



NEWS RELEASE

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**Six School Districts Selected to Help Spearhead
Statewide Community Engagement Efforts**

SAN BERNARDINO – The statewide [Community Engagement Initiative](#) (CEI) has selected six school districts to join the groundbreaking effort to build capacity for meaningful community engagement in California’s public schools.

The CEI is an integral part of California’s new statewide System of Support, a key component of the state’s accountability system.

The [California Collaborative for Educational Excellence](#) (CCEE), [San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools](#) (SBCSS), the [California Association of Bilingual Educators](#) (CABE), and [Families In Schools](#) (FIS) jointly lead the CEI.

The six districts selected will compose the CEI’s inaugural *Peer Leading and Learning Network*, which will identify and analyze models, metrics, and practices of community engagement in order to help schools, districts, and their communities across the state build their engagement skill and knowledge.

Each district possesses a deep, systemic commitment to community engagement and the ability to help the CEI strengthen the capacity of school districts and communities to authentically engage each other in difficult conversations and build trusting relationships.

Below are the six districts, one example of the many community engagement initiatives they spearhead in their local school communities, a quote from the district’s leader, and a district contact should the media or public like more information:

[Anaheim Union High School District](#)

Example: AUHSD’s family and community engagement specialists (FACES) develop student and family leadership.

“AUHSD is honored to be selected as a CEI participant as it highlights our commitment to our families and broader community.” – Michael Matsuda, AUHSD Superintendent

AUHSD contact: Patricia Karlak, karlak_p@auhsd.us

[Azusa Unified School District](#)

Example: AUSD's Parent Advisory Committee, known as the "PAC+," gives families and local stakeholders a strong, institutionalized voice in the Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP).

"The Azusa Unified School District is honored to be part of the CEI's PLLN, we value the authentic engagement of our community, and we look forward to building greater capacity for this work in our district and other districts statewide." – Linda Kaminski, AUSD Superintendent

AUSD contact: Anjelica Garcia Juarez, agarciajuarez@azusa.org

[Cajon Valley Union School District](#)

Example: CVUSD's support and engagement of refugee students and their families.

"The Cajon Valley Union School District is excited to share our success in authentically engaging all families in cultivating 'Happy kids, engaged in healthy relationships, on a path to gainful employment' with this network of leaders to advance family engagement across our great state." – Dr. David Miyashiro, CVUSD Superintendent

CVUSD contact: Sandra Candler, candlers@cajonvalley.net

[East Side Union High School District](#)

Example: ESUHSD's success focuses on student engagement and student empowerment.

"East Side is excited to collaborate as a member of the Community Engagement Initiative to further establish how we include student and community voice to develop equitable communities in our district and across the state." – Chris Funk, ESUHSD Superintendent

ESUHSD contact: Linda Ornelas, ornelasl@esuhsd.org

[Ontario-Montclair School District](#)

Example: OMSD's ability to use community-based organizations to provide true wrap-around services for its students.

"Community engagement remains a top priority for OMSD and we are proud to have been selected as a Peer Leading and Learning Network district. We look forward to working collaboratively to ensure all students are prepared to successfully access college and career pathways." – Elvia M. Rivas, OMSD Board President

OMSD contact: Jana Dupree, Jana.Dupree@omsd.net

[Oxnard School District](#)

Example: OSD's newcomer program and its "No Me Llamas Oaxaquita" resolution helps ensure all students and their families feel welcome at school.

"OSD is excited to contribute to the collaborative as we all share best practices and stimulate exponential parent engagement practices statewide." – Dr. Cesar Morales, OSD Superintendent

OSD contact: Marlene Batista, mbatista@oxnardsd.org

“These districts and their communities have clearly demonstrated their strength in engaging together and we look forward to learning from their experiences in doing so,” said Tom Armelino, CCEE Executive Director.

Each of the six districts that make-up the CEI’s inaugural *Peer Leading and Learning Network* is comprised of:

- District staff and leadership
- School site staff and leadership
- Students and/or family members
- A representative from the county office of education
- A representative from a community-based organization

“By lifting up the promising practices of these six districts, we will deepen our knowledge and understanding of authentic community and family engagement and its value and importance to student success,” said Oscar Cruz, Executive Director of [Families In Schools](#), one of the four organizations overseeing the statewide CEI.

Jan Gustafson-Corea, CEO of the [California Association of Bilingual Education](#), echoed that sentiment. CABE is partnering with the CCEE, SBCSS, and FIS in overseeing the statewide CEI.

“We are thrilled to learn with these districts know what impactful community engagement looks like to bring about the ultimate goal of student success—particularly for communities of linguistically and culturally diverse backgrounds,” Gustafson-Corea said.

The first meeting of the CEI’s *Peer Leading and Learning Network* takes place today. The six district teams will be connected virtually.

“This is important work for our state, and we look forward to seeing the results in the coming years,” said Ted Alejandre, leader of the [San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools](#), one of the four organizations overseeing the statewide CEI.

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