Welcome Back!

A big welcome back to all of you hard-working school board members, superintendents and staff. I hope your summer was wonderful!

Another school year is upon us and the Ventura County School Boards Association (VCSBA) is more than ready to meet the challenges of educating Ventura County’s public school children.

Before I let you know of the wonderful line-up of meetings and an additional training that VCSBA has in store for you, let me introduce you to the VCSBA Executive Board:

- Veronica Robles-Solis, VP, Programs
- Dr. Charles Weis, VP, Legislation
- Denise Helfstein, Secretary
- Steve Blum, Treasurer
- Suzanne Kitchens, Region 11b Director
- Vianey Lopez, Delegate
- Dr. Mark Lisagor, Delegate
- Bill Daniels, Delegate
- John Walker, Delegate
- John Andersen, Delegate
- Stan Mantooth, County Superintendent of Schools

The Executive Board and I met on August 14 and we have developed a stimulating program for the 2017-18 school year. Prior to this meeting, a survey was sent to all School Board Members in Ventura County asking for your suggestions for dinner meeting topics. We received many wonderful responses and determined there will be three dinner meetings and one Saturday breakfast meeting.

At our first dinner meeting on Monday, October 2, we welcome the “CSBA Roadshow” where representatives from the California School Boards Association will present on a variety of issues of concern to local school boards.

Our second dinner meeting is Monday, February 5 and the topic is school safety, crisis intervention and the role of school resource officers.

The third dinner meeting is Monday, April 30 where we will have a presentation on public information officers and social media.

Additionally, there is a breakfast meeting on Saturday, March 17 where there will be a discussion on progress with our Local Control Accountability Plans and how are our boards evaluating the programs we have funded.

And if that is not enough excitement for you, we will be experimenting with a new dinner vendor at our October dinner meeting!

Please mark your calendars and join us for all of these events.

See you soon!

Christina Urias, President, VCSBA
Santa Paula Unified School District
RESPECTING OUR DIFFERENCES

As we enter a new school year with both excitement and anticipation, it is important to remember the dedication of teachers and staff members as well as the innate goodness and curiosity of the students they serve. However, in light of recent national events – and a couple of unfortunate local ones – we must also be attentive to the supports our children need in a time of societal polarization.

While there will always be academics and the need for rigor in those disciplines, the social and emotional component of learning must be given equal importance. By continuing to integrate civic learning and positive behavioral supports, educators enable our kids to see things and people as they truly are, which ultimately ensures the brightness of our future.

Social media now enhances and frequently overpowers our own personal and public communication world. Discussion amongst like-minded groups often makes people more unified, more confident - but also more extreme. This occurs on platforms like Facebook and Twitter all the time. For this reason, it is important to seek out and understand opposing points of view and different value systems in order to keep America from becoming isolated and, in some ways, untethered from reality.

When we interact with others, it is critical that we understand their unique perspectives, motivations and concerns as well as our own. Learning to work collaboratively with people from all walks of life is one of the most important skills we can give our kids to help them thrive both personally and professionally. When we fail to engage with challenging ideas and with people who are different than ourselves, we build a bubble that shuts out so much of what is wonderful in the world.

We are living in an era in which science is under attack, “alternative facts” hold sway over large segments of the population and conspiracy theories compete with professional journalism for the public’s attention. Our schools can play a vital role in helping students learn to be critical thinkers and to intelligently navigate the daily barrage of information that is at their fingertips.

As educators, we have the power to help shape the next generation, and the next, and the one after that; and we have the opportunity to teach our students to better respect those who are different at a time when they are developing their own beliefs, values, and ability to determine truth from fiction.

There are, of course, many other variables that come into play, but by maintaining our commitment to equality, equity, and valuing diversity, our students can truly become citizens of the world.

Additional resources can be found at: http://blog.csba.org/discuss-intolerance/

Stan Mantooth
Ventura County Superintendent of Schools
**LEGISLATIVE REPORT**

**Keeping Tabs on Sacramento**

Keeping up on legislative action is so easy these days. CSBA sends out Weekly Update emails each Wednesday highlighting movement on legislation that affects local school districts. You can check them out or sign up to receive them by clicking here.

**WHAT'S NEW**
Here are some of the most recent bills and issues CSBA is following:

- Reserve cap bill SB 751 unanimously passes Assembly Appropriations
- Reserve cap bill AB 235 passed to Senate Floor; key amendment exempts all small districts of less than 2,501 ADA from the cap
- School and county boards encouraged to submit requests for free water lead sampling

**A NEW APPROACH TO ADVOCACY**

For many years, CSBA has been the effective statewide voice for local school boards. Over the years, a conscious decision has been made not to form a 501 C (3) Political Action Committee nor to provide campaign contributions to candidates or issues like other statewide associations. This is because our membership of elected officials has a different type of political capital... clout and relationships with colleague elected officials. The shift to greater local control through LCFF and LCAP has inspired CSBA to consider a new local approach to advocacy.

With the slogan, “It takes a local community to know what’s best for students. It takes a powerful statewide network to make it possible!” CSBA is exploring a new grassroots network that will help deliver results for students and the change schools need on a local level.

