

THE CORE

California County Boards of Education

In this issue



President's message

by Heidi Weiland, CCBE President, El Dorado COE Board Member

It has been a very busy year for CCBE and county boards across the state. A lot of work has been done: county boards worked tirelessly to implement their LCAPs, while the CCBE has updated its Board Training Manual, working with CCSESA and

CSBA on new training for new board members, CCBE held its sixth annual Fall Conference in Monterey, and much more. It was also a time for reflection — we celebrated the 60th anniversary of *Brown v. Board of Education* and the 50th anniversary of the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. We have come such a long way, but still have a long way to go. Students of color, especially young men, are still far more likely to be expelled or suspended, more likely to end up in court schools, or incarcerated. While we know that a piece of this is a result of socio-economic issues, individually and collectively, we need to examine our beliefs, practices and policies to identify what we are doing or neglecting to do that contributes to this. If you were at the conference in September, you likely heard CSBA Executive Director, Vernon M. Billy, give a very moving and thought provoking keynote address with a theme of Building Bridges – *Brown v. Board of Education* to LCAP.

In this edition of the Core you will find a conference wrap-up article written by President-elect Juliana Feriani, and Vice President Joaquin Rivera, 2014 CCBE Annual Conference Co-Chairs. Once again, this year's conference exceeded expectations in attendance and content matter. We very much appreciate the participation and assistance given by CSBA and CCSESA, once again contributing greatly to the success of our conference.

I hope to see you all at our General Membership Meeting and Breakfast at CSBA Annual Education Conference and Trade Show in December, as well as at the various workshops offered with county board members in mind. We had great county representation on the AEC Planning Committee this year and I look forward to seeing what they helped provide.

As I finish this year as president of CCBE, I can reflect on all the progress we have made and look forward to all the things that we will be rolling out over the next year. You can look forward to an updated New Board Member Training sometime in late winter, the Board Self-Evaluation Tool, and an updated website, to name a few. ■

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2014 Calendar of Events

December

CCBE Board of Directors Meeting, December 14
 CCBE General Membership Meeting and Breakfast, December 15
 Location: San Francisco

CCBE Fall Conference 2014 wrap up

By Juliana Feriani (Tuolumne COE) and Joaquin Rivera (Alameda COE), Conference Committee Co-Chairs

The sixth annual Fall Conference hosted by CCBE in Monterey this September was once again full of engaging sessions and opportunities for networking. Among the most worthwhile aspects of the conference appreciated by members were the opportunity to attend a conference designed with high quality workshops and the time to meet, talk and share ideas with other county board members. I couldn't have said it better than Jay Hoffman from Riverside COE when he said, "the opportunity to learn from our colleagues, coupled with high quality session speakers, is outstanding!"

The conference committee met at the beginning of the year and worked hard to bring CCBE members a conference that was engaging and thought provoking, as well as providing both in-depth and broad sessions to help with the decisions county board members must make to fulfill their mandated responsibilities. President Heidi Weiland asked the committee to consider the theme "Building Bridges" to echo her efforts with CSBA and CCSESA. Building Bridges became the conference theme and the major goals the committee identified were promoting healthy and positive climates; understanding budgets and finance; board governance, relationships, and leadership skills; facility responsibilities; charter school oversight responsibilities and best practices; and opportunities for networking.

Two pre-conference sessions were added on Friday afternoon and were very well attended and received: ABCs of Legislative Advocacy chaired by Dennis Myers, CSBA and Pam Lopez; K Street Consulting and Roles and Responsibilities chaired by Peter Birdsall and Stan Mantooth of CCSESA, Amy Christianson, Butte CBE, Heather Edwards, Girard and Edwards, and moderated by Heidi Weiland, CCBE. These sessions sparked conversations that continued all weekend.

The Friday night President's Welcome reception once again provided a fabulous



Richard Asadoorian, board member from Contra Costa COE before he sings his 200th performance of the national anthem on Sept. 14, at the CCBE Fall Conference. Coincidentally, this is the same date that Francis Scott Key wrote the lines of the song that became our national anthem 200 years ago in 1814.

