The nomination process for ACSA Administrator of the Year Awards 2027 has commenced.

How are we helping our members to feel they belong? How are we inviting other leaders into ACSA, our leadership community. EVERY GREAT LEADER NEEDS A COMMUNITY!

association of california school administrators
REGION 6

Advance Newsletter

November 2026

President's Message



Invited and United to Lead

Dear ACSA Region 6 colleagues,

As we move towards closing the first half of another impactful school year, I find myself reflecting on the profound privilege it is to serve alongside each of you. Across our region—in every school site, operational department, and district office—our administrative leaders demonstrate an unwavering commitment to the growth, safety, and success of the students and communities we serve.

This year, our guiding theme is **Invited and United to Lead**. For me, it is more than a slogan; it is an intentional commitment to honor how we arrived in our administrative roles and a call to work together to create lasting educational impact.

Deep Gratitude for Your Leadership

Educational leadership demands extraordinary skill and resilience. Whether managing campuses, supporting student services, directing fiscal operations, or guiding strategy, your hard work forms our foundation. To all of my Region 6 colleagues, thank you for your dedication and quiet perseverance every day.

This theme highlights a vital truth: exemplary leadership is not defined by a single credential or job title. Every student outcome is supported by a full network of leadership. From instructional guidance in the classroom to the operational support that keeps our campuses safe, welcoming, and effective, our collective

strength relies on our unity. When we invite diverse perspectives to the table and leverage the expertise of all leaders across our organizations, our entire educational community thrives.

A Call to Action: Pay It Forward

Very few of us reached leadership entirely on our own. Most of us can point to a pivotal moment when a mentor, supervisor, or colleague saw our potential, offered encouragement, and invited us to step forward.

As we enter the season of giving thanks, I ask each of you to take two meaningful steps **before winter break**:

1. **Express Gratitude: Reach out to someone who previously invited you to lead, mentored your growth, or championed your development. A quick note, call, or email of thanks can mean the world.**
2. **Extend the Invitation: Look across your school site or department for a colleague with untapped leadership potential. Pay it forward by inviting them to join a committee, share their perspective on a key project, or take on a new leadership role.**

Thank you for your partnership, your energy, and your commitment to our shared mission. I am honored to serve as your President, and I look forward to all that we will accomplish together.

With deep appreciation,
Christina Filios Yiannakopoulos
Region 6 President

ACSA Administrator of the Year Awards 2027



Kicking Off ACSA Administrator of the Year Awards 2027

Every ACSA member knows a colleague deserving of recognition. It’s a great opportunity for members to contribute to this annual ACSA tradition. As leaders, it's important that we make

the effort to honor colleagues/fellow ACSA members for their contributions to the profession and dedication to students.

There are a few changes to the ACSA Awards Program this year. Nominations for all awards including all special state awards begin at the Charter and then Region levels.

Special Awards

- **Ferd Kiesel Memorial Distinguished Service Award** — *awarded to anyone (school board member, legislator, community leader, teacher, administrator) who has made lifelong contributions to California education*
- **Marcus Foster Memorial Award for Administrator Excellence** — *ACSA membership required*
- **Valuing Diversity Award** — *ACSA membership required*
- **Partners in Educational Excellence Award** — *awarded to a school-community partnership program*
- **Robert E. Kelly Award** — *must have been a retired member for 3+ years*

Administrators of the Year in 23 categories
ACSA membership required in all these job-alike categories. New category for 2027: Early Education Administrator of the Year

More information about the ACSA Awards Program including detailed descriptions of each award can be found on the **ACSA website**.

The nomination process in Region 6 begins in your charter. Check with your Charter leadership on specific local timeline. **Click here** to the Region 6 website for timeline and additional information.

SAVE THE DATE:
2027 Region 6 Administrator of the Year Awards Dinner at the San Ramon Marriott on Friday, April 23, 2027!

ACSA Every Student Succeeding Awards



Angie Molina receiving her award from Dr. Zazueta, ACSA Ex Directorr and Dr. Rickard, ACSA President



21 students from 19 ACSA regions were honored at the November 8 Every Student Succeeding Awards Luncheon at the Annual Leadership Summit in Chula Vista



Angie with Monie Bohnsack after receiving her award

This ACSA program honors students who exceed expectations and the educators who support them along the way. These award recipients are extraordinary examples of perseverance, dedication, maturity, and grace.

At the November Leadership Summit, our Region 6 winner, Angie Molina, was honored along with 20 other ESS honorees. Thank you to her support team from Del Amigo HS in San Ramon Valley USD led by Melissa Sackett, Principal; Monie Bohnsack, Social Worker; and Alissa Kruse, Counselor

You can see the story of each student winner on **ACSA YouTube**
Be prepared to be inspired by their incredible stories and even shed a few tears!