At VCSBA's October 2 dinner meeting we will participate in the **CSBA Roadshow: Investing in Education, Empowering Local Communities**. Attendees will discuss issues of particular concern to school board members in Ventura and Santa Barbara Counties, such as:

- Relief from escalating pension costs
- Career and technical education
- Supporting English learners
- Increased school funding
- Teacher shortages
- Enhanced professional development for staff
- Increased afterschool enrichment
- Greater access to technology and learning materials
- Improved parent engagement

The need in California schools is tremendous and it’s not limited to the items listed above. CSBA’s new strategic initiatives allow us to address these issues by:

- Establishing a robust grassroots system to mobilize members and maximize our political capital
- Driving the education policy agenda to ensure high quality education for every student by addressing the adequacy and opportunity gap
- Providing more in-depth advocacy, policy, community engagement and governance training for individual board members
- Guaranteeing more frequent contact with CSBA staff and localized updates on the policy, legal and political developments of specific interest to your community
- Building powerful coalitions regionally and statewide

Learn how you can play a part in the work and make an even bigger difference for your students!

Chuck Weis, Vice President, Legislation
Hueneme School District
Specialized Schools Help Students Overcome Obstacles to Success

Providing supportive and enriching learning environments for students with special needs, social-emotional and behavioral issues is one of the biggest challenges in public education. Ventura County is fortunate to be served by numerous schools that offer specialized education for students with disabilities as well as those who have been expelled or incarcerated. Below is a listing of schools and programs operated by the Ventura County Office of Education (VCOE) that are meeting the needs of these students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Grades</th>
<th>Students Served</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACCESS</td>
<td>Moorpark</td>
<td>Ages 18-22</td>
<td>Moderate to severe disabilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Balboa Middle School</td>
<td>Ventura</td>
<td>Grades 6-8</td>
<td>Moderate to severe disabilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dean Triggs School</td>
<td>Thousand Oaks</td>
<td>Grades K-5</td>
<td>Moderate to severe disabilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dorothy Boswell School</td>
<td>Ventura</td>
<td>Ages 18-22</td>
<td>Moderate to severe disabilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dos Caminos Preschool</td>
<td>Camarillo</td>
<td>Pre-K</td>
<td>Moderate to severe disabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Douglas Penfield School</td>
<td>Ventura</td>
<td>Grades Pre-K - 5</td>
<td>Moderate to severe disabilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dwire School</td>
<td>Oxnard</td>
<td>Grades Pre-K - 5</td>
<td>Moderate to severe disabilities</td>
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<td>Gateway Community School</td>
<td>Camarillo</td>
<td>Grades 6-12</td>
<td>Expelled, truant and referred students</td>
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<td>James Foster School</td>
<td>Oxnard</td>
<td>Grades 6-8</td>
<td>Moderate to severe disabilities</td>
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<td>La Mariposa Elementary School</td>
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<td>Las Colinas Middle School</td>
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<td>Moorpark High School</td>
<td>Moorpark</td>
<td>Grades 9-12</td>
<td>Moderate to severe disabilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ojai TEAMS</td>
<td>Ojai</td>
<td>Ages 18-22</td>
<td>Moderate to severe disabilities</td>
</tr>
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<td>Phoenix - Airport</td>
<td>Camarillo</td>
<td>Grades 6-12</td>
<td>Social-emotional and behavioral needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phoenix - Los Nogales</td>
<td>Camarillo</td>
<td>Grades K-5</td>
<td>Social-emotional and behavioral needs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Phoenix - Moorpark</td>
<td>Moorpark</td>
<td>Grades 2-8</td>
<td>Social-emotional and behavioral needs</td>
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<td>Providence Court School</td>
<td>Oxnard</td>
<td>Grades 9-12</td>
<td>Incarcerated students</td>
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<td>Ritchen Preschool</td>
<td>Oxnard</td>
<td>Pre-K</td>
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<td>Sunkist School</td>
<td>Port Hueneme</td>
<td>Grades K-5</td>
<td>Moderate to severe disabilities</td>
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<td>Triton Academy</td>
<td>Camarillo</td>
<td>Grades 3-12</td>
<td>Autism Spectrum Disorder</td>
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<td>Ventura High School</td>
<td>Ventura</td>
<td>Grades 9-12</td>
<td>Moderate to severe disabilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Williams Preschool</td>
<td>Oxnard</td>
<td>Pre-K</td>
<td>Moderate to severe disabilities</td>
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VCOE’s Triton Academy for Students with Autism is Seeking a New Home

Triton Academy, a school that serves students with autism spectrum disorder from throughout Ventura County, is in search of a new place to call home after the current school year. For the past ten years, Triton Academy has operated at a campus in Camarillo leased from the Pleasant Valley School District (PVSD). Due to expected growth in enrollment, the district anticipates needing the site for its own students beginning in the 2018-19 school year.

VCOE operates Triton Academy and is actively exploring options to locate a new home for the school. These include finding an unused or underused facility in another school district, using existing VCOE facilities or creating a temporary campus with relocatable buildings on a vacant site. Since Triton Academy’s 83 students come from all parts of the county, the goal is to find a centrally located site.

VCOE expects to find a new home for Triton Academy in time for the 2018-19 school year to prevent any interruption in the services it provides to students and their families. The latest updates on the move are being posted on a special webpage which can be found at vcoe.org/triton-move.