



California Department of Education
**Achievement
Gap Summit**

Sacramento
Convention Center
November 13 & 14, 2007

Summary Report of Breakout Sessions

The following document includes summaries of a sampling of breakout sessions at the Achievement Gap Summit. Because there were 122 sessions, we were unable to include information on each session. Additional information on the summit is available online at http://www.closingtheachievementgap.org/cs/ctag/print/htdocs/summit_2007.htm.

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November 13, 2007, Session One: 10:15 – 11:15 a.m.

Closing the Achievement Gap by Addressing the Opportunity Gap in California	
Speaker:	Linda Darling-Hammond, Stanford University
Brief description of presentation	Gaps in academic achievement between low-income and minority students and their white and Asian counterparts persist in California and nationwide. Behind this gap are a multitude of less conspicuous gaps that need to be addressed in order for learning to improve for these students, including the gap in teacher salary and the gap in teacher experience and qualifications. This presentation discussed these gaps and how student achievement can be improved by addressing them. It also presented data from a newly released study of California high schools that are successful in graduating low-income students of color and sending nearly all of them to college.

- A wide range of per-pupil spending on education (Sausalito vs. Compton) exists in California. Segregation supports inequality. California’s infrastructure for teaching is weak.
- “High Schools for Equity” is a newly released study on five high schools serving a majority of students of color and sending 80% or more students to college. The high schools profiled are Leadership High School (San Francisco), June Jordan School for Equity (San Francisco), Ánimo Inglewood Charter High School (Los Angeles), Sacramento New Technology High School, and Construction Tech Academy (San Diego).
- The five high schools include the following features:
 - Highly personalized
 - All small (300 to 500 students)
 - Long-term relationships with adults
 - Advisory systems
 - Close parental contact
 - Rigorous and relevant instruction
 - Internships and career preparation
 - College-preparatory courses
 - Community service
 - A culture of revision and redemption
 - Project-based learning
 - Authentic assessment
 - Culturally responsive instruction
 - Professional collaboration and learning
 - Intensive summer retreats
 - Shared planning time



Summary Report

- Teaching teams
- Regular professional development
- Inquiry about student learning
- Leadership focused on instruction
- School features supporting success
 - Teachers prepared and supported for adaptive, socially just practice
 - Strong instructional leaders
 - Coherent, authentic curriculum
- What do we need to achieve educational quality?
 - Well-prepared teachers and leaders
 - Authentic assessment
 - Engaging, real-world curriculum
 - Schools designed for teaching, learning, and caring
- The policy implications for addressing the opportunity gap mean that we need to provide the following:
 - Support for teacher recruitment and development
 - Forward-looking curriculum
 - Funding that flows on the basis of student needs

Legislative Panel Discussion on Achievement Gap	
Speakers:	Julia Brownley, California State Assembly Representative Amy Costa, Office of Senate President pro Tempore Don Perata Denise Ducheny, California State Senate Bob Huff, California State Assembly Representative Fiona Ma, California State Assembly Representative Gene Mullin, California State Assembly Representative Rick Simpson, Office of Assembly Speaker Fabian Nunez
Brief description of presentation	This panel of state legislators discussed themes that arose at the Achievement Gap Summit and commented on preliminary recommendations for developing, implementing, and sustaining a specific, ambitious plan that holds California accountable for creating the conditions necessary for closing the achievement gap.

Simpson:

- Is the achievement gap the most important issue in education?

Mullin:

- The achievement gap is the sum and substance of everything we do.
- Overregulation, prescription, funding gaps, and problematic teacher assignments all lead to the achievement gap.

Brownley:

- Closing the gap is the most important goal for the state.
- It is an opportunity gap; we are not providing the right resources and conditions for the very best teaching and learning.
- We want to raise achievement and close the gap.

Ma:

- Growing up in New York City, we had sports, arts, music, etc. They have been taken away. We understand it is about resources and money, and there's not enough. What do we do? San Francisco passed \$60 million to add music, art, nurses, and librarians to our schools.
- Resources are a big part of the achievement gap. We need to think hard about them.

Huff:

- We are looking to government to close the gap; I would submit the bigger issue is the parental gap.
- The breakdown of traditional families has influenced education. Traditionally, parents push kids ahead of them, but today there is a lack of motivation.
- Some solutions are outside of the classroom.

Ducheny:

- If we do not educate those students not meeting the standards, then all of us will suffer when those folks do/do not enter the workforce.
- What are the jobs going to be for students not meeting standards? Immigrant families tend to push their children above them.
- How do we ensure the future workforce is college educated?

Costa:

- Is the achievement gap a civil rights issue?

Ducheny:

- The Williams lawsuit was clearly a reaction to a civil rights issue; it is important to make (quality) facilities and learning materials available.
- We are probably over-prescriptive, and we probably over-test; some of us are convinced that the gap would not be so big if we tested kids in their first language.
- Why can we not replicate best practices? There are examples; how can we facilitate replication? From the top? Guidance from the field?

Mullin:

- We have been searching for replicable programs; extraordinary teachers drive many programs.
- Kids often come in with a gap; the buck is passed. How do we deal with kids before they enter the system? Then we can add value to a more solid foundation.

Ma:

- There is no excitement to learn and no exciting curriculum. Teachers are upset by tests.
- I believe in more local control to tailor programs; it is not one size fits all.

Huff:

- I like standards; we have to find a way to empower our teachers by being less prescriptive.
- We need to set standards, model best practices, and let districts meet the standards.

Brownley:

- There is a gap of opportunity, access, and equity.
- The Legislature's role should be to provide tools and policies that help locals do the right thing.
- Educating a child involves creating the best conditions for teaching and learning; replication is hard because we do not have the resources. That is the role of the Legislature.
- We should "underwrite optimal conditions for teaching and learning."

Simpson:

- How can the state help overcome the challenges kids face outside of school (non-school factors)?

Mullin:

- We do a pretty good job of moving kids forward, but we need to address other issues. This is the concept of value added. If we do not do this, the gap will not close.
- Interagency collaboration (ages 0–5) must be examined.

Brownley:

- Kids miss school often because of reasons such as cavities and asthma, but the most important thing is getting kids ready to learn at kindergarten. What do we do for children from ages 0 to 5?
- Quality healthcare and universal preschool are vitally important. RAND has correlated prekindergarten and elementary school success, but the effects level off in middle and high school.

Huff:

- I do not think universal preschool will accomplish what we want; there is still a parenting gap.
- We do not have enough resources to fund what we are doing now, so we should not expand programs.
- Beating the odds involves leadership. You do not accept failure; you use the resources you are given and get families involved.

Ma:

- I agree that we need universal preschool. San Francisco has it for all four-year-olds. This is a local commitment.
- Government needs to do what it can to level the playing field; the government is responsible for providing more than what is in the classroom.

Ducheny:

- We cannot sit back and wait. We must have high expectations for students and parents. We must train teachers and principals.
- But just keeping a roof over a family's head is a struggle; how do we support these families? Do we provide more money for social services and health care?
- The economy is flawed; more and more public school families are in poverty, and few wealthy families are in public schools.
- However, there is no money in the budget (next year will be worse).
- Seventy percent of the prison population is former foster kids.

Costa:

- How should California address its dropout problem?

Mullin:

- The average inmate has a tenth-grade education but is at the fourth-grade level.
- We have narrowed the curriculum and emphasized testing. There is a dearth of technical education, and it is hard to recruit new teachers.
- We are going in wrong direction for engaging students.

Brownley:

- We need to calculate the dropout rate correctly.
- I believe in high expectations and accountability; students must achieve a standard before graduating. I feel strongly that it is time for the state to fine-tune its assessments.

Ducheny:

- How do we make education relevant? We do not have multiple alternative paths; we worry about tracking students. We must provide an opportunity for consensus about A-G requirements, but we must also recognize that it is not everyone's long-term goal. We have not yet acknowledged that as a state.
- What do you do to hold a 14-year-old's imagination?

Ma:

- High-tech firms complain about the lack of engineers in California, but only some of these firms are partnering or providing internships. We could be more creative in this area.

Huff:

- The reason for dropouts is that school is not relevant.
- I am confident that a change in the exit exam isn't necessary; we must hold kids accountable for a meaningful diploma.
- We need to keep standards high and help people achieve them.

Simpson:

- What is the future of career-technical education in California?

Mullin:

- It took us a long time to dismantle our career-technical education (CTE) pipeline; it will take a while to rebuild it. The education committee will focus on this issue.

Brownley:

- We need more guidance for kids.

Ma:

- 109 community colleges in California serve 2.6 million students. We must bring options back.

Brownley:

- We need partnership academies with community colleges. We need to be creative. We are not creative enough with the curriculum. Students do not see the connection between algebra, for example, and careers.

Huff:

- The workforce needs are different now; the automotive industry and machinists cannot find technicians.
- We need to tailor CTE to fit with A-G requirements.

Audience Member:

- What do you see as the role of adult education?

Ducheny:

- We do not make it comfortable to go back to school; there are strange restrictions on adult education.
- We need to create "parallel structures."

Ma:

- Eighty percent of U.S. jobs require education beyond high school.

Mullin:

- We need to prevent dropouts and keep adult education students in the K-12 system.
- We should limit adult education programs to new entrants to the U.S.

Policies That Support the Academic Development of Urban Black Males	
Speaker:	Otis Johnson, Jr., Maryland Population Research Center, University of Maryland
Brief description of presentation	In this session, Johnson explored the contextual and social factors contributing to the achievement of African Americans and African American males in particular. How African American males are achieving relative to their female counterparts and peers of other racial groups; how differences in the quality of the learning contexts in which we find African American males contribute to gender and racial achievement disparities; and how social policies might be enacted to address these issues were the primary topics explored in this session. The latter topic considered the promise of developmental “pipelines,” out-of-school programs, in-school retention/acceleration policies, and others.