Nominations for 2027 Awards have begun. Here's the link to ACSA website with information and nomination form: **https://acsa.org/awards/every-student-succeeding/**

Nominations are due to Region 6 on January 29, 2027.

Region 6 Fall Networking Events

Region 6 hosted 4 membership networking events across the region this fall. Members gathered in Antioch, Newark, Livermore, and Oakland after work to connect with one another. Don't miss out on these opportunities for good conversations, professional networking and some complimentary food and beverage.

Look for spring events coming in March!





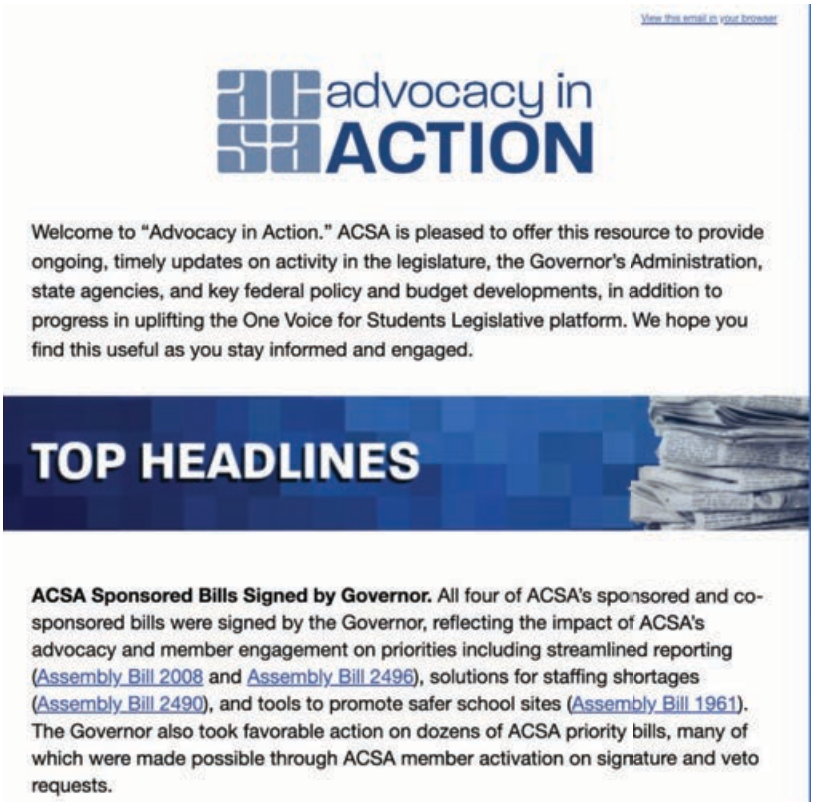









ACSA Advocacy


View this email in your browser

advocacy in ACTION

Welcome to "Advocacy in Action." ACSA is pleased to offer this resource to provide ongoing, timely updates on activity in the legislature, the Governor's Administration, state agencies, and key federal policy and budget developments, in addition to progress in uplifting the One Voice for Students Legislative platform. We hope you find this useful as you stay informed and engaged.

TOP HEADLINES

ACSA Sponsored Bills Signed by Governor. All four of ACSA's sponsored and co-sponsored bills were signed by the Governor, reflecting the impact of ACSA's advocacy and member engagement on priorities including streamlined reporting (Assembly Bill 2008 and Assembly Bill 2496), solutions for staffing shortages (Assembly Bill 2490), and tools to promote safer school sites (Assembly Bill 1961). The Governor also took favorable action on dozens of ACSA priority bills, many of which were made possible through ACSA member activation on signature and veto requests.

Every month, ACSA's outstanding Governmental Relations Department publishes the ACSA **Advocacy in Action** and delivers it to you in your email. Our members are very interested being informed and receiving timely updates on activities in Sacramento as well as relevant federal policy developments. This is a comprehensive resource for all school and districts. Make sure you are receiving them in the email you have provided in your ACSA profile. If you are not seeing them, check your spam folder or update your profile with preferred email address.

You can also keep up with all the legislative and advocacy updates available on the ACSA website at https://acsa.org/advocacy/

One of the best ACSA experiences is participating in the annual Legislative Action Days. Each year, approximately 250 education leaders throughout the state bring their regional teams to Sacramento to advocate for California's 5.8 million students. ACSA staff, along with experts in the field, will provide members with briefings and guidance on current issues in education as well as offer the tools to directly lobby the legislature. Join us to hear our legislative priorities and advocate for leadership, equity, support and investment on behalf of California's students and educators.