CCBE Executive Committee & staff

Heidi Weiland

CCBE President | Region 6: El Dorado COE

Juliana Feriani

CCBE President-elect | Region 8: Tuolumne COE

Joaquin Rivera

CCBE Vice President and Editor of CORE
Region 7: Alameda COE

Dr. Ramón Flores

CCBE Immediate Past President
Region 11: Ventura COE

Mike Walsh

CSBA Director-at-Large, County | Region 4: Butte COE

Elizabeth Romero

CCBE Treasurer | Region 18: Riverside COE

Charlyn Tuter

Program Manager

About CCBE

Hours

Monday - Friday: 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

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Holidays (office closed)

Jan 1 | New Year's Day
Jan 20 | Martin Luther King Day
Feb 17 | Presidents' Day
May 26 | Memorial Day
July 4 | Independence Day
Sep 1 | Labor Day
Nov 11 | Veterans Day observed
Nov 27 | Thanksgiving Day
Nov 28 | CCBE Holiday
Dec 25 | Christmas Day

CCBE

2014 nominating committee

Boardsmanship: Understanding roles and responsibilities

By Amy Christianson, Butte COE

Have you ever wondered what you're doing serving on a board? Is it clear to you what your purpose is? When asked to participate on the CCBE Board Roles and Responsibilities Panel during the annual Fall Conference, I paused to reflect on those very questions. To answer, I first familiarized myself with the meaning of boardsmanship. Boardsmanship refers to the basic characteristics and behaviors that effective board members have in common. It describes how board members respond to and interact with the community, students, parents, staff, the superintendent and fellow board members.

For me, there are three important components of serving:

1. Relationships
2. Advocacy and collaboration
3. Board development/training

My fellow Butte COE board members use these three key areas to keep our focus and keep us working towards our goals.

Relationships

Some things that helped our team was placing importance on maintaining both internal and external healthy relationships. An especially good example is when Superintendent Tim Taylor hosted a strategic planning day that included board members and the administrative team to create shared priorities for the organization. Once those priorities were identified, they were used by the administration team to guide the development of strategies. Throughout the year the administration team provides updates on the activities and success or challenges. Boards that are successful are constantly assessing. They have benchmarks to ensure they are meeting goals. If they aren't meeting goals, then they dig deeper to find out why.

With implementation of the LCAP, COEs can utilize the need assessment and community input process in guiding their work for students, districts and other partnerships. CCBE created a resource handbook, *A Guide to Effective Governance*. Taken from the handbook, the following quote crystallizes what board members should do for an effective leadership: "An ideal strategy for cultivating effective relationships between COE's and districts is one in which the COE engages primarily in service focused support while ensuring compliance. This strategy emphasizes COE operations as a service to districts while ensuring that statutory responsibilities relating to compliance are addressed and results in the COE being viewed as a valuable resource and ally."

CCSESA, *Statutory Functions of County Boards of Education and County Superintendents of Schools* points out that while COE Boards have

The 2014 Nominating Committee met on Sept. 13 to interview the candidates for president-elect and vice president of CCBE. Upon deliberation, as outlined in CCBE Bylaws and Standing Rules, the nominating committee voted and is pleased to put forward the following slate for election to these offices: Joaquin Rivera (Alameda COE) for president-elect and Amy Christianson (Butte COE) for vice president. No nominations were received for treasurer.

As provided for in CCBE's Standing Rules and Bylaws, any individual intending to have his/her name placed in nomination from the floor for treasurer, as well as additional nominations for vice president and president-elect, shall provide written notification to Heidi Weiland, CCBE President, no later than Oct. 31, prior to the general membership meeting on Dec. 15 at which the election takes place.

We are asking each county office of education to help identify their county voting representative who will be attending the CCBE General Membership Meeting and Breakfast by filling out the county representative form and returning it to Charlyn Tuter at ctuter@csba.org or by fax at 916-371-3407. A copy of the county representative form can be downloaded from CCBE's website: www.theccbe.org.

— David Patterson, Chair 2014
Nominating Committee

County boards and the achievement challenge

From Brown to LCFF

By Vernon M. Billy, CSBA CEO & Executive Director

Editor's Note: The following is an abbreviated version of the script from CSBA CEO & Executive Director Vernon M. Billy's keynote address at the CCBE Fall conference on Saturday, Sept. 13. The speech has been edited for printing space considerations.

I truly appreciate the opportunity to join you at the CCBE Fall Conference and talk about the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, LCFF and some of the social challenges we still face as a state and nation around race, equity and justice. As evidenced by recent events in Missouri, court cases around the country regarding race and schools, and reports on the disparate treatment of minority students in school discipline, we continue to struggle as a nation with race, equal treatment under the law, and with the idea that our education institutions should provide support for our most disadvantaged students, while providing all students with an education that has “excellence” as its goal.

