

Make the time for some of our amazing offerings this spring. You are worth it!



Advance Newsletter

March 2026

President's Message



Empowered to Lead, Inspired by Heart, United for Impact

Dear Colleagues,

As we move through March, we find ourselves in a pivotal part of the school year. Across our districts and throughout California, the work of educational leadership feels especially demanding right now. Collective bargaining, budget reductions, and staffing decisions weigh heavily, not just operationally, but in our hearts. I know many of us are feeling that strain right now.

In my previous message I shared how leadership is grounded in equity and compassion. That commitment is not reserved for calm seasons. It is tested and strengthened in moments like these. When resources tighten, when decisions are difficult, and when clarity must be earned through conversation and care. Our theme, *Empowered to Lead, Inspired by Heart, United for Impact*, becomes our greatest strength. We are empowered by our expertise and experience. We are inspired by the "why" behind every student's face, and we are united in the understanding leadership is not meant to be an isolating journey.

While we cannot control the external fiscal climate, we can control how we show up for our staff, our communities, and one another. Connection is essential right now. By leaning on each other and leading with both strength and compassion, we have the ability to transform challenge into shared success. We must also care for ourselves. Self-Care is not indulgent, it is foundational. You cannot lead others if your own well is dry. Sustaining leadership through self-compassion ensures we can continue to serve with resilience and strength. Honoring the sentiment of Eleanor Roosevelt, who reminded us that we must *give from the overflow*

of our well, not from the bottom of the cup. Consider offering yourself a few small but meaningful 'leadership gifts' this month:

- The "Priority Pulse": Take five minutes to identify one "Bud," something you are looking forward to or see growing or something that gives you hope to balance out a current "Thorn".
- Find Your "Quiet Office" Moment: Even 15 minutes away from email can create space to reflect on a breakthrough conversation or a small win that mattered.
- Connection Over Perfection: Give yourself permission to choose collaboration over a perfectly polished plan. Progress with people will always outpace perfection alone.
- Additional Self-Care Strategies for Educational Leaders, (With appreciation to Dr. Chad Mabery of Laguna Beach USD and the C&I Academy for additional self-care inspiration.)

In the middle of such a demanding season, there is also so much to celebrate. I am personally looking forward to our upcoming Administrator of the Year celebrations. I find myself energized by the comradery, the laughter, the joy and the storytelling. These moments serve as a powerful reminder of the incredible talent and heart within our region. It is an honor to highlight the leaders who, even in tough seasons, continue to set a standard of excellence for our students and staff. I am also looking forward to our Every Student Succeeding recognition and Region 6 scholarship event. There is nothing quite like seeing the faces of our students as they are honored. Stories of perseverance, resilience, opportunity and achievement are inspiring. Seeing our students and colleagues honored for their achievement reinforces why we do this work.

As we continue through our journey, let us remember that steady leadership during uncertain times leaves a lasting imprint. Our communities do not look for easy answers, they look to us clarity, compassion, and courage. We have all three.

In partnership and gratitude,
[Lorianne R. Ventura, Ed.D.](#)
President, ACSA Region 6

ACSA Region 6
Administrator of the Year Awards Dinner
Thursday, April 23, 2026



Region 6 Administrator of the Year Awards Celebration

Join us in celebrating all of our 2026 AOY nominees and winners
(list can be found on our [website](#))

Thursday, April 23, 2026
San Ramon Marriott

5:00 - 6:00 pm Cocktail hour (1 complimentary beer, wine, or soda)
Featuring music by students

6:00 - 8:00 pm Dinner and Awards presentation

Tickets \$95

Register on [Eventbrite](#) until April 3, 2026

<https://ACSARegion6AOY2026.eventbrite.com>



Region 6 Awards

Each year, Region 6 honors two ACSA leaders for exemplary leadership to ACSA and the education community.