If you are interested in participating as a member of the Region 6 delegation in the 2027 LAD on March 29-30, 2027, email **Efa Huckaby**, R6 Vice President of Legislative Action.

Upcoming ACSA Conferences



🌵 Desert Bloom: Leading Systems in Challenging Landscapes

Join more than 1,500 California education leaders at ACSA's Every Child Counts Symposium, January 11–13, 2027, at the JW Marriott Desert Springs Resort & Spa in Palm Desert.

Designed for student services and special education professionals, this premier event features inspiring speakers, practical workshops, innovative strategies, and meaningful opportunities to connect with colleagues from across the state.

Together, we'll explore how strong leadership, resilience, and collaboration help every student thrive, even in the most challenging landscapes.

👉 Register today: **https://bit.ly/EveryChild27**

Download flyer here



Essential Engines: Fueling the Future of Education

Built for Classified Leaders by Classified Leaders

Join Us in Pasadena!

February 24–26, 2027
Hilton Pasadena | Pasadena, CA

You deserve professional learning designed specifically for the work you do. The 2027 ACSA Classified Educational Leaders Institute is the only statewide professional learning event dedicated to classified leaders across California's schools and county offices of education.

Join colleagues who understand your responsibilities, share your challenges and bring valuable perspectives to the table.

Your Role. Your Challenges. Your Institute.
Whether you lead in business and fiscal services, human resources, maintenance and operations, custodial services, technology, facilities, student services or administrative support, this experience is designed with you in mind. Emerging and aspiring classified leaders are welcome, too!

Take advantage of this opportunity to learn alongside professionals who understand your work, build a statewide network and return with ideas you can put into action.

Register today: **on ACSA website**

ACSA Leadership Summit 2026 in the books



What a beautiful venue for the ACSA Leadership Summit from November 4-7. Over 750 ACSA members attended this always inspiring event at Chula Vista's new Gaylord Pacific Resort. Approximately 30 Region 6 members attended the conference and networked with other leaders from across the state and learned from other ACSA members.

The ACSA welcome reception also offered opportunities to meet member authors and purchased their signed books.

One of our partners, Scholastics, again hosted an amazing dinner at a nearby restaurant for our Region 6 Board of Directors attending the conference. Thank you, Lisa Karmann, for the delicious dinner and organizing this fun-filled evening.

The Thursday Every Student Succeeding Recognition Luncheon had most of the student honorees in attendance. These students' stories about overcoming incredible challenges and achieving against the odds were truly inspirational and touching. Our Region 6 honoree and graduate of Del Amigo High School in San Ramon Valley USD, Angie Molina, was present along with her social worker Monie Bohnson.

Friday evening's President's Award Gala was a festive event when ACSA celebrated all of this year's Administrators of the Year. Daniel Musselman, Vice Principal at Livermore High School, was recognized as the Co-Administrator of the Year.

This year's conference with the theme "You Belong Here: Leadership for Every Student" drew more than 200 first time attendees! Save the date for Leadership Summit 2027 on November 3-6, 2027 in Sacramento!



Region 6 Board leaders enjoyed dinner and time together on the first night!



What a beautiful venue for the 2026 Leadership Summit in Chula Vista Returning in 2028!



Proud of our R6 authors, Cynthia Rapaido and Matt Chamberlain, seen here with their books!



The winners of the 2027 ACSA Association Awards



Daniel Musselman receiving the Secondary Co-Administrator of the Year Award from ACSA President-Elect Roxane Fuentes



Congratulations, Daniel!

ACSA Leadership Assembly



First ACSA Governance Meeting of the year

The Leadership Assembly is an important representative body within ACSA.
Its responsibilities include:

- Electing statewide officers
- Approving changes to ACSA bylaws
- Approving the legislative platform
- Reviewing statewide education policy issues
- Advising the Board of Directors
- Representing the interests of the geographic regions

Regional delegates participate, giving local administrators a voice in statewide decisions.

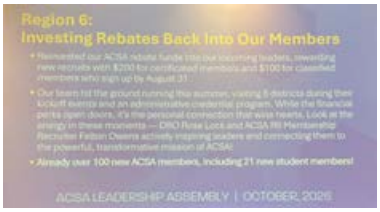
There are 3 governance meetings each year and the first one was held on October 8 in Anaheim. There were 2 new features this year. Delegates from the 19 regions were introduced to the whole assembly as they walked across the stage in the *Parade of Regions*. Delegations were encouraged to be creative using signs, simple props, coordinated attire, movement or another fun way to highlight their regional identity.