Sixty years ago, excellence wasn't the goal for the plaintiffs in the *Brown* case — but equality in educational opportunity and access was. May 17th marked the 60th anniversary of the Supreme Court's decision in *Brown v. Topeka Board of Education*. This decision reaffirmed the role of education in our society and opened up the gates of justice for minority students. This decision obliterated the “separate but equal” doctrine that had been established by the Court in the 1896 *Plessy v. Ferguson* case, forever altering education policies and practices.

On so many spoken and unspoken levels, *Brown* was a catalyst for social change beyond equity in school facilities. I would submit that the Supreme Court understood this by issuing the decision. The anniversary reminds us of how important your decisions are and how they have the potential to impact generations of Americans.

Remembering the *Brown* decision is important because it reminds us of this moment in our country's history, but also because it is representative of the “connectedness” of our work today with the struggles of the past, and that education is part of a greater social contract, a bridge between the people and its government, and a fundamental civil right.

Over the last 40 years, we have seen dramatic shifts in the achievement gap, and today, the gap is most adversely affecting low-income African-American students and our growing Hispanic student population. In 2012, more than 60 percent of Latino and African-American students were scoring below proficient in English language arts on the CSTs, while 60-plus percent of white and Asian-American students scored proficient or advanced. This kind of segrega-

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Mark your calendar

CCBE General Membership Meeting and Breakfast

Monday, December 15 | 8:30 a.m. – noon

The 2014 General Membership Meeting and Breakfast will be held on Monday, Dec. 15, from 8:30 a.m. – noon at the Westin St. Francis hotel in San Francisco. All county board members and superintendents are invited to attend this meeting. Breakfast will be from 8:30 – 9:00 a.m., and the meeting will begin after 9:00 a.m.

This meeting is very important for county board members. You will have an opportunity to vote for the 2015 leadership positions vice president, president-elect and treasurer. In addition, we will be honoring this year's Outstanding Legislator Award to Assemblywoman Susan Bonilla who will also be speaking on education legislative topics and hear from guest speaker Peter Birdsall, executive director from California County Superintendents Education Services Association (CCSESA), who will be speaking on critical county issues.

As described in the CCBE bylaws, there shall be one vote from each county board. Each county board will select one of their members to serve as their voting representative. Any county board member may participate in debate or initiate action, but only the representative may vote. Also, please remember a quorum for business at this meeting is 20 county board representatives. To download a copy of the county representative form, please visit www.theccbe.org and submit it to Charlyn Tuter at ctuter@csba.org or by fax at 916-371-3407.

This is an important time for CCBE. Don't miss President Heidi Weiland's report and the vision of our incoming president, Juliana Feriani from Tuolumne COE.

County Boards and the Achievement Challenge, continued from page 3

tion is exactly what the Brown decision had intended to prevent, but as we sit here today, we're seeing African-American and Latino students still being segregated based on three factors: race, income and language.

We also see a significant number of African American and Latino students making a stop in your community court schools. We are confronted with a 20 percent dropout rate for African-Americans and Latino students in California, and an African-American student who drops out of high school has a 60 percent probability of being incarcerated. The U.S. Department of Education estimates that nationally, students who are suspended or expelled are three times more likely to be in contact with the juvenile justice system in the following year. When you have that statistic in mind, and then connect it to the fact that African-American students are suspended or expelled at a rate three times higher than white students, you see a pattern of concern.

Recently, we had hundreds of our fellow Americans protesting in the small town of Ferguson, Missouri over the shooting of an 18-year-old African-American. The frustration that exists in Ferguson, in some ways, exists in California's education system as it relates to African-American students and education policy. The community response in Ferguson seems to be, in part, about the ongoing breach of the social contract between the community and law enforcement. When either side or both feel the social contract is broken, any sense of trust is destroyed. When you put that in terms of education there is the same frustration and distrust if the terms of the contract aren't being met.

We mark the 60th anniversary of the Brown decision at a time in California when there is a resurgence in discussions about equity and opportunity, as districts around the state implement the first year of the LCFF and their LCAPs. Embedded in these efforts is a requirement for LEAs to honor their social contract with their community by engaging students, families and community members in the LCAP process. LCFF potentially creates an opportunity to close achievement gaps for some of the state's most at-risk students.

Some will say that African-American students are captured in the LCFF concentration grant, but if we believe that these students are in need, why doesn't our state policy specifically call this out as we do for other groups of students? If we're making state policy based on historical and current needs, it's time to be surgical in how we address these students. County boards have a unique opportunity to make a difference. There is an opportunity to strengthen the bridges between your students, families, communities and school districts. There is an opportunity for counties and school districts to strengthen conversations about common interests related to students, such as helping districts to address the root causes of issues that may lead to suspensions and expulsions. The programs that are having success in doing so are the ones looking at what kids need that their classrooms don't have the resources to offer, and are identifying a broader perspective on the kinds of partnerships that can support their students.