- Johnson presented national statistics.
- He addressed many of the social issues that are arising both as a result and as a cause of the high rates of school failure for African American males.
- The problem is even more apparent as African American women are achieving at much higher rates.
- Problems arise due to the high concentration of poverty in neighborhoods where many African American students are served. Not addressing the African American male’s educational attainment is complicated by the level of poverty and needs that arise from this environment.
- It is critical to focus on African Americans; sometimes this is not easily accomplished, but the disparity should be difficult to ignore.

Policy recommendations:

- **Create less stratified learning environments.**
 - Ensure that equity in education is achieved for African American males.
 - Address disparities by looking at course offerings.
 - Learn from schools that succeed, whether private or charters.
- **Limit the amount of unsupervised/idle time.**
 - Create programs to address after-school needs, whether at school or in the community.

- Provide extended-day opportunities.
- Provide opportunities for varied means of involvement, such as additional recreational or organized activities.
- **Build in extra-familial supports.**
 - Develop partnerships (community/businesses).
 - Encourage family involvement.
 - Provide school support system.
 - Provide mentoring.

Professional Development: Strategies to Enhance Instructional Practices in Preschool	
Speakers:	Paula Brown-Almond, California Department of Education David Gordon, Sacramento County Office of Education Nancy Herota, Sacramento County Office of Education Cathy Wietstock, Orange County Office of Education Joyce Wright, Sacramento County Office of Education
Brief description of presentation	This session discussed new techniques to enhance instructional practices for preschool and kindergarten students through high quality, research-based, development strategies.

- *Gordon* referenced the recently released RAND report and the report's indication that quality prekindergarten programs are needed to close the achievement gap. The report stated that 47% of all eligible four-year-old children do not have access to state or federal prekindergarten programs. The report also indicated that high-quality, well-trained prekindergarten teachers are needed to make the programs successful in closing the achievement gap.
- *Wright* presented information on the California Preschool Instructional Network (CPIN) as a method of providing professional development opportunities for teachers and administrators, focusing on English learners. The California Department of Education funds the program.
- *Herota* explained that CPIN is implemented through the California County Superintendents Educational Services Association, and it provides the training and materials in a train-the-trainers model. Trainers may then take materials back to their schools and districts.
- The focus of the training is on language and literacy development, with additional focus on early math. There also are informational trainings on the prekindergarten learning foundations.
- *Brown-Almond* explained that CPIN makes courses available online.

- California’s Early Reading First is part of No Child Left Behind; it has four goals:
 - Early development through scientifically based research
 - Language and literacy-rich environments
 - Language and literacy activities
 - Screening assessments
- *Wietstock* explained that providing children with above-average teachers for five years in a row eliminated the achievement gap, and that professional development is extremely important in this regard.
- Horizontally and vertically aligned professional development activities are necessary. Guided professional development should be supported by student formative assessments.
- Teachers need to have more time for teaching. Teachers are currently spending approximately one-third of their time assessing their students.

Teaching as the Opportunity: When Teachers Thrive, Students Achieve	
Speaker:	Lowell Milken, Founder and Chairman, National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (and Milken Family Foundation)
Brief description of presentation	Many school reforms have failed to deliver on their promises of improved rigorous education by not addressing the central role of talented teachers in raising student achievement. Lowell Milken, education reform pioneer, explored how comprehensive school reforms such as the Teacher Advancement Program – active in 14 states and the District of Columbia – can drive student performance and close achievement gaps across all socioeconomic levels.

- The current and future economies rely on *human* resources, rather than the natural or financial resources of the past. Human capital is a scarce resource, though, and one that needs to be valued and fostered. What is the best way to build human resources? Education!
- Good teachers are needed to allow education to be the answer of a prepared workforce and informed nation.
- Most kids are not ready for work or college after K-12 schooling. Thirty to 40 percent of them need remediation in college.
- Company leaders say high school graduates are not ready to work. Most think the K-12 school system has the greatest responsibility for preparing the workforce.
- U.S. students need to compete globally; our test scores are not good enough.
- Research shows the single most important element in raising student achievement is the teacher. Teachers touch thousands.
- Teacher quality effects are 10 times greater than small class sizes.
- Most needy schools and students get the least qualified teachers.



Summary Report

- The highest testing teachers are entering the profession at a lower rate and leaving at a higher rate.
- The challenge is to inspire people to become teachers, develop them well, support them over time, and retain and reward them.
- The teaching profession does not have enough:
 - Money
 - Support
 - Apprenticeship opportunities
 - Professional learning communities
 - Collegiality and interaction with adults/peers
 - Professionalism
 - Respect
- Why are actors, scientists, and athletes respected, but teachers are not, even though they are the most important profession in that they prepare all others?
- Milken and his organization go to schools across the country, assemble the entire school, bring local media, and single out and reward a teacher with \$25,000. (Then the approximately 100 teachers receiving awards per year work together over time to continue to improve their teaching and that of their school colleagues.)
- The Milken Family Foundation was developed to address the barriers (listed earlier) to having more high-quality teachers.
- The Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) is a comprehensive, research-based, school reform program to raise teacher quality. Four key, interrelated elements lead to systemic changes. The program shows big achievement growth when its schools are compared to similar schools.
- Its goal is highly skilled, motivated, well-compensated teachers. It is endorsed by Margaret Spellings, Secretary of Education.
- The four elements of TAP are the following:
 1. Multiple career paths
 - Continuum of teacher development, with each level coming with higher pay
 - Career to mentor to master teacher
 - Allows teachers to keep teaching, but move to leadership roles, rather than switch to administration for advancement
 2. Ongoing applied professional development
 - Over 100 hours
 - Cluster groups driven by student need, followed by support from a master teacher in the classroom
 3. Instructionally focused improvement and accountability
 - Based on instructional standards and a rubric
 - Trained evaluators
 - Longitudinal student achievement tracking
 4. Performance-based compensation
 - Value added – based on skills, knowledge, responsibilities, and effectiveness

The Role of the Media in Closing the Achievement Gap	
Speakers:	Greg Edmonds, KGO Radio News Carolyn Goosen, New America Media Linda Jacobson, Education Week Franco Pinto, KMEX-TV
Brief description of presentation	A panel of journalists from print, TV, and radio news discussed the question: <i>What role does the media play in closing the achievement gap?</i> Representatives from leading news organizations in some of the largest and most diverse cities in America provided important perspectives.

Goosen:

- His organization, which is a San Francisco ethnic media organization, did a multilingual poll. The achievement gap is not a gap in desire. Eighty-six percent of the respondents wanted a four-year degree.
- Young people are aware of the importance of education.
- One in four Americans go to the ethnic media for their information.
- Do not keep talking about black students' failure. It makes these students feel like they cannot achieve.
- Asians are lumped together as a group, whereas there are clearly diverse issues.

Jacobson:

- He used to feel alone in covering preschool issues. Now preschool is receiving more attention.
- The barriers are coming down between the different segments from preschool through higher education.
- Business writers and presidential candidates are all showing interest in preschool.
- There is often no follow-up on how preschool did in terms of a student's future success. We have been talking about the Perry Preschool study for 12 years.

Pinto:

- He believes that the media can do something about the achievement gap crisis. They can help to set priorities. Right now the most important topics are Iraq, health, immigration, and the economy. Education never begins as the top news story. Instead we talk about whether people should be allowed to get drivers' licenses.
- Students' dreams are shattered before they begin.
- Parents define success. Having food and housing is crucial. Education is important, but not as crucial.
- The Los Angeles Unified School District is not unified. It is 90% Latino, and 70% of these students do not finish high school. There is no one reason for the problem.
- Parent involvement cannot be more important than the teacher, but it can be equally important.
- We need to show success stories—role models.

- Every media outlet should have one reporter dedicated to education.
- Pinto goes to high schools and talks to the students about once a month. The students see doors closing; they have no dreams.
- Good reporting can tell any story, even complex ones.

Edmonds:

- As a radio reporter, he goes into every interview with an agenda. He tells people, “I want your comment.” He is after the truth from everyone—and everyone has a different truth. He asks broad questions and then narrows things down.
- School libraries are in a sad state. Students need books to read, but the resources are not there.
- If audience members have an exciting story, they should pick up the phone and call him or other reporters. People can strike up a relationship with a reporter to get their story out. They should think outside the box in terms of trying to get the story to the public.
- The ethnic media have limited resources. They do not have education reporters. *Goosen* is interested in success stories. She wants to frame stories in a culturally relevant way.
- *Education Week* is policy oriented. A story has to link to a broader policy issue. *Jacobson* said it may take multiple calls to get your story out there.

Theory to Reality – From Program Improvement to National Model School	
Speakers:	Chris Adams, Shasta Union High School District Julie Adams, University Preparatory School
Brief description of presentation	This presentation explained how Enterprise High School closed the achievement gap and exited Program Improvement (PI) by focusing on the systems adopted and the process implemented that changed the culture of the school from an athletic school to an academic school. This session discussed the step-by-step process in which one high school went from PI to a national model school in three years.

- It is more than test scores; it is about cultural change.

Chris Adams wanted the staff to be the best they could be and not just complain about scores.

- After attending a summit with Joe Johnson and getting inspired, Adams met with teachers about making a cultural change.



Summary Report

- He wanted to hear what teachers had to say, as it related to making changes. They met with kids and developed good relationships.
- He discovered that academics were in competition with music and art. He worked to overcome that battle.
- The school needed a good system to measure needs, so as the leader he wanted to make changes with data.
- When systems are in place, schools improve. Schools need to do little things to create systemic change.
- He wanted students to be part of the change process.
- He wanted to get more students back from continuation or alternative education.
- The issue was about proficiency. He gave capacity to teachers to get their buy-in.
- Teachers needed to be able to reach into the kid's world.
- He used his leadership skills to move his agenda.
- He talked with feeder schools to get the ninth graders on board.