Regions in Action: Celebrating Success Across ACSA was another new feature at the Leadership Assembly. Three regions were selected to highlight a successful event, innovative approach, impactful member engagement effort that they are particularly proud of. Our President, Christina Filios, presented our successful new member recruitment campaign where we invested rebate incentives back into our members.

Our region is represented by the following delegates: President Christina Filios, President Elect Dustin Gacherieu, Past President Lorianne Ventura, VPLA Efa Huckaby, Board Rep Raul Zamora, plus 3 at-large delegates Juwen Lam, John Tran-Mortel, and Theodora Pappas.



President Filios presented on our region's successful new member recruitment effort during Highlight on Regions.



Investing membership rebates back into our members. Cash incentives for new members brought over 100 new ACSA members in August



Your proud Region 6 delegates with ACSA Past President Daryl Camp.

Region 6 Members Learning Together on a Saturday!



So honored to have Dr. Candy Singh leading the Franklin Covey training on the 4 Essential Roles of Leadership. Dr, Singh is a former Superintendent, university professor, and renowned speaker



Over 35 leaders attended a Saturday training. A great mix of certificated and classified leaders learning together from each other. Amazing energy!



Thank you to Kyle Ellison from Franklin Covey for providing this training to our R6 leaders. Looking forward to part 2 in the spring



Region 6 leaders, Charter President Erika Brown, VPSD



Byron ESD Superintendent Crystal Castaneda brought a



Cindy Lau, Pleasanton USD and Anna Foster, Bryon USD

Hong Nguyen, President Christina Filios, Charter President Crystal Castaneda, learning along with our members

team of district leaders

received full PD scholarships to attend the upcoming ACSA Classified Leaders Institute in Pasadena!

Thank you to our partner, Franklin Covey, Region 6 is able to offer another outstanding leadership training complimentary to our members. This year, we are following up on the introduction to Trust and Inspire offered last spring with a two-part course - The 4 Essential Roles of Leadership.

We have also specifically invited our classified leaders to take advantage of this PD opportunity as it is relevant to classified as well as certificated leaders. Region 6 has been continuing to find ways to support of classified leaders. At the November 14 session, 2 classified ACSA members in attendance were awarded PD scholarships to attend the February 24-26, 2027 ACSA Classified Educational Leaders Institute in Pasadena. The scholarships will cover registration, lodging and travel. Congratulations to Cindy Lau, Assistant Director, Technology Services in Pleasanton USD and Anna Foster, HR Generalist, Byron USD!

From Region 6 Executive Director

"Belonging"

The theme of this year's ACSA Leadership Summit was "You Belong HERE: Leadership for Every Student" to inspire school leaders to step up, speak out, share their stories and build connections. "Belonging" is a powerful concept and can trigger emotional responses for the young and old. Oftentimes, even thinking about "belonging" brings back memories of difficult times during our school years. Fortunately, there has been more and more awareness and willingness for adults to share their stories. This in turn ultimately benefits all those in our circle of influence especially our students. As our President shared in her message above, find the opportunity to invite others to belong.

ACSA is a diverse community in so many aspects. Statewide, there are over 18,000 members at all levels of management. In Region 6, we now have over 1400 members in our two counties, Alameda and Contra Costa. Over 150 members are classified and confidential leaders. Over 250 are retirees who belonged to ACSA over their long administrative careers and remained committed to the mission of our organization. Participating in ACSA can take many forms - professional learning, advocacy, networking. ACSA is an indispensable resource to help public school leaders thrive.

Each year, your Region 6 Board of Director develops goals that align with **ACSA's Strategic Plan**. Here are the 2026-27 goals adopted for our region.

COMMUNICATION
Goal 1: Support Charters to disseminate ACSA and Region communications to members as well as non-members
Goal 2: Facilitate members' understanding of ACSA and Region 6 resources
Goal 3: Continue to improve communication channels and tools

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
Goal 1: Provide differentiated professional development opportunities for new and existing members, focusing on underserved populations
Goal 2: Support the development and continuation of affinity groups and spaces
Goal 3: Provide opportunities for members to reflect and process their learnings from professional development

Goal 4: Provide opportunities that support members in developing their careers

LEGISLATIVE ACTION AND ADVOCACY
Goal 1: Build a strong advocacy network
Goal 2: Increase member participation
Goal 3: Keep members informed and connected

MEMBERSHIP
Goal 1: Recruit, engage, and retain members
Goal 2: Identify a membership liaison in each charter to support Region 6 membership efforts
Goal 3: Connect with groups in Region 6 to gain access to potential ACSA members

Don't hesitate to reach out to your Charter President or to us at the Region level if you have suggestions on we can better serve you.