The Nels Nelson Award is named after Region 6's first Executive Director who served for many years. The recipient of this award is a person who has demonstrated ethical and moral leadership, continuing commitment and dedication to student achievement and a visionary who lays foundations of educational excellence that will continue beyond their tenure. This individual has also served ACSA for many years and in many capacities as a leader. This year's recipient is Matt Chamberlain.

The Region 6 Frank Wells President's Award is given to a member who has provided exceptional leadership and service to the region. This award honors the late Dr. Frank Wells who exemplified outstanding service and leadership to ACSA. This year's recipient is Janet Gates.

Congratulations to Matt and Janet who will be honored at our 2026 Region 6 Administrator of the Year Awards Dinner on April 23.



Nels Nelson Award

Matt Chamberlain
Assistant Superintendent of HR
Vallejo City USD

Region 6 President 2024-25
Diablo Valley Charter President 2018-21
Board Rep 2010-17
Delta Charter Board Rep 2022-25
Region 6 Rep to ACSA Secondary Schools
Council 2019-23
Region 6 Leadership Assembly Delegate
2021-25

Participation in numerous ACSA State,
Region and Charter activities



Frank Wells President's Award

Janet Gates
Director of Student Services
Pleasanton USD

Region 6 Secretary 2023-25
Amador Valley Charter President 2021-23,
Past President 2023-26
Treasurer 2015-23

Participation in numerous ACSA activities
and conferences



Trust and Inspire for Educators

Hosted by Franklin Covey Education, R6 Partner

association of california school administrators | **region 6**

Trust and Inspire for Educators

Hosted by Franklin Covey Education

Why Trust & Inspire?
 Move beyond Command & Control leadership.
 Build trust-based cultures that empower educators, inspire collaboration, and elevate student success.

Cost \$25: includes breakfast, lunch, and materials
 When: Saturday, April 25, 2026
 9:00-3:00 PM
 Where: San Ramon Valley's District Office

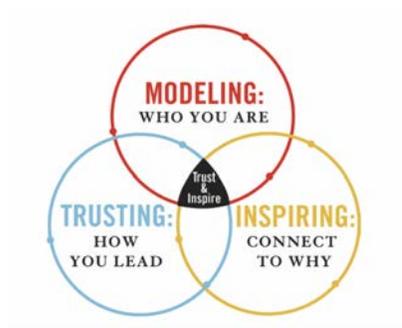
Participants will:

- ✓ Understand the Trust & Inspire leadership mindset
- ✓ Identify and overcome barriers to leading with trust
- ✓ Apply principles that elevate people and results
- ✓ Build cultures of trust, collaboration, and innovation

Keynote: Dr. Candy Singh



Register: <https://acsaregion6trustandinspire.eventbrite.com>

Trust & Inspire for Educators

Empowering School Leaders to Build Trust, Inspire Growth, and Transform School Culture

Saturday, April 25, 2026

9:00 - 3:00

San Ramon Valley USD District Office

Fee: \$25 (ACSA Region 6 members) and \$50 (non-Region 6 members)

[Register on Eventbrite](https://acsaregion6trustandinspire.eventbrite.com)

This is an incredible opportunity for all educational leaders in our region. We are grateful to our Region 6 Partner, Franklin Covey Education, for sponsoring this full-day course.

This amazing day will be facilitated by Dr. Candy Singh, a former superintendent, university professor, national speaker, coach and consultant!

[Download flyer here](#)

<https://acsaregion6trustandinspire.eventbrite.com>



Region 6 Annual Conference

SAVE THE DATE



Empowered to Lead, Inspired by Heart, United for Impact

ACSA REGION 6
CONFERENCE
JUNE 11, 2026
DOUBLE TREE
PLEASANTON

Region 6 Annual Conference

Thursday, June 11, 2026
8:30 to 3:30 pm
7:30 - 8:45 am (Superintendents Breakfast)
DoubleTree Pleasanton

Registration \$95

REGISTRATION ON EVENTBRITE WILL BE AVAILABLE IN UPCOMING WEEKS



Region 6 Spring Events

making connections, building relationships, learning from each other

One of our region's goals this year is a concerted effort to engage our members. Many of our members are not fully aware of all the benefits (professional and personal) of being a member of OUR professional organization. In addition to all the state ACSA offerings, Region 6 also supports our members with a full menu of learning and networking resources. Here's what's available this spring. Click on links for more information or download a flyer.