Julie Adams came into the schools to do professional development. The research showed that teachers needed to know the latest research.

- She wanted to know why instructional change was not taking place on campuses.
- The literacy strategy should focus around nonfiction.
- Teachers need to be better trained to deliver instruction in the classroom. Leaders should attend the training they have for teachers.
- Implementation will take place if it is constant, not drive by!
- Schools should agree to a standard form of note taking.
- Everything about student success depends on teachers.
- Teachers need professional development and to be held accountable, like other professions.
- Success has a lot to do with leadership.

What California Can Do to Close Achievement and Opportunity Gaps	
Speaker:	Russlyn Ali, Education Trust – West
Brief description of presentation	Practices and policies throughout California perpetuate devastating achievement and opportunity gaps that plague low-income students and students of color. But it does not have to be this way. Russlynn Ali unpacked the strategies that yield real results for all students. She talked about key roles in K–16 reform efforts, both state and local, and answered some key questions: How do we talk about our challenge of closing the achievement gap in terms that inspire action and confidence rather than hand-wringing? What are some powerful leverage points—especially in high schools—for moving all students to high levels of achievement? And what are the underlying structures needed to support real change at all levels of education?

- Ali reviewed 2007 National Assessment of Educational Progress and California Standards Test data. California’s scores remain some of the lowest in the nation. In seventh grade, African American and Hispanic students read at about the same levels as white third graders. Non-poor minority students score lower than poor white children. There has been little progress over time.
- The achievement gap is both race and poverty. Various strategies will yield results:
 1. Build a better statewide data system. Having more accurate and accessible data will help track students across the K-12 system.
 2. Support students with high-quality college and work readiness skills. Too often low-income students do not have access to the A-G curriculum.
 3. Adopt a growth model.
 4. Measure college and work readiness skills and knowledge. Use the Early Assessment Program model that the California State University System developed.
 5. Provide access to rigorous course work for all students. Classrooms should have high-level assignments. The same should hold true for career-technical programs. Low-level assignments are often given to Latino and African American students.
 6. Provide adequate interventions that do not “lock” students into a remedial track.
 7. Provide adequate instructional time.
 8. Make multiple pathways follow the same rigor as college preparation pathways.
 9. Hold the line on objective assessments, such as the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE). CAHSEE has made students and schools accountable.
 10. Ensure teacher quality. Low-achieving students gain more with effective teachers. In California minority students are four times more likely to have unqualified math teachers.
 11. Align fiscal resources with the greatest student needs.
- The Education Trust Summit on closing the achievement gap will be held February 24-26, 2008. For more information, contact www.educationtrust.org.

November 13, 2007, Session Two: 1:15 – 2:15 p.m.

ACES Needs the 4Cs: Coherence, Collaboration, and Civic Capacity	
Speakers:	Leslie Jordan, California School Boards Association Jo Ann Yee, California School Boards Association
Brief description of presentation	Districts with high concentrations of immigrants, English learners, and students living in poverty face intense pressure to close the achievement gap. Why are solutions so elusive? The speakers explored critical school factors, such as access, culture, expectations, and instructional strategies, and the role schools play in building the foundation and support of families, communities, and the larger society.

- Addressing the achievement gap is important for three reasons:
 - Employment
 - Accountability
 - Civil rights – equity
- We will know when the gap is eliminated when predictability of results no longer exists.
- The California African American student populations are generally concentrated in only three school districts, and high concentrations of other subgroups are concentrated in a limited number of school districts.
- Because student populations are so concentrated in a few school districts in California, a targeted approach to closing the gap should be employed. These districts should use a strategic approach with coherence in systemic reform by using data, aligning budgets to needs, and providing an intense focus on the achievement gap.
- Districts should form collaborations, such as the Alliance for Regional Collaboration to Heighten Educational Success (ARCHES).
- Other collaborations include:
 - Santa Ana Padres Promotores de la Educación.
 - San Diego State University and the Sweetwater School District compact to provide the A-G curriculum as the standard. If students meet all course requirements with a 3.0 grade point average, they are guaranteed access to college.
 - Cities, Counties, and Schools (CCS) Partnership. Cities engaged in school system coordination and supports include Denver, San Francisco, San Jose, Santa Fe Springs, Chicago, and Boston.
- High concentrations of ethnic, poor, and English learner students tend to create conditions whereby the achievement gap is deeply rooted.

Closing the Expectations Gap: Lessons from the American Diploma Project	
Speaker:	Michael Cohen, President of Achieve, Inc.
Brief description of presentation	This session focused on the research background and policy agenda of the American Diploma Project (ADP) Network, a consortium of 30 states working with Achieve to close the “expectations gap,” which is the gap between current state requirements and expectations for students to earn a high school diploma and the knowledge and skills high school graduates must have to succeed in postsecondary education and careers.

- The preparation gap means that too few students earn a high school diploma. Jobs today require more education and training, and too many students graduate unprepared for college and work.
- ADP works in five states regarding essential skills.
- The expectations gap means that standards currently reflect what is desirable, not essential. Only three states require algebra 2 for graduation. Too few students complete the A-G requirements in California.
- The ADP network policy agenda for states includes the following:
 - Align high school standards with the demands of college and the workplace.
 - Build college- and career-ready measures into statewide high school assessment systems.
 - Hold high schools accountable for graduating all students ready for college and the workplace.
 - Hold postsecondary institutions accountable for the success of the students they admit.
- The ADP network has made the following progress:
 - More states have policies that help prepare high school graduates for college and work (aligned standard and rigorous graduation course requirements).
 - States that have raised graduation requirements have maintained general electives (arts).
- The following lessons were learned from the ADP network:
 - Standards must drive high school curriculum/graduation requirements/ assessment, postsecondary placement, and other policies and tools.
 - Postsecondary institutions have a critical role; they need a single, system-wide definition of readiness.

Higher Education Panel	
Speakers:	Steve Bruckman, California Community Colleges Harold Levine, University of California, Davis Barry Munitz, California State University, Los Angeles
Brief description of presentation	What is the California system of higher education's role in reducing the K-12 achievement gap in California? The speakers discussed their efforts to partner with K-12.

Levine:

- He is taking the lead in designing what the University of California system overall can do to reduce the K-12 achievement gap. He also works with the Oakland public schools.
- The overarching position at UC is that the state has a tremendous stake in the future of California's children. We have three systems in the state: preschool (now a struggling cottage industry), a K-12 system, and a higher education system. The three systems do not speak to each other in any meaningful way. The exit requirements of one system are disassociated with the entrance requirements of the next. Levine feels this is a mistake.
- We do not have a data system that allows us to track students as they move across these three education layers, or what happens to students when they enter the workplace.
- UC has decided that it needs to step up as it has done historically in agriculture, science, and medicine – it needs to add education as the fourth leg at this table. UC needs to act more proactively with the state's K-12 systems. It has declared a long-term commitment to work with K-12 to do things like helping to close the achievement gap. This is not designed to be a top-down effort from the university, but it is a more collaborative model where UC is a partner at the table. It includes more than just faculty in schools of education. They have tremendous intellectual resources across the university that can be harnessed these toward these issues.
- UC also want to shore up its presence and influence on Sacramento from a research and policy sense. In addition, the campuses would like to work with K-12 districts in their area. Levine hopes there is a Web-based way to take what is known from research and to make this accessible to classroom teachers.
- Another thrust is "university assisted schools." Some of these are charter schools. Levine pointed to a number of universities involved with charters. In addition, UC is starting to make a deep commitment to non-charter public school systems, which is good because it forces UC to "walk the walk." UC has been good at telling others what to do, and now it will be accountable for actually attempting to implement this.

Bruckman:

- Community colleges have primarily transfer and vocational functions. They also have a mission to accept students who may not be ready for four-year-college admission. They take very seriously their mission to acclimate these students and to get them ready for college work, e.g. new immigrants.



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- Community colleges also have basic skills programs for students who are not yet ready for community college work.
- Effective practices they are trying to implement include the following:
 - Prioritize making education a high community priority.
 - Put pre-entry orientation and assessment processes in place.
 - Emphasize program evaluation and modification.
 - Emphasize faculty training in areas in which faculty may be deficient.
- Local colleges need to be able to do their own self-assessment as to how they are doing on the above.
- They now have over \$30 million for the Basic Skills Initiative. Every college will be submitting an action plan describing exactly how it will be using these funds to meet its goals.
- The colleges are trying to tie into the California State University System's initiative to test juniors in high school regarding academic progress and needs and to prescribe what the students need to do and take in their senior year to become ready for college.

Munitz:

- The California State University System prepares about 10% of all new teachers across the nation every year. It also now offers the education doctorate.
- Can work between CSU and UC move and produce the next generation of leadership for California schools?

Other comments:

- There was a bill to bring the early assessment system used by CSU to the community college system, but it was vetoed.
- The community college system and high schools have not historically interacted that well or frequently, and they are seeing the need to change this.
- An area of increasing attention and focus is the need to produce a statewide plan regarding professional development for our school site leaders.
- When asked what it would take to get veteran teachers back to struggling schools, the answer was capable and supportive leadership and the resources needed to get the job done. Safety and increased pay were priorities after these first two.

Making Schools Work	
Speaker:	William Ouchi, University of California, Los Angeles
Brief description of presentation	Eight of the nation's major urban school districts are now implementing a strong form of school empowerment that grants principals control over their school budget, curriculum, staffing pattern, and schedule. UCLA Professor Bill Ouchi and his research team have gathered data through visits to nearly 500 schools in these eight districts. Each is implementing a unique version of school empowerment. This session described what is now happening in several of New York City's empowerment schools.