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CSBA Delegate Assembly

Call for Nominations

The call for nominations for CSBA's Delegate Assembly seats is now open through Wednesday, Jan. 7, 2015. In addition to serving on CSBA's Delegate Assembly, regional county delegates have a dual role and automatically serve as regional directors for a two-year term on the CCBE Board of Directors.

CCBE is a statewide organization that is a section of CSBA and partners with them in providing educational leadership serving the unique needs of all county boards of education in California. CCBE's mission is to provide leadership and services to county board of education members enabling them to help every student succeed. Members of the CCBE Board of Directors establish the vision, mission and goals for CCBE, and ensure that activities and programs remain focused on those goals and the issues identified in CCBE's Legislative Policy Platform. Individuals who are committed and involved in providing educational leadership are needed.

A few of the CCBE Board of Directors roles and responsibilities are:

- Provide two-way communication with local county board members and school districts.
- Support and participate in CCBE's and CSBA's activities and events.
- Adopt the budget, Legislative Policy Platform, Bylaws and Standing Rules.
- Select and endorse a candidate for the CSBA director-at-large, county position.

There are three CCBE Board of Directors meetings per year; one is held in conjunction with the CSBA Delegate Assembly meeting in May, the CCBE Fall Conference in September, and one at the CSBA Annual Education Conference in late November or early December. It is important that in addition to serving on the CSBA Delegate Assembly, regional county delegates also make a commitment to serve on the CCBE Board of Directors and attend all scheduled meetings.

For further information about CCBE, please go to www.theccbe.org or contact Charlyn Tuter, at 800-266-3382 ext. 3281 or by email at ctuter@csba.org.

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specific education codes by which they operate, each COE has their unique strengths and challenges contingent upon their geography and focus. For example, Butte COE, like many other county offices, is lead on several statewide and regional projects offering their expertise related to Career Technical Education, Mini-Corp, Migrant Education, Assembly Bill 109 re-entry and several others.

What that means for us is that our superintendent has made it a focus to work directly with district superintendents in our county and across the state to maintain and strengthen those external relationships. A customer services assessment was conducted with each of our county districts. Findings were shared with the board and updates on activities addressing areas of concern are provided during the superintendent's report at monthly board meetings. Superintendent Taylor encourages each board member to maintain working relationships with district boards in our areas. It's important to keep in mind that while county board members don't have direct responsibility over district business, it is more important than ever before that we keep the lines of communication open and develop relationships in which we listen and seek to understand the district's perspective.

Advocacy and collaboration

Another helpful section in the CCBE Guide to Effective Governance tackles advocacy and collaboration: "As locally elected officials and as community leaders, county board members have a responsibility to keep the public informed about the county office's goals. They attend events, offer to make reports to community groups, return phone messages and faithfully attend board meetings. They listen to concerns expressed by the public, but know when it is appropriate to refer the problem to the board as a whole or to the superintendent rather than trying to solve it by themselves. They make the public feel welcome at board meetings and encourage public input."

There are many ways to accomplish the above guidelines. For instance, Butte COE board member, Jeannine McKay has a seat on the Butte Glenn Medical Foundation Committee on Drug Awareness and Education. Working collaboratively with the committee and with knowledge of district programs she was able to create partnerships that were beneficial to both organizations in furthering their missions to serve students.

AB 109 has impacted Butte County children and families in many of the same ways it has in every county throughout the state.

AB 109 moves responsibility of incarceration of low-risk inmates from the state to the county. It is also known as "prison alignment." Managing low-level offenders, according to the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, AB 109 has a Local Planning Process to develop "an implementation plan for their respective county." Superintendent Taylor worked with the County Sheriff's Office and Probation Department to create a comprehensive model program providing education, work experience and case management for parolees. "These are the parents of our students. If we can help them, we are helping our students with role models," Superintendent Taylor says about this work.

Focusing on advocacy and collaboration increases the possibilities of the kind of goals our community can meet. A good example of this is when the Butte COE court and community schools relationship with the county probation and Butte Community College brought about positive change in a student's life. This student lived in juvenile hall and the relationships between the agencies allowed this student to get on a bus daily to take classes on the Butte College campus and return each day as if he were any student attending class.

