revised training requirements for intern teachers so that they receive more support and training in order to serve English learners (EL). Thanks in large part to efforts of the Personnel and Administrative Services Committee (PASSCo), all parties involved were able to come to an agreement, and the item was passed by the Commission with unanimous approval and general goodwill.

The change was prompted by various advocacy groups that believe interns need

more extensive, specialized training before teaching California's roughly 1.4 million English learners. California currently allows recent college graduates to expedite their teacher training through intern programs, which enable them to start teaching after 120 hours of pre-service training, rather than going through a full year of a postgraduate program. The new regulations require increased training and support during the pre-service training program, and include new standards specifically for teaching English learners.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### **CCSESA Board of Directors.**

The next Board of Directors meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 13 at 9:30am. The agenda will include a discussion about Governor's Local Control Funding Formula, an update on the CCSESA Service Fees work group, and an update from Karen Stapf Walters, the Governor's Education Advisor and Executive Director of the State Board of Education.

**Mental Health Month.** May is National Mental Health Awareness month and May 9 is National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day. For resources, see, [www.samhsa.gov/children/](http://www.samhsa.gov/children/). Thank you to all counties participating in the Regional K-12 Student Mental Health Initiative. From January to March 2013, your efforts included 170 trainings serving 6,932 participants, 179 technical assistance events reaching 61,736 individuals, and demonstration programs involving 35,485 students and 4,492 adults.

**Quarterly Meeting.** The next general membership meeting will be held on June 23-25 at the Maya Hotel in Long Beach. Registration and lodging details are available by signing into the private side of [ccsesa.org](http://ccsesa.org). Room reservations are offered at a lowered rate until May 31, and the registration deadline is June 7.

### **CCSESA**

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### Arts Leadership Colloquium

Over 70 county and district arts leaders, representing all eleven service regions, will be convening on May 14th at the Sacramento County Office of Education for the 2013 Arts Leadership Colloquium. The professional learning day will include breakout sessions by regional arts leads and arts leaders focused on the

Common Core State Standards and the Arts. A gallery walk will also highlight the exciting and innovative work that is happening around the state. This event is co-sponsored by CCSESA Arts Initiative, the Curriculum and Instruction Steering Committee's Visual and Performing Arts Subcommittee, and the California Department of Education.

### Federal Advocacy Trip Update

In late April, a delegation of county superintendents traveled to Washington DC to meet with top staff in the US Department of Education, members of California's Congressional delegation, and key Congressional staff on K-12 education issues. Our agenda focused largely on protecting funding for the basic special education and ESEA grant programs and continued support for educational technology and rural schools. In addition, the delegation expressed CCSESA's support for the nine CORE districts' ESEA waiver request.

The delegation met with Senator Boxer and was encouraged by efforts in Congress to seek additional funding for early mental health programs. Unfortunately, meetings with Congressional staff on the topic of ESEA reauthorization revealed little movement on that issue, reaffirming the importance of seeking flexibility through a federally-approved waiver. Interestingly, in the meeting with US Assistant Secretary for Education Deb Delisle, she indicated they expect a new state waiver request from California fairly soon.

### Legislature Reaches First Key Deadline for Legislation

The first key deadline for legislation was last week, and dozens of bills failed to clear the first hurdle. Throughout the two-year legislative session, there is a series of deadlines that a bill must meet if it is to be enacted. The next important deadline is May 31, where bills must move out of the house of origin to continue in the legislative process. These deadlines are important because they allow us to focus more attention on bills that are "still alive" and therefore may be enacted into law.

So far in the 2013 session, most major bills for K-12 education are linked to the budget debate. High-profile measures include proposals to restructure the school finance system, modify numerous statutes relating to pupil assessment, and strengthen school accountability. The Legislature is scheduled to approve the budget by June 15, so by the time of our next quarterly meeting we should have a good handle on which bills have better chances of becoming law.

### Many Perspectives on Accountability Discussion

The debate over school accountability is active in Sacramento, but it means different things to different groups. For many public advocacy groups, the question is what protections will replace the old categorical programs. In the Assembly Budget Subcommittee, FCMAT Executive Director Joel Montero was asked whether the AB 1200 process would be applicable to educational accountability. At the State Board of Education, President Mike Kirst expressed concern about

the desire to eventually produce a single number, using the metaphor of baseball statistics to indicate that several indicators may provide a more accurate picture. CCSESA has formed an ad hoc committee of county superintendents and CISC leaders that is working through these issues. County superintendents should expect this to be an important topic of discussion at both the May Board meeting and the June General Membership meeting.