Wishing you peace and joy in the upcoming holiday season.

Rose Lock
Region 6 Executive Director



Welcome New ACSA Members



Welcome to the following new ACSA members in Region 6 during September and October.

Alameda COE
Ellen Luce McKay

Albany City USD
Virginia Cook, Jen Com

Antioch USD
Sean Dimri, Nikki Pitchet, Lynne Ruvalcaba

Contra Costa COE
Steven Leopold, Patricia Facteau

Liberty UHSD
Robyn Maselli

Livermore Valley JUSD
Jessica Stewart

Mt. Diablo USD
Nicolina Totah

Oakley UESD
Amber Hagen, Allison Sinclair

Piedmont City USD
Jean Chen-Takazawa

Pleasanton USD
Lauren Reilly

San Ramon Valley USD
Jennifer Adams, Megan Yahr

Walnut Creek ESD
Stephanie Andrews-Velasquez, Ngoc Nguyen

West Contra Costa USD
Maria Resendiz

Student Members
Susan Williams, Colby Angeloni, Elizabeth Richardson, Michelle Mazzeo, Acacia Samples, Sylvia Kahn, Evan Gravenmier, Sharon Pizer, Sarah Ghannadan, Caitlin Raymond, Leesa Campbell, Homaira Siddiqi, Kelley Leathers, Miguel Barrera, Xinjia Xia, Regina Hoang, Megan Fortayon, Jim Kang, Elizabeth Mendonca-Seufert, Courtney Wilson, Kelly Reimer

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 new Region 6 Partners

LEAD BY LEARNING
Understand learning. Improve teaching. Build leadership.
A Center of Northeastern University

Lead by Learning is your trusted implementation partner to meet your student and staff goals. A center of Northeastern University on the Oakland campus, Lead by Learning partners with schools, districts, agencies, and organizations across California to improve the day-to-day experiences students have in and beyond the classroom. We do this by building the capacity of those best positioned to improve student learning experiences—the educators, staff, and leaders who work with students daily.

THE STEPPING STONES GROUP
Transforming Lives Together

The Stepping Stones Group is the largest provider of Special Education and Autism services in the United States. In the state of California, we represent 1200 candidates and clinicians to districts throughout the state. We would appreciate being a preferred vendor due to the expertise that our team brings to this space and the growth for services that we have committed to our California clients. We incorporate a triad model bringing clinical management and support into our client and recruitment strategies that help support our providers on

Learn more at:
https://weleadbylearning.org/

assignment and allows our clients to ensure compliance.

Learn more at:
www.thesteppingstonesgroup.com

Swing Education is an award-winning substitute management service, built by former school administrators to keep student learning on track. For Northern California public schools needing additional coverage for certificated, classified, SPED, or ECE roles, Swing provides on-demand support with top-rated substitutes recruited from your local community. By leveraging technology built for last-minute gaps, Swing creates efficiencies that keep costs low and Northern California students learning without interruption.

Learn more at :
SwingEducation.com.

Imagine Learning creates K–12 learning solutions that support the boundless potential of students in more than half the districts nationwide. Empowered with data and insights from educators, we innovate to shape the future of education with a robust, digital-first portfolio of school services and core, courseware, and supplemental and intervention solutions. Imagine Learning. Empower potential.®

Learn more at:
https://www.imaginelearning.com

TIPS AND RESOURCES FROM OUR PARTNERS

From Lifetouch

Picture Day, the iconic start to the school year, is underway in schools across California. As smiling faces are photographed and pictures are delivered, it's time to think about if your school's Picture Day experience made you smile.

School photography is a unique service. Schools rely on the images for student information systems, IDs, and yearbooks, while families purchase the portraits. This unique buying experience means schools must balance their needs with those of their families. And because families are paying for these services, a traditional RFP may not be needed.
The question then becomes; How do you find the right photography partner and ensure families are receiving the best possible value?

Read more

ACSA Region 6 Partners 2026-2027



Contact Us
We welcome your feedback and suggestions.

ACSA website
Region 6 website

Region 6 Leadership
President: Christina Filios Yiannakopoulos
President-Elect: Dustin Gacherieu
Past President: Lorianne Ventura
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: Monique Walton
Communication Chair: Pam VandeKamp
ACSA Board Director: Raul Zamora
At-Large Representatives: Nia Rashidchi, Deb Brill, Farnaz Heydari, Danielle Winford

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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