This type of work has developed an understanding that our voice for education doesn't stop at the county border. It also extends to Sacramento and Washington D.C. Like the CCBE booklet says, "County boards also have a responsibility to inform others outside the local community about the function of county boards and the needs of county offices." Superintendent Taylor encourages and supports the members of our board to attend state level board meetings to represent the county. I have personally had the opportunity to attend two meetings of the State Board of Education to share insight on the LCFF and LCAP process in our county. Due to my past experience in the nine northeastern counties, Superintendent Taylor asked me to speak to the High Speed Internet State Committee on behalf of rural counties and the impact on students and families. As a result of everyone's effort, we were able to open a further conversation of resource allocation in rural communities.

Board development

A School News survey from New Jersey describes the foundation for board development as "a willingness to acknowledge you don't know it all." Be willing to seek training and take continuing education courses to stay current. In my experience, this has proven to be very important. Having been an employee of

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Fall Conference wrap up, continued from page 2

opportunity for members to network and enjoy delicious food. We were pleased to welcome and acknowledge our sponsors: K Street Consulting; Atkinson, Andelson, Loya, Ruud, & Romo; Garcia Hernandez Sawhney and Bermudez; Jones Hall; Lozano Smith; Seneca Center; TBWB Strategies; California Lottery; and for all the support from CSBA.

The Saturday workshops provided opportunities for board members to learn about support for authorizing charter schools and oversight responsibilities; how to develop governance frameworks; LCFF and LCAP roles and clarified that county boards of education have no involvement with districts' annual budgets and LCAPs. Rather, it is the county superintendent who is vested with certain responsibilities to review districts' annual budgets and LCAPs. There was also dialogue about facilities programs and learning environments, how to organize educational leadership summits, conflict of interest statements and school safety.

Our luncheon keynote address, given by CSBA Executive Director Vernon M. Billy, focused on the anniversary of *Brown v. Board of Education* and how much we still have to do to close the achievement gap. He also spoke about the opportunities that county boards of education have with LCFF to help those students achieve success. Once again, we arranged for members attending the conference alone to join other members for dinner. Around twelve people shared a table at Sapporo's for a fun cooking experience and lively conversation.

County boards and the achievement challenge, continued from page 3

I also believe that it's critically important for county superintendents and county boards to work cooperatively and not "at odds" as we embark on this new era of LCFF. I would encourage county superintendents to look at their boards as a valuable resource and partner in engaging the community and developing policies that advance your LCAP goals.

It is the collective responsibility of the county board and superintendent to ensure that you are building bridges and honoring your social contract with your local community. This, I believe, is the key to success and honoring the important ideas embedded in the Brown decision. When you see a student who has fallen down, be there to help them get back up, so they too can have a chance to have a positive academic experience and cross whatever bridges await them in life. ■

The Sunday speakers and their topics also engaged our members. First off was a presentation, *Whose Budget Is It Anyway?* Presented by Louis Lozano of Lozano Smith Attorneys At Law. The presentation detailed the respective roles and powers of the county superintendent and the county board of education when it comes to the county office of education budget. Wayne Sakamoto presented the second session, *Solutions to Bullying*, helping to lead members to an increased awareness and a greater understanding of the roles of administrators, teachers and board members in setting rules and policies to stop bullying. Both sessions had terrific participation and received rave reviews.

We are very appreciative of all the presenters who came to our conference. Their experiences and advice answered and provoked many questions and conversations. Please visit www.thecbce.org events page to download workshop materials.

Save the date for Sept. 11-13, 2015 and in your budgets to ensure you don't miss out on the 2015 CCBE Fall Conference scheduled to take place at the Portola Hotel & Spa located across from Fisherman's Wharf in downtown Monterey!

Remember that this is the only conference created by county board members for county board members to address the unique issues they face. Materials, meals, meetings, and all the critical information you need to serve your students and communities well will be offered at the 2015 conference. For more information visit www.thecbce.org. ■

Boardsmanship, continued from page 6

a school district and COE for over 15 years prior to becoming a board member has given me a unique insight into understanding programs and services. Yet, I found it still wasn't enough. My first year on the board, I attended the CSBA Board Governance for New Board Members workshop which provided a depth of responsibilities, legalities and my role as a county trustee. Then came the LCFF that changed the entire system for funding and budgeting. The reasons to participate in continuing education opportunities as a board member is longer than can be stated in this article. And with that, I believe it cannot be overstated the importance of continuing to look for opportunities to learn and grow as a voice of education.

I am a believer that we all should find strategies that fit our skill set and use our strengths to collectively work as a board serving our students. We need to strive to meet our vision, where student needs come first. ■