

## CCSESA PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



As county offices of education, our mission is to provide a first line of support to our school districts and the students they serve. As we recover from this pandemic, we know California's 1,000 school districts need more support than ever as they address the considerable academic and social-emotional challenges facing our students in real time.

We are grateful for the significant financial commitment to our children from both the federal government and our own great state. We know that such investment requires considerable planning, thought, and expertise. We also know where much is given, much is expected.

How we choose to spend these one-time resources will ultimately be a statement of our values. The impacts of this pandemic have not been felt equally. Our recovery is taking place against a backdrop of unrivaled and painful racial, political, and social upheaval. We must continue to prioritize *all* of our students with a keen eye toward the needs of those who have suffered most from being disconnected from the safeguards and face-to-face instruction our schools provide.

We hope the resources included in this toolkit will help our schools rebuild better -- recognizing lessons learned and facing the sobering reality of what has been lost. We have included practical ready-to-use financial planning tools and key questions to help prioritize equity, measure outcomes, leverage technology, and staff your plans.

While some may view our current school reopening efforts as the culmination of a "return to normal", we as educators entrusted to lead California's public school systems understand well that this is more than simply getting back to what we were doing before. We are contemplating and implementing an entirely "new normal" for our students.

The investments made to the recovery of our public education system by leaders at the federal and state levels must be matched by our own leadership at this pivotal time. We must prepare for what comes next with a commitment to students, collaboration with stakeholders and clear focus on maximizing the opportunity we have been given to make positive and meaningful change. Because we know well that a "return to normal" would be a disservice to our six million students.

L. K. Monroe  
Alameda County Superintendent of Schools  
2021 CCSESA President