- [R6 AAPI Administrators Network](#) - March 11
- R6 [Student Scholarships application](#) closes on March 13
- Virtual [Presentation on March 15 notice](#) - March 12
- R6 Networking Social on Tuesday, March 24 ([Flyer](#))
- Bay Area Equity Symposium, Saturday, March 28 ([Flyer](#))
- R6 [Virtual Series: Reflective Space](#), April 1(Flyer)
- [ACSA 2026 Legislative Action Days](#), April 20-21
- R6 [Administrator of the Year Awards Dinner](#), Thursday, April 23
- R6 Trust & Inspire Class, Saturday April 24 ([Flyer](#))

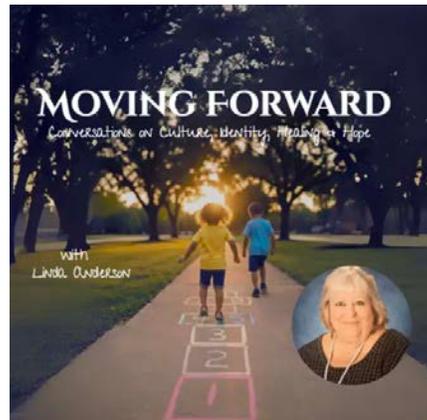
- R6 [Virtual Series](#): Creating Systemic Conditions for Supporting LGBTQ+ Students, May 7
- R6 Student Scholarship & Awards Reception, Tuesday, May 12 (by invitation)
- R6 Annual Conference, Thursday, June 11 ([Flyer](#))

To be scheduled:

- R6 Women's Leadership Network Breakfast



Region 6 Retiree, Now a Podcaster!



Moving Forward: Reflections on Leadership, Purpose, and the Power of Story

After 32 years in education, Linda Anderson retired as an elementary principal from Fremont Unified School District in June 2025. She is now an established podcaster with 23 episodes aired! She recently joined our Region 6 Retiree Charter for a reflective conversation about transitioning from formal leadership roles into a new season of influence and purpose.

Rather than focusing on retirement as an ending, the session explored how leadership continues beyond a title. Linda shared how stepping away from the daily pace of school leadership created space for listening, reflection, and renewed connection — which ultimately led to the creation of her [Moving Forward](#) podcast, a series of conversations centered on culture, identity, healing, and hope.

A central theme of the discussion drew on a metaphor shared by Anthony Robinson, ACSA's Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: leadership is like a game of Double Dutch. Effective leaders watch the rhythm, listen, and choose when to step in — sometimes individually, sometimes alongside others. In retirement, this becomes an intentional choice about where to invest time, energy, and experience.

Participants engaged in small-group conversations about what continues after retirement — mentoring, learning, creating, advocating, and serving in ways shaped by meaning rather than obligation. The gathering emphasized that while roles change, the capacity to influence, support others, and contribute to the profession remains.

The session concluded with a reminder that retirement does not end leadership; it simply allows educators to choose the rhythm in which they continue to lead.

Dr. Cynthia Rapaido, our Retiree Charter President-Elect, will be Linda's guest in an upcoming episode. Don't miss it.

Moving Forward is available wherever you get your podcasts. You can also connect with Linda at her email linda.anderson0329@gmail.com



Region 6 Communications

ACSA Region 6 is getting the word out! There are many ways to connect with ACSA Region 6. We make great effort to keep the [Region 6 website](https://regions.acsa.org/6/) up to date with announcements, Region 6 calendar of events, professional learning and networking activities. <https://regions.acsa.org/6/>. NEW: ACSA JUST LAUNCHED THEIR UPDATED WEBSITE. BE SURE YOU CHECK OUT [ACSA.ORG](https://www.acsa.org/)!