- Districts are much larger than they used to be. They are 15 times the size that they were in 1932, and they tend to display “bureaucratic pathologies.”
- The five largest districts educate 23% of kids.
- Once you get past 150 professional employees, you require decentralized management, or you risk suffering from bureaucratic pathologies.
- You need a management model of decentralization. This model has strong accountability, with flexibility; otherwise, you have a slow decision-making process and a top-heavy bureaucracy, and you fail in a competitive world.
- Centralized decision-making tends to favor the majority group. It causes acute organizational problems and uniform per-student staffing patterns.
- The system not geared to personalized solutions for a diverse group of students.
- Student diversity has been stabilizing in large districts over the past 15 years. It is time to examine new management practices; we cannot keep doing the same thing.
- Charters overall have a 2.3% market-share. It is larger in some districts (such as 35% in Dayton, Ohio).
- Charters have lower per-pupil costs, creating genuine competitive pressure in some areas.
- Some districts have changed their central operations.
- Edmonton’s weighted student formula (WSF) has a flat structure where most decision-making falls into the principal’s hands (unlike site-based decision-making, which lacks control over the budget) and full parental choice.
- The Edmonton superintendent decided to fund the student rather than the school. This is what California is doing via categoricals (funding certain students at higher levels), but the money is going to the district, and this is not equitable locally.
- The WSF could make school-level budget information public, so there is high accountability
- Edmonton, Denver, San Francisco, and Oakland have parental choice; principals start planning/managing to attract customers.
- New York City (NYC) principals controlled 6.1% of money that made it to their schools; Los Angeles principals controlled 6.7%.
- Today NYC’s empowerment school principals control 85% of the money.

- In Los Angeles the total student load (TSL) for teachers = 245; Clark County TSL = 260; Boston TSL = 140; NYC empowerment schools = 80 (which is a desirable number).
- A horizontal school has these qualities: Principals control the budget; new staffing patterns - administrative and clerical positions are eliminated to reduce TSL; teachers are organized by grade level; and students are organized into advisories.
- As of fall 2007, all New York City schools are now “empowered” in this way (approximately 1,400 schools).
- If being a teacher is not the best job in the school, the school should be reorganized.

Teaching Reading, Language, and Content to Long-Term English Learners and SIFE in Middle and High Schools	
Speaker:	Margarita Calderón, Johns Hopkins University
Brief description of presentation	The diversity of long-term English learners (ELs) and students with interrupted formal education (SIFE) ranges from pre-literate to reading at a fourth grade level in English and even in their primary language. Yet, schools must be accountable for the students’ progress. This session described two complementary programs and the amazing outcomes in 20 middle and high schools in New York City. The programs were implemented in classrooms with multiple language students and in dual-language classrooms with Spanish-English students. The five-year study, funded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York, focused on training math, science, social studies, and language-arts teachers on how to integrate vocabulary and reading comprehension skills with their subject matter. The complementary project focused on teaching English language development, special education, and reading teachers how to integrate phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, and basic comprehension with rich vocabulary and discourse through content.

- No Child Left Behind has brought more attention to language-minority students. The states with the fastest growing English learner adolescent student populations are North Carolina (500% increase), and Colorado, Nevada, Nebraska, Oregon, Georgia, and Indiana (200% increase).
- Nationally, over 6 million American students in grades 6 through 12 are at risk of failure because they read and comprehend below basic levels.
- Sixty-nine percent of ELs in middle and high school were born in the U.S. and have been in U.S. schools since kindergarten.
- Newcomers and refugees are mainly SIFEs.
- Only 30% of all secondary students read proficiently.



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- Eighty-nine percent of Hispanic and 86% of African American middle and high school students read below grade level. (NCES, 2005)
- It is obvious from these statistics that students, especially ELs, need targeted instruction in reading to learn strategies. ELs are learning English at the same time they are studying core content through English.
- Calderón discussed two evidence-based programs: ExC-ELL (Expediting Comprehension for English Learners) and RIGOR (Reading Instructional Goals for Older Readers). ExC-ELL is a professional development program for K-12 mainstream teachers on how to integrate language and literacy development along with subject matter. RIGOR provides lessons, leveled readers, ancillary materials, and professional development for ESL, dual-language, and mainstream teachers in grades 4-12.
- In ExC-ELL, the professional development focus is helping content teachers develop students' word knowledge, basic reading skills (fluency), comprehension of classroom texts, discussion skills, grammatical knowledge, spelling, and writing skills in English or Spanish or both. The professional development is a five-day institute with follow-up. ExC-ELL also provides an observation protocol.
- RIGOR provides intervention for SIFEs in middle and high schools who are at the preliterate to low-literate third grade reading levels and have missed two or more years of schooling in their native country or U.S. schools. RIGOR's professional development helps to support the following:
 - Onsite pre-assessment for accurate student placement
 - Initial teacher training, plus follow-up coaching and observation
 - Coach and administrator training with the RIGOR observation protocol
 - Onsite post-assessment to determine student gains
- The New York Carnegie Corporation is currently sponsoring ExC-ELL. Contact information for Margarita Calderón is mecalde@aol.com (915-276-1804).

The Village Nation: “How Are the Children?”	
Speakers:	Andre Chevalier, The Village Nation Fluke Fluker, The Village Nation Bill Paden, The Village Nation
Brief description of presentation	The Village Nation has helped to redefine the traditional approach to education, which has left the African American segment of the population disenfranchised. Co-founded in 2003 by Bill Paden, Andre Chevalier, and Fluke Fluker, The Village accomplished this task by utilizing the ancient African proverb, “It takes a Village to raise a child.” Currently serving hundreds of African American students at Cleveland High School in Reseda, California, the Village has improved their Academic Performance Index (API) scores more than 144 points across four years. This gutsy program places the African American students into a small learning environment in which cultural, academic, and personal issues are examined with an honest, straightforward message. The raising of black consciousness, coupled with test taking methods, yield results that baffle the experts and slam the “achievement gap” closed. The Village’s out-of-the-box approach is not for the faint of heart, but its results are proven.

- After one year of mentoring, test scores rose.
- They created an environment of high expectations.
- Teachers came together with students to “air dirty laundry.”

Paden:

- They communicated to the students that using the “n” word was wrong. They showed the students the history behind the “n” word.
- They explained the need for students to communicate and listen to each other and to teachers.

Chevalier:

- What was the motivation for creating the Village Nation? Chevalier was in a Master’s program and saw the low test scores and called the others.

Fluker:

- Fluker received more motivation to do his work after hearing Jack O’Connell say that the problem was a “racial gap.” Also, the low test scores of African Americans made the issue more personal.

Paden:

- Paden was bothered by the headlines of negativity. He saw this negativity as a constant attack on his dignity as an African American.

- He was motivated by a historical context; America is still in a racist mode, even since 1968. African American students have their dignity assaulted.

Fluker:

- Fluker went to South Africa to see Oprah’s school. It was life changing. The experience of an African in the airport calling him “Zulu” made him feel at home.
- Do kids feel welcome or tolerated? Schools need to know the challenges kids face.
- We could learn from the example of the Masai Warrior’s greeting to each other, which asks “How are the children?” In our schools the answer would be “not well.”
- The Village Nation addresses the hostile environment in which children of color find themselves.
- Teachers do not understand where the kids are coming from.
- Schools need to provide a safe forum for teachers and students to address issues of concern, without repercussions.
- Fluker has worked to disarm hostility by speaking about it in a historical context, especially as it relates to the “n” word.
- It is critical to empower the youth through education.
- We must remember that race matters, but racism matters more!

Chevalier:

- Teachers need to get to know the students personally.
- The Village Nation develops a relationship with its students.
- We need to address the student’s psychological and emotional needs. We need to keep our finger on the pulse – that shows that we care.
- The Village Nation wants to be the “underground railroad of education.”

Urban Superintendent Panel	
Speakers:	Mike Hanson, Fresno Unified School District Magdalena Carrillo Mejia, Sacramento City Unified School District Laura Schwalm, Garden Grove Unified School District Chris Steinhouser, Long Beach Unified School District
Brief description of presentation	The panel of urban superintendents focused on issues of student achievement and gaps in statewide student achievement. They shared successes and challenges that they have experienced in their role of ensuring the achievement of their students.

- Garden Grove won the Broad prize in urban education.
- Long Beach also has won the Broad prize and was a runner-up.
- Mejia was the Association of California School Administrators’ Superintendent of the year.

District profiles:

- Garden Grove: Approximately 50,000 students, 60% free or reduced-price lunch (FRPL), 55% Hispanic, 29% Asian, 80% non-native speakers
- Long Beach: Approximately 90,000 students, 75% FRPL, 55% Hispanic, substantial African American, Cambodian, and white
- Sacramento City: 65% FRPL; 32% Hispanic; 21% African American, Asian, and white; 29% English learners with 58 languages

Garden Grove has the following areas of focus:

1. Clear, sharp goal setting
 - The district focused on what adults are supposed to achieve – getting all kids to college – so it tries to reduce barriers to entering A-G classes.
 - When they set measurable goals for accountability, they found that they needed more data to do so, and they also hired a statistician to work with the data.
 - The goal for individual students is to move up by at least one band/year of growth each year on the California Standards Tests (also on the California English Language Development Test) at the SAME time so English learners do not fall behind.
2. Support systems
 - The schools adjust support for each child.
 - All schools now have AVID, which is worth the money, because the culture and practice permeates the whole school.
 - There are targeted interventions for students and targeted professional development for teachers of those students.
 - New parent engagement efforts inform parents about college paths.

Long Beach

1. Access and equity
 - The district expanded Advanced Placement (AP) classes by 60% over four years. It opened the classes to all students and helped students pay for the AP test if they wanted to take it.
 - The Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test is given to all students.
 - The “AP Bridge Project” offers extra support.
 - The district opened AVID to all middle and high schools, and now it is in the elementary grades.
2. Targeted curriculum interventions
 - “MAP 2D” is a professional development program in math that reduces the number of standards and helps teachers to teach differently (in three years, proficiency rates are up 24%).