As a member of ACSA Region 6, you should be receiving a Quarterly News Email called the **Advance** as well as frequent **Flash** updates to be sure that you have the most important and timely information about our region. Issues of these newsletters can also be found on our website. If you are not receiving them, contact R6 Executive Director [Rose Lock](#).

In addition, our Social Media Accounts on LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram and Threads all share posts about activities that are planned so that you can participate in social activities and professional development. Then, when the event takes place we can share what's happening in real time. Right now, we are working to make sure that we celebrate our nominees and recipients of the Administrator of the Year Awards, promote professional development opportunities such as Trust and Inspire which is sponsored by Franklin Covey Education and ACSA Region 6 designed to help you learn more about building trust and gathering inspiration from educational leaders. There are many ways to connect to ACSA Region 6!

Our communications efforts are aligned with our Region 6 Strategic Goals and designed to create multiple opportunities to learn more about what is happening in our Region and to support our colleagues by growing community and connection. In our Strategic Plan we are committed to:

GOAL 1: Support Charters to disseminate ACSA and Region communications to members as well as non-members

Goal 2: Establish a communication framework that will facilitate members' understanding of ACSA and Region 6 resources

Goal 3: Explore and implement additional communication tools

You can follow and 'like' us on Facebook [@acsaregion6](#); on Instagram [@region6acsa](#); on LinkedIn by following ACSA Region 6 and on Threads [@region6acsa](#).



From Region 6 Executive Director

Leadership Matters!

One of the many benefits of membership in a professional organization is the many opportunities to develop your leadership. ACSA is organized by 19 regions in the state and each region is made up of charters that include one or multiple districts. Region 6 has 19 charters covering 33 districts/county offices. Each charter has its own governance structure established in its ACSA-aligned bylaws. You can see there are many opportunities to serve as a leader at the charter, region, and state levels.

Region 6 is governed by a 50-member Board of Directors which also includes a 16-member Executive Committee. Your elected officers lead the Executive Committee and manage the routine business of the region. Check out our website at <https://regions.acsa.org/6/>

Congratulations to Dustin Gacherieu who was just elected as the Region 6 President-Elect for 2026-27! Thank you for stepping up to serve in this ACSA leadership role.

If you are interested in ACSA leadership, check with your local charter president. List of all our charter presidents can be found on our website.

Happy spring! Enjoy your upcoming break.

Rose Lock
Region 6 Executive Director



Welcome New ACSA Members



Welcome to the following new ACSA members in Region 6!

Alameda County Office of Ed
Zarina Ahmad, Lauren Bell, Michelle Gee

Antioch USD
Alexis Heames, Mindy Laituri, DarVisa Marshall

Brentwood UESD
Amy Pierman

Byron ESD
Heather Yurkovich

Castro Valley USD
Coron Brinson

Fremont USD
Lauren Morales, Robert Pascual

Hayward USD
Gabriela Esquivex, Veronica Estrada, Rafael Flores, Jose Irizarry, Deborah Murayama, Amy Nichols, Randy Taylor

Knightsen ESD
Christopher Chenault

Lafayette ESD
Shayna Peeff

Liberty UHSD
Dominic Adams, Steven Shankles

Livermore Valley JUSD
Chris Connor, Katie Crouse, Douglas D'Amour, Tori Ha, Tara Rodriguez, Andrea Tapia

Mt. Diablo USD
Chitra Bhardwaj, Heather Fontanilla, Karlynn Gaare, Kelly Ann Jacob, Erin Vallejo

New Haven USD
Anthony Pava, Heather Viscia-King

Oakland USD
Nicole Knight, Marceli Rocha-Rocha, Ameer Tillman

Oakley UESD
Christopher Carey, Ashley Chavez, Naomi George-Harrison, Ashley Hayes, Melissa Luna, Natalie Wilson