Sacramento City Unified has a system of continuous improvement that focuses support on ethnic/racial minorities:

1. Operational efficiency



ACHIEVEMENT GAP SUMMIT

NOVEMBER 13-14, 2007

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- International Standards Organization (ISO) 9000 helps to audit to ensure funds are allocated according to goals.
2. Build staff capacity
 - Leadership is built from the classroom to the district.
 - Staff gets the data it needs to improve.
 - There is ongoing differentiated professional development, with schools helping to decide what they need.
 3. All six high schools are broken into smaller learning communities with specific career paths and A-G as a graduation requirement.

The following lessons were learned:

- Access and opportunity are not enough without support.
- An assessment system built on trailing indicators is not good enough.
- We need ongoing and differentiated professional development for teachers and principals. Students, staff, and standards change!
- We should build a *system*, providing support for students, teachers, and parents.
- Improvement is a slow process, but patience is hard with such urgent needs.
- We need to change the culture to benefit kids, not adults.
- Communication is essential. Be honest about where you are, what to do, and why.
- Schools need to focus on essentials and target efforts.
- Others' successful examples should be copied.
- Staff at all levels should be involved in improvement.

November 13, 2007, Session Three: 2:30 – 3:30 p.m.

Achievement Gap or Accessibility Gap	
Speaker:	Sal Castro, Chicano Youth Leadership Conferences
Brief description of presentation	Mexican American students lead the nation with the highest high school dropout rate and the lowest college graduation rate. How do low expectations, lack of meaningful standards-based instruction, and non-student focused education contribute to this? Sal Castro discussed how to provide the Chicano student a successful educational experience. Education needs to be culturally relevant and responsive to the needs of all students.

- As a teacher in Los Angeles Unified School District, Sol Castro was a primary leader in the Hispanic student walkout in the 1960s. This was the largest student walkout in U.S. history. Starting peacefully, these walkouts became violent over time. After five days the walkout ended, but no progress was made regarding more Hispanic teachers, more schools, and better resources. Castro and others were then arrested, and he was fired as a teacher. This led to another set of walkouts and a sleep-in demanding that he be returned as a teacher, which finally happened. While the immediate results from this were minimal, the students' views of themselves made a big difference. Within three years, Hispanic attendance at UCLA went from 40 to 1200. A sense of Hispanic empowerment came from this that has made a big difference over time
- Hispanics have been a part of the United States since before the Pilgrims arrived at Plymouth Rock. (When they arrived, "we" did not ask them for their green card.)
- Castro noted that it is not an achievement gap, but an access gap. Hispanics in the U.S. have not had full access to education since 1888, when Hispanics were running schools in California. The first high school in California was opened by a Hispanic.
- He cited the example of his own grandson who had done very well in middle school and was planning to attend college. When his grandson got to high school, he was automatically enrolled in a business cluster where he was enrolled in English as a second language and algebra (even though he had passed it in middle school with a B grade). When his grandparents went to the school to straighten this out, the counselor said "Sure, sure, lots of parents think their children will go to college," which suggested this was not a serious aspiration for them.
- Teacher qualifications have to include high teacher expectations for their students and those who really care for them and their well-being.
- Teachers must know their students. How about a teacher credential that allows a "super credential" for working with Hispanic or African American students?
- He pointed out the importance of also identifying and featuring Hispanic role models for students. The accomplishments of Hispanics (and their predecessors, e.g. the Aztecs) are largely ignored by the U.S. education system.



Closing the Achievement Gap Through Regional Collaboration	
Speakers:	<p>Herb Fisher, San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools Office</p> <p>Dennis Galligani, Alliance for Regional Collaboration to Heighten Education Success</p> <p>Joyce Justus, University of California, Office of the President</p> <p>Diane Siri, Alliance for Regional Collaboration to Heighten Education Success</p>
Brief description of presentation	<p>Based on over 40 years of research, collaborative efforts to affect school reform have proven successful, yet difficult to accomplish. A new initiative, the Alliance for Regional Collaboration to Heighten Educational Success (ARCHES) is building a statewide network of collaboratives. Under the auspices of the California Education Round Table, ARCHES has developed 15 new regional collaboratives in two years. Each of these collaboratives consists of at least one school district, one community college, one baccalaureate-granting institution, one business, and one community or family-centered organization. In addition to these 15 new or emerging collaboratives, California has seven mature regional collaboratives that are part of the ARCHES network. The focus of all these collaboratives is on matters of school reform that must reflect the needs of a specific region (e.g., mathematics achievement, combining career-technical and college preparatory courses, or quality preschool). This presentation gave an overview of ARCHES and the lessons learned developing and sustaining effective collaboratives that result in measurable student achievement.</p>

- ARCHES grew out of several statewide initiatives (California Academic Partnership Program (1984), California Educational Round Table (2000), UC Strategic Review Panel (2003), Report of California Alliance of Pre-K-18 Partnerships (2004), and the Superintendent’s P-16 Council (2004).
- ARCHES is a voluntary confederation of collaboratives, whose sole purpose is to improve student success and close the achievement gap among groups of students. Its goal is to link every public school in the state into regional collaboratives consisting of at least one community college, a baccalaureate-granting institution, a business, a community-based organization, and a family-centered organization.

Closing the Achievement Gap with High-Quality Instruction	
Speaker:	Ronald Ferguson, John F. Kennedy School of Government
Brief description of presentation	Ferguson's presentation focused on important findings from several years of surveying students and teachers as part of the Tripod Project for school improvement. The findings indicate ways that instruction affects student engagement and ways that high-quality instruction can help raise achievement for all students while narrowing gaps between groups. Ferguson used evidence from surveys to explore how organization conditions affect classroom practices, how classroom practices affect student engagement, and how student engagement leads to learning.

- Expectations are key.
- Content, pedagogy, and relationships are the tripod of success.
- Ferguson surveyed 40,000 students to understand expectations. He found out the following about the students:
 - Encouragement: Non-white groups were encouraged to achieve; white students felt that people demanded that they achieve.
 - Understanding: Half of the African American and Latino students surveyed reported understanding half or less of what they were taught.
 - Effort and Skill: There was no difference detected in homework time. White students had higher homework completion rates.
- High-quality instruction includes high expectations, strong relationships with students, and challenging course content.

Improving the Achievement of English Learners Using the Sheltered Instructional Observation Protocol Model	
Speaker:	Jana Echevarria, California State University, Long Beach
Brief description of presentation	English learners are a large and growing population in our schools, yet as a group they continue to under perform academically. One reason for their pervasive low-academic achievement is that these students are learning academic English while they try to meet content standards required by the nation's education reform movement. Jana Echevarria presented the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) model, which is an effective instructional approach for improving the academic success of English learners. Used in all 50 states and several countries, the SIOP model provides teachers with an explicit model for organizing instruction in a way that optimizes student learning.



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- There is a demographic shift in minority student enrollment. In 1975, minority students were 22% of public school enrollment. In 2005, minority students were 42% of public school enrollment.
- There is a persistent gap in academic achievement between white students and those from culturally and linguistically diverse groups.
- English learners (ELs), by definition are not proficient in English; they are tested before they become proficient.
- It takes most ELs four to seven years of learning English to reach average academic performance levels.
- To help close the gap, teachers need to promote academic literacy by integrating language and content objectives into English-as-a-second language (ESL) and science lessons.
- We need to implement instructional strategies to reduce the achievement gap between ELs and native English-speaking students.
- The historical definition of sheltered instruction is a variety of strategies, techniques, and materials specially designed to provide students access to grade-level core curriculum in English.
- The research definition of sheltered instruction is a means for making grade-level academic content (e.g., science, social studies, and math) more accessible for English learners while promoting their English language development.
- Academic language development, not merely ESL support, must be integrated into the curriculum throughout the school day.
- The SIOP model provides a systematic approach for making content accessible and consistently focusing on academic language.
- The following are components of the SIOP model:
 - Preparation—Language and content objectives
 - Building background—Vocabulary development, student connections
 - Comprehensible input—ESL techniques
 - Strategies—Metacognitive and cognitive strategies
 - Interaction—Oral language
 - Practice and application—Practice all four language skills
 - Lesson delivery—Meet objectives
 - Review and assessment—Review vocabulary and concepts
- The SIOP model shares many features recommended for high-quality instruction for all students, such as the following:
 - Cooperative learning
 - Strategies for reading comprehension
 - Emphasis on the writing process
 - Differentiated instruction
 - Accommodates the distinct second-language development needs of ELs
- The SIOP model contains key features for the academic success of ELs, such as the following:
 - Inclusion of language objectives in every lesson
 - Development of background knowledge

- Acquisition of content-related vocabulary
- Emphasis on academic literacy practice
 - o Allows for some variation in classroom implementation
- The SIOP model is an observation protocol (rating instrument) and a lesson planning and delivery system.
- The SIOP rating instrument is the following:
 - Research observation tool for fidelity of model implementation
 - Supervision and observation tool of student teachers
 - Classroom observation tool by administrators
 - Teacher self-reflection tool
 - Lesson plan checklist
- In 1998-99 using a prompt requiring *expository writing*, ELs in classes with SIOP-trained teachers outperformed and made greater overall gains on the Illinois Measure of Annual Growth in English than ELs in classes with non-SIOP-trained sheltered teachers.
- The SIOP model is used widely in all 50 states in the U.S. and a number of countries around the world. Its implementation initially outpaced research. Its randomized and quasi-experimental research base has grown and consistently shows implementation of the SIOP model yields much greater academic benefits for ELs compared to control groups.

Panel of African American and Latino Superintendents	
Speakers:	Edna Davis-Herring, Rialto Unified School District Carlos Garcia, San Francisco Unified School District Edmond Heatley, Chicano Valley Unified School District
Brief description of presentation	Leading African American and Latino superintendents discussed district-wide efforts to close the achievement gap. The panel members discussed their expertise in leading a large organization as well as their efforts to use the power of the district to improve student achievement. They also discussed what the state and districts need to do to increase the ranks of superintendents of color.