Orinda UESD
Alison Burke

Pittsburg USD
Makaela Huntsinger, Tami Middleton

San Leandro USD
Filiberto Chavez-Guerrero, Jianmin Guo, Gloria Munoz, Ryan Murrow

San Lorenzo USD
Claudia Luna

San Ramon Valley USD

Walnut Creek SD
Tyson Fecther

West Contra Costa USD
Briahna Basketm Indira Bell, Kelsey Corrales, Alison Makela, Ruben Orona, Stephanie Sanchez, Summerlynn Sigler, Tanise Smith, Emily Springhart, Collette West, Theresa Williams



Region 6 Welcomes New ACSA Members

Sonja Neely-Johnson, retired Chief Academic Officer from West Contra Costa USD and former R6 President and state ACSA Board member, continues to champion ACSA as she welcomed some of our new members in person. She presented them with gifts from Region 6 which included a region mug and our new membership handbook!



Partners Corner

Thank you to our ACSA Region 6 partners whose donations and sponsorships support various programs benefitting our school leaders. Check out all our partners on our website <https://regions.acsa.org/6/acsa-region-6-partners/>

Welcome to these two new Region 6 Partners:



Schoolbeat is the Everything SEL platform—giving you the real-time beat of your schools and classrooms, all in one place. Designed to be low lift for educators and highly engaging for students, Schoolbeat replaces disconnected SEL tools with one unified system for whole-child wellbeing.

With Schoolbeat, schools and districts get:

- Netflix-style SEL movie lessons that students actually want to watch
- Daily student wellness check-ins and monthly universal screeners—seamlessly connected
- Real-time wellness data showing school, classroom, and individual student climate
- A low-lift experience for educators, with high engagement from students

Schoolbeat brings **everything SEL into one platform** so educators can see what's happening now, respond faster, and allocate resources where they make the biggest impact.

More information: <https://schoolbeat.io>

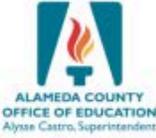


SchoolsFirst Federal Credit Union is the largest credit union serving school employees, and for the seventh year in a row, Forbes has named SchoolsFirst FCU the top credit union in California. Serving school employees and their families, the organization is dedicated to delivering World-Class Personal Service and improving the financial lives of its Members. In J.D. Power's 2025 inaugural U.S. Credit Union Satisfaction Study, its Members ranked them #1 for overall satisfaction. Today they serve more than 1.5 million Members with a full range of financial products and services. SchoolsFirst FCU was founded in 1934, when 126 school employees pooled \$1,200 and established a Member-owned cooperative to help improve each other's lives.

The Credit Union has nearly \$34 billion in assets and remains the largest credit union in California and the third largest credit union in the United States. For more information about SchoolsFirst FCU, visit schoolsfirstfcu.org. Insured by NCUA.

Website: [SchoolsFirst FCU: Welcome](https://schoolsfirstfcu.org)

ACSA Region 6 Partners 2025-2026



[Contact Us](#)

We welcome your feedback and suggestions.

[ACSA website](#)
[Region 6 website](#)

Region 6 Leadership

President: Lorianne Ventura
 President-Elect: Christina Filios
 Past President: Matt Chamberlain
 VP, Staff Development: Hong Nguyen
 VP, Programs: Paulette Smith
 VP, Legislative Action: Efa Huckaby
 VP, Membership: Erin Roberts
 Secretary: Valerie Nebo

Region 6 Staff

[Rose Lock](#), Executive Director
[Steve Collins](#), Associate Director

Treasurer: Suzy Chan
Equity Chair: Hong Nguyen
Communication Chair: Pam VandeKamp
ACSA Board Director: Raul Zamora
At-Large Representatives: Nia Rashidchi,
Deb Brill, Mikey McKelvey

The mission of the Association of California School Administrators is to advocate in the best interests of students and to develop, empower and inspire equity-minded educational leaders.

ACSA Region 6 | 77 Santa Barbara Road | Pleasant Hill, CA 94523 US

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