Garcia:

- We need to use common sense. The achievement gap will be solved or at least addressed, when children are able to read by third grade.
- We need to get kids in prekindergarten and get them reading.
- Educators have to change the way we do business.
- We should use the data as a plus, because we have enough data.

Herring:

- Leadership is the reason for change at the Rialto Unified School District – that includes teachers, staff, coaches, and parents. It is all about leadership.
- It is not an achievement gap; it is a cycle. Since 1954 the watered-down classes are still part of the fabric.
- We need to talk about the gap by names, Latinos and African Americans, and know the students by name.
- It is good that Jack O'Connell used the race issue as part of the gap conversation.
- To close the gap, staff development must be a part of it. Otherwise, those teachers need to leave and do other things.
- It is important to know that white teachers made the biggest impact on her life.
- In terms of upward mobility, black and brown administrators were trapped in the "discipline office." They have had all of the qualifications, but they were trapped prior to becoming superintendents.

Heatley:

- There is no magical bullet. We need intestinal fortitude.
- All kids are prepared, but we have failed our kids.
- We do not have an achievement gap; we have an expectation and equity gap. We do not have the right to fail our students.
- Good leaders should be training people to replace them.
- Heatley is in it for the kids. Teachers should be trained to be the best they can be. Districts need to hold teachers accountable.

Garcia:

- There is a lack of leadership. Superintendents need to mentor people because the pool is drying up.
- We run schools for the convenience of adults.
- San Francisco sees its district as a social justice problem.
- Schools need to be convenient for students, not adults.
- African Americans need to mentor each other.
- African Americans can do more than just look at discipline.
- Things have to change. We need more people teaching our kids who look like our kids. We need to redirect our males.

Heatley:

- We need a mentoring program.
- We need to surround ourselves with people who will put us back on the saddle. Heatley had non-blacks who supported and helped him. We must have a support system and share the knowledge to build success.
- There are too few people of color in the superintendent role.

Putting It Together...The Work Around the Achievement Gap	
Speakers:	Steven Ladd, Elk Grove Unified School District Nancy Lucia, Elk Grove Unified School District L. Steven Winlock, Elk Grove Unified School District
Brief description of presentation	The panel from Elk Grove shared how the district fostered leadership and teamwork to improve student performance and began to close the achievement gap. The district-wide approach focused attention on the classroom, increased teacher support, and made testing, data, and structural changes. Collaborative academic support teams focused on student achievement, with teachers and district staff visiting classrooms, reviewing data, and discussing practices.

- Elk Grove is the fifth largest California district, covering one-third of Sacramento. It has 62 schools, 39 of which are elementary. Forty-six percent of the students receive free or reduced-price lunch, and 17% are English learners.
- Every Title I school has an Academic Performance Index (API) of 700 or higher. The district went from 3 schools over 800 API to 24. It has a 95% attendance rate.
- The district has the following strategies for success:
 - Focus on the achievement gap.
 - Develop culturally sensitive employees at the district and schools.
 - Partner with the school board and other support.
 - Develop three-year plans, not short-term ones.
 - Know every child and adjust to their needs.
 - Enact bold goals.
- Elk Grove has the following bold goals:
 - 100% of students will be proficient or above in math and English-language arts on California Standards Tests.
 - 100% of students will pass the California High School Exit Exam.
 - 100% of students will be ready for college and careers.
 - 100% of schools will meet Adequate Yearly Progress and API goals.
- The district has specific strategies to help achieve broader goals:
 - Reduce class size K-6 to provide more individual attention, based on success in K-3. In grades 4-6, have fewer than 24 students in classes at Title I schools and fewer than 26 at others. The district started with Title I schools, which helped stem the tide of teachers leaving these schools.
 - Focus on English language development.
 - Focus on African American students (use disaggregated data, then focus in even further on specific children who need more help).
 - Pay preschool teachers the same as other teachers.
 - Improve testing and use of data.
 - Provide academic support teams.
- The district uses data to support teachers

- Progress on standards in English-language arts and math is addressed mid-year; end-of-year tests are useless for helping current kids.
- Staff can draw from item banks.
- Information is not used in teacher evaluations.
- Staff are able to download data by grade in 72 hours.
- Staff are trained on what to do with this information.
- The district helps schools utilize statewide test data
 - District research staff chunks data and creates PowerPoint slides very quickly.
 - Data (CST, CELDT, CAHSEE) are compared to “bold goals.”
 - Principals can meet with the support team and superintendent to discuss results.
 - School staff meet together, then split into grade-span cohorts.
 - Staff look at all subgroups, even when they are too small to be reported at the state level.
 - The district provides a one-page “vital signs” sheet, including targets and needs areas.
- Academic support teams provide strategic and intensive support. Every team is different, with different goals, depending on the school and needs. It is led by the principal, with coaching from the district. The team conducts walk-throughs with a grade-level representative, and they all work together. They communicate positives first, then areas for improvement and how to improve.

State P-16 Council Subcommittee on Access	
Speakers:	Carrie Harris Allen, Claremont Unified School District Lionel Meno, San Diego State University Sallie Wilson, California Department of Education
Brief description of presentation	The presenters gave an overview of the P-16 Council’s Access Subcommittee preliminary findings and recommendations for closing California’s achievement gap.

- Recommendation #1: Provide high quality prekindergarten programs.
 - The RAND study released last week described the early readiness gap, which mirrors the achievement gaps in later grades.
 - Expert teachers should be compensated on par with K-12 teachers.
 - Class size should be 20 students.
 - National Institute for Early Education Research benchmarks should be used as a roadmap.
 - We need to invest in the workforce.
 - We need to create a results-based accountability system and provide full-day, full-year services.
- Recommendation #2: Align prekindergarten-16 systems.
 - The state must review and refine current systems to develop graduation requirements that align with postsecondary and real world expectations.
- Recommendation #3: Develop partnerships to close the achievement gap.

- The state should work with postsecondary institutions, school districts, businesses, and local agencies to implement a comprehensive student support system to close the gap.

The Governor’s Education Policy Agenda for California	
Speakers:	Scott Hill, Governor’s Office of the Secretary of Education Diane Levin, Governor’s Office of the Secretary of Education Camille Maben, Governor’s Office of the Secretary of Education
Brief description of presentation	Education will take center stage in California’s policy arena during the coming year and beyond. The Governor’s Advisory Committee on Education Excellence and the Office of the Secretary of Education have submitted recommendations for Governor Schwarzenegger’s education policy agenda. In this session, the Governor’s staff gave a broad overview of the recommendations and a summary of the input received from stakeholders.

- There has been a lot of information gathering, and they have benefited from recent work, such as Getting Down To Facts (GDTF).
- Policy recommendations were to be presented to the Governor the next morning (11/14), so at this time they did not really know the “agenda” yet.
- GDTF is a very useful tool; a key finding was that ours is not a student-centered system. It also exposed the irrationality of finance system.
- The Governor’s Committee on Education Excellence was also an important part. It had a diverse set of stakeholders and consensus-driven ideas. It has identified 1) a comprehensive (non-piecemeal) vision for public schools in California (there probably will not be much disagreement), and 2) how much such a system would cost.
- We need more teachers, counselors, arts, music, physical education, and career-technical education (CTE). Political policy and the fiscal climate will have a significant effect on the discussion. We have a bad budget situation. Should we even focus on enhancing education during such a difficult budget year?
- The Governor’s office will offer a pragmatic, long-term agenda (10-20 year plan).
- The Governor is looking for new approaches. He wants to think big picture and take bold steps.
- Secretary Long held eight community leader events with stakeholders (including state senators, mayors, law enforcement representatives, parent groups, and educators). Thousands of people attended over the past six months.
- They are willing to trade more accountability for more local flexibility.
- We need a transparent and reliable data system. There are too many silos and too little student-level data. Any new money should go toward a data system.
- We need to encourage a safe and nourishing school environment. We need to engage students by having an adult who cares.
- The State “constricts” locals; more flexibility is needed.

- We need more CTE courses in the A-G sequence. The two are not mutually exclusive.
- Unless you test it, it is not counted.
- Senate Bill 219 addresses accountability around dropout rates.
- They are interested in the American Diploma Project and workforce skills and readiness.
- We need more professional development and credentialing options for teachers and support for administrators.
- For preschool and prekindergarten we need to build on what is working. We also need to provide support to reduce the growing gap between English speakers and English learners.
- 2008 will be an initial set of steps.
- Who is accountable? We want to make it transparent who is in charge.
- California is the most regulated education system in the country. We need to focus on learning expectations, resources, and flexibility.
- We provide school- and district-level performance data, but we do not do a good job of providing support and help. We provide little support for implementing school/district improvement plans. How do we ensure that someone “owns the problem” when we rely on external support providers?
- How can state accountability be a vehicle for local decisions?
- Nothing is off the table. What system do we need, and how much will it cost?

The following are the ten priority areas submitted to the Governor as of November 14, 2007.

1. Governance (who is in charge in the state)
2. Deregulation and local control (flexibility)
3. Accountability (state learning expectations, local flexibility, better support and resources, but “own the problem locally”)
4. Information and data (expand what is collected; improve interaction between collections)
5. Teachers and administrators (new pipelines, from non-traditional backgrounds)
6. Preschool and prekindergarten (expand access in low-income areas)
7. Finance system
8. Career-technical education (including certification)
9. Safe schools and student well-being
10. English learners

November 13, 2007, Session Four: 3:45 – 4:45 p.m.

A Framework for Understanding Poverty	
Speaker:	Sue Nelle DeHart, aha! Process, Inc.
Brief description of presentation	How do life skills, such as self-control, self-confidence, responsibility, and cooperation, influence student achievement? Discover best practices in elementary school counseling that closed the achievement gap for students at E.P. Foster Elementary, a Title I school, were presented.

- One in four children live in poverty in the U.S., which means 16 million kids ages 18 and under.
- Poverty is relative. The poor do not always know they are poor, particularly the rural poor who have some land.
- Poverty occurs in all races and all countries. Class is an issue that crosses race.
- Generational and situational poverty are different. The former often expect help, as their families have been poor for generations; the latter often refuse help, because they feel ashamed of their status.
- Education is generally not revered -- survival is seen as not linked to education.
- Individuals bring with them the hidden rules of the class in which they were raised.
- According to John Molloy's research, we judge a person's class within the first three minutes (via dress, language, and body language).
- Schools operate from middle-class norms and values. We often judge people's intelligence because they do not know our hidden rules.
- To survive in poverty, one must rely upon non-verbal, sensory, and reactive skills.
- To survive in school, one must use verbal, abstract, and proactive skills.
- There are cultural differences in poverty. This study is cross-cultural and focuses on economics.
- We must neither excuse students nor scold them for the manifestations of their socioeconomic class. We must teach them that there are two sets of rules.
- To move from poverty to middle class, one must give up (for a period of time) relationships for achievement.
- Survival (poor) is typified by relationships and entertainment.
- Work (middle-class) is typified by achievement and material security.
- Political (wealthy class) is typified by financial and social connections.
- Two things that help one move out of poverty are education and relationships.
- The four reasons one leaves poverty are the following: 1) it is too painful to stay; 2) one has a vision or goal; 3) one has a key relationship; 4) one possesses a special talent or skill.

Accelerating Student Achievement by Changing the Organizational Culture	
Speakers:	Wendell Callahan, San Diego County Office of Education Juvenile Court and Community Schools Dennis Danielson, San Diego County Office of Education Juvenile Court and Community Schools Mary Glover, San Diego County Office of Education Juvenile Court and Community Schools
Brief description of presentation	The presentation spotlighted the process of organizational development and change led by the San Diego County Office of Education Juvenile Court and Community Schools (JCCS) over the past seven years. Speakers discussed how the goal of enhancing student access to high-quality instruction helped the JCCS drive positive and measurable organizational change. The presentation highlighted research, approaches, and strategies that underscore why organizational change is critical to accelerating the achievement of all students.

Glover:

- Students come to the JCCS “on loan.” They get students from places like the Probation Department. Their students are other people’s students – the speakers just have them for a while (usually 30 to 90 days). Students come behind in credits, but express considerable interest in attending college. They also suggest that they are getting parental encouragement to do this.
- This presentation was about a seven-year journey that the schools have been on – for anything to meaningful to happen, they have to plug along. They knew they would have to take a long-term, consistent, and dedicated view of the schools.
- The schools used to give pre-tests, but they did not do much with the information. They have very high mobility, a total of 16,000 students in a year, but not that many at any one point.
- Their challenges include improving teaching and learning (they have had a lot of “autonomy”), completing their data, establishing accountability, improving continuity, and improving the demographic match between teachers and students.
- Their teachers choose to come and work with these students; they have little turnover. At the same time, the teachers have been feeling a great deal of stress. The standards set for them are high, and there has been an increasing emphasis on them.
- Many of their students are at the basic or below-basic level. Given this, they must accelerate their education. For some of these students, they now find themselves in a safe environment that is drug free and where they are well fed.
- A major thrust for change was standards alignment. As an example, the staff took their textbook adoptions very seriously. Some of the materials they were using were not sufficiently challenging and not aligned. They asked teachers to turn these in, and this was not always well accepted.



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- Not all juvenile programs are Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) accredited, but the schools set this as an important goal. They wanted their students to be able to say they had gone to a WASC program and to be able to say that they had an opportunity to receive quality and relevant instruction while there.
- The focus of all their staff meetings is on instruction, as well as equity. The staff have really explored their student population, their culture, and their needs. They have high expectations for all their students and are working very hard to be culturally sensitive.
- The schools expanded the number of counselors, they hired parent liaisons, and they have student support specialists. They have a high percentage of special education students, and therefore they have hired 20 special education teachers, which has made a large difference.
- The major thrust is continuous improvement, and the overall guiding objective is full equity and access.

Danielson:

- As a part of the change process, the schools realized they really did not have the data they needed to address the question, "How are your kids doing?" They realized they needed to change to get the data to be able to answer this question on an ongoing basis.
- They started looking for best practices and tools that would help them to get the technology they needed. They went to an online assessment program, Northwest Evaluation Association Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), to find out what their kids needed instructionally upon entry. They wanted this to impact classroom practice, not just to send the data to Sacramento.
- They also looked at supplemental education programs and focused on PLATO, which offers online supplemental instruction.
- Danielson showed an example of a JCCS Model Classroom, which focused on the teacher as the model technology user in the classroom. Staff development shares best practices from JCCS teacher exemplars.
- Because the JCCS could not find a good example to copy, it developed its own classroom spreadsheet to show how students are achieving in real time. The information is succinct and readable; it is a snapshot of how students are doing. It provides very quick and accessible information to guide teachers regarding where their students are academically and what they need. From this single succinct page per class, teachers can drill down and find considerable detail regarding where the students have been with this kind of testing over time.
- They are also trying to integrate this technology up to the highest level. This means a sign-off from the Department of Juvenile Justice for things such as allowing access to the Internet.
- The superintendent wants a "digital dashboard" that will allow him an ongoing snapshot of how the schools are doing.

Callahan:



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- We tried a package for doing the above, and it took about one and one-half years to finally admit it was not working. JCCS then started developing its own system based on a Filemaker-Pro network-based system that is totally geared to its needs. If you have the talent in-house for developing a data-driven system that will work for you, use it. You should use your existing system and develop it for “real time” use and to provide “real time” information.
- What does data-driven decision-making mean? Teachers must have real-time data that focuses on continuous improvement. Teachers wait for more summative data. By the time they get it, the kids they serve are gone.
- There is a substantial investment in hardware, but once you have made this investment and develop the needed systems, you can really track and monitor what you are doing and revise it as needed to produce real progress. For example, tracking and improving attendance generates important new revenues that allow more development and internal investments.
- Data display charts also show board members the progress their students made overall in relation to how many days the teachers were with them. The teachers need to show continuous and accelerated progress if their kids (who come to them behind in school) are going to pass the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE). The data allow staff to show the extent to which they have really added value.
- They are doing race-based analysis to better understand gaps in achievement, to better measure it, and to gauge their success in closing the gap.
- What the data have allowed them to conclude is that they have achieved the following:
 - Improved attendance
 - Improved performance
 - Increased CAHSEE completion for all racial groupsFor example, with the data, they not only know what percentage of students are doing things like passing the CAHSEE after completing all requirements, but exactly who the kids are who are not doing this so they can assess what they are failing to do for these specific kids.
- Staff have learned the following:
 - Students will rise to increased expectations.
 - Teamwork and collaboration are critical.
 - Data really can inform instruction.
 - Ongoing, high-quality, staff development is key.
 - Shared leadership and decision-making are necessary for meaningful change to occur.
 - Cultural change is hard work.
 - Professional learning communities have emerged.
 - Innovation around professional roles (e.g., flexibility regarding staffing and roles) can work. A teacher developed a data system for them that they would have had to pay hundreds of thousands of dollars for a vendor to do.

Closing the Achievement Gap for Students Who Are Deaf	
Speakers:	<p>Sherri Farrina Moody, Advocate Paul Ogden, California State University, Fresno David Smith, California State University, Fresno Erica Thompson, California School for the Deaf</p>
Brief description of presentation	<p>A famous deaf man said, "Deaf children can do anything, but hear." Yet, the majority of deaf children are not succeeding academically. These experts, who are deaf themselves, will provide information about the factors that lead to academic success for children who are deaf, and will talk about instructional strategies and programming that can help deaf children acquire linguistic competence in American Sign Language and English, and compete successfully in standards-based instructional settings.</p>

Ogden:

- Parental involvement is key, but it is hard when parents do not know sign language. There is a need for earlier intervention. Early intervention includes ages 0-5. The Shared Reading Project helps parents learn how to read to their children who are deaf.
- Fresno State did a survey to look at students who have been successful to better understand the parent's role in that success. Fresno has about 30 surveys back, but it found that the successful students were exposed to literature, that many of the students sign (but not all of them), and that some used analog hearing aids. This work is still being developed, but the results will be out in a few months.
- Doctors emphasize oral development, but many of the panelists felt that students need to hear both perspectives on the issue.
- The panelists emphasized the importance of state standards. All students should be taught the state standards and the general education curricula. Some educators believe that the state needs to adopt American Sign Language (ASL) standards.

Moody:

- She emphasized the need for regionalization of services since nothing mainstream has worked to improve the achievement of deaf and hard of hearing students (D/HH).
- There are two state schools for the deaf – one in Fremont and one in Riverside. These schools provide a lot of support for students. An audience member noted that mainstream programs can be hard for D/HH students.
- Moody suggested that the state eliminate special education local plan areas since they do not seem to work. She suggested that the money follow the child.

Thompson:

- She discussed the language-planning model. She would like to see more ASL materials and a higher status given to ASL. She would also like to help teachers in

schools learn how to teach both English and ASL. She emphasized the need for a positive and purposeful attitude in the instruction of D/HH students.

- She went on to describe the idea of “translanguaging,” which is when students learn in English and respond in ASL. There is a body of research suggesting that this approach works for English-as-a-second-language students. Baker is the researcher that focused most on bilingual students while Caber has done some initial work around D/HH students.
- While there is no consensus on how best to teach D/HH students, the panelists all agreed that the achievement gap is an important issue for this population.

High School Transformation: Results Achieved and Lessons Learned	
Speaker:	Kevin Johnson, former National Basketball Association athlete and Chief Executive Officer, Founder of St. HOPE
Brief description of presentation	Kevin Johnson discussed the organization’s groundbreaking work in the frontier of high school transformation. His organization works to revitalize inner-city communities through a P-12 public education model, economic development, civic leadership, and the arts, all working together. St. HOPE has transformed one of the lowest achieving high schools in the region to a school that has sent more than 70% of its graduates to a four-year university.

- St. HOPE started in 1989 as an after-school program. Its philosophy is holistic community development.
- Features that have led to success include high expectations and longer school days. Johnson also wants to implement a policy that one of the graduation requirements is that each student has to be accepted into college.
- St. HOPE has personalized relationships (a 12-1 student/teacher advisory period each day), and high quality teachers and interventions.
- The students wear school uniforms. As a result, they have a “feeling of going to a private school for free.”
- Johnson also worked to bring in community development in the neighborhood, including Starbucks, bookstores, and art galleries.
- Johnson brought 30 students to the session; some of them spoke about their experiences at school and answered questions from the audience.

Shifting a District's Focus to Formative Assessment	
Speakers:	Connie Chrysler-Anderson, Pleasant Valley High School Michael Morris, Chico Unified School District Eric Nilsson, Chico High School Mary Tribbey, Butte County Office of Education
Brief description of presentation	What role do professional learning communities play in education? This presentation focused on classroom assessment strategies supported by monthly teacher collaboration. Teachers shared their insights and described how their knowledge of individual student learning and understanding has improved.

- The major outcomes of the session included sharing research-based formative assessment strategies, how the use of these strategies improves teaching and learning, and how teacher-learning communities improve teacher efficacy and content knowledge.
- In collaboration with the Butte County Office of Education, two high schools in Chico Unified School District formed professional learning communities focused on providing ongoing frequent formative assessments.
- Teachers studied and discussed the research on formative assessment (Stiggins, Dylan William, Popham, Marzano, Reeves, Crooks, Klueger and DeNisi, Nyquist, and Natriello).
- The teachers spent a great deal of time building their learning communities, establishing a culture that builds experimentation and reflection, and learning how to specifically match assessment strategies with student learning needs.
- The schools worked with a project funded by Education Training Skills and conducted by Dylan William. The schools used a pilot program called *Keeping Learning on Track*, which helps teachers select appropriate assessments.
- Forty-seven teachers have been trained; 11 have become teacher-leader trainers.
- Several districts across the nation participated in this pilot, but Chico was the only one from California.

State P-16 Council Subcommittee on Climate and Culture	
Speakers:	Jim Dilday, San Bernardino City Unified School District Shadidi Sia-Maat, California Department of Education
Brief description of presentation	The P-16 Council's Subcommittee on Climate and Culture shared its preliminary findings and recommendations for closing California's achievement gap.

Dilday:

- *Culture* is the school's embedded patterns of values, beliefs, and traditions that have been built over time and have created school *climate*, which is what people feel about the school. Both need to be intentional and institutionalized.

Recommendation 1 – Climate Survey

- The California Department of Education, every school, and all districts should perform a climate survey or assessment that informs practice and improves educational outcomes. Students, parents, educators, and staff would take the survey. This effort requires adequate funding; potentially, it could collaborate with the California Healthy Kids Survey.

Recommendation 2 – Culturally Relevant Professional Development Strand

- There needs to be specialized professional development for teachers, administrators, and staff. It should focus on a culturally relevant curriculum (CRC), culturally responsive instruction (CRI), culturally competent educators (CCE), and culturally courageous leaders (CCL).
- An ongoing professional development process supporting CRC, CRI, CCE, and CCL (pre-service, in-service, and continuing education) should be built into the regular school year.

A culturally relevant curriculum does the following:

- Recognizes the positive contributions of diverse groups.
- Includes knowledge that reflects the culture of people in the classroom, school, and community.
- Corrects past omissions and distortions (racism, sexism, and classism).
- Positively impacts the self-concept, esteem, motivation, and resiliency of historically underachieving students.

Sia-Maat:

Culturally responsive instruction does the following:

- Builds upon learner characteristics and learning styles, strengths, interests, and cultural background/heritage.
- Recognizes that it is important to capitalize on what students know.
- Validates and empowers all learners; provides multidimensional, transformative instruction.

- Rejects the idea that good teaching is transcendent and identical for all students under all circumstances.

Dilday:

Culturally competent educators do the following:

- Identify and change cultural norms of the school when they negatively affect those whose culture is different.
- Celebrate and value diversity.
- Resolve conflicts among persons from different cultural backgrounds.
- Understand how historical distrust affects present-day interactions.
- Interact effectively in a variety of cross-cultural situations.
- Change discriminatory policies and practices.

Sia-Maat:

Culturally courageous leaders do the following:

- Confront and help change biased beliefs, attitudes, policies, and practices that are counterproductive to respecting the identity of culturally diverse students.
- Are committed to improving their own cultural proficiency.
- Take risks to go beyond their comfort zone to help historically underachieving students who are victimized.
- Model a commitment to critical self-examination; facilitate the personal transformation of others.

November 14, 2007, Session Five: 9:30 – 10:30 a.m.

Closing the Achievement Gap by Focusing on What's Best for Children	
Speaker:	Ted Lempert, Children Now
Brief description of presentation	California's significant achievement gap is a threat to millions of today's students and to our collective future. As Children Now's <i>2007 Report Card</i> highlights, far too many of California's students are not meeting state standards or graduating from high school. What is needed is a child-focused agenda to close the achievement gap. Ted Lempert, President of Children Now, highlighted how this unique approach has the ability to bring together leaders from education, business, ethnic, and community-based groups to solve the longstanding problems of inequitable funding, distribution of resources, and access to preschool. He highlighted the consensus that already exists among the public and diverse interest groups and discussed the challenge of overcoming the traditional polarized debate of "more money" versus "more reform."

- Lempert is optimistic about state policy and that we can make some changes.
- He is a children's advocate. It is an issue that the public cares about; it is all about the kids.
- Political leaders are also talking about making kids first, but they do not actually follow through. We need to hold elected officials accountable for providing a great education and childcare.
- We need to be more bipartisan in a tough budget year. Is there an opportunity to bring people together?
- Children Now produces a report card on the status of children.
- Health and education are interrelated. If you have dental pain, you cannot concentrate in class.
- The issues that need to be addressed are 1) data and transparency; 2) changing the finance system; 3) incentives to enter teaching; 4) early education; and 5) more money.
- Data: We do not know what is going on in schools. What is happening with dropouts and class size reduction? Where do the dollars go? The business community is especially interested in this question.
- Equitable funding: The finance system is not rational; it is not based on student needs. We cannot describe how things are financed. We need categorical reform and to cut down on the number of programs. We need to have a student-based finance system.
- Teaching profession: We need more training and support for teachers and other staff. We need to attract teachers to the profession.
- Early education: We need to provide effective preschool.

- More money: Money makes a difference, and clearly funding support for education in California has eroded. We need to convince people to support our schools. You can get groups together to form greater consensus. We need to keep the pressure on.
- People are willing to pay attention to the “Getting Down to Facts” report, which is a step in the right direction.

Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Instruction: Powerful Pedagogy for Advancing Learning in Underachieving Students	
Speaker:	Noma LeMoine, Los Angeles Unified School District, Closing the Achievement Gap Branch and Academic English Mastery Program
Brief description of presentation	Educating African American students is one of the greatest challenges facing American educational institutions. The failure of educators to produce literate African American students and other students of color who are capable of success in academic environments may be attributed, in part, to a systemic failure to leverage cultural and linguistic research and knowledge. LeMoine helps educators build new schemas for educating underachieving students of color through culturally and linguistically responsive instructional methodology. She discussed strategies that build on the language, cognitive styles, and experiences of diverse students to facilitate learning and serve as powerful pedagogy for scaffolding access to rigorous, standards-based curricula.

- As a group, African American, American Indian, Hawaiian American, and Mexican American standard English learners have the lowest scores on standardized achievement tests.
- Educator attitudes toward the students’ languages and cultures set up barriers to their success in school.
- Standard English learners (SELs) have roots in different instances of historical oppression. Their language varieties and cultures are denigrated and marginalized in the classroom. The students are seen as problems to be fixed, not as resources to be respected and built on.
- Reform proposals fail for two reasons:
 - They concentrate on what diverse learners lack and what they are incapable of doing.
 - They do not see culture, ethnicity, and personal experience as linked with academic performance.
- Being a poor student and/or a student of color is correlated with negative teachers’ perceptions and beliefs.
- Teachers’ beliefs about students and their sense of responsibility for student learning are inextricably interlinked.



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- Teachers' low expectations have a significant impact on students' academic self-image and effort and on the level of coursework.
- Low expectations lead to:
 - An unsupportive environment
 - Lower student participation
 - Lower achievement
- Traditional pedagogy has always been culturally responsive to students who are primarily middle class and European American.
- "Culturally responsive teachers know about the lives of students and use their knowledge about students' lives to design instruction that builds on what they already know while stretching them beyond the familiar." – Villegas and Lucas (2002).
- We need to optimize learning based on what students know and what they are expected to learn.
- Knowledge being stored into long-term memory depends on how learners interpret their experiences.
- With regard to student learning and behavioral styles, there is a mismatch between what styles students prefer and those that teachers expect.
- This mismatch often leads to lowered expectations by teachers and lowered academic performance.
- In valuing students' strengths and accommodating their differences, culturally responsive teachers remove barriers to learning and enhance student achievement.
- Through bridging the cultures of home and school, culturally responsive teachers create equal opportunity for students (decrease the "opportunity gap").
- Storytelling, rather than being read to, may be part of SELs' early literacy experiences.
- There are several possible or likely differences between school and home cultures:
 - Narrative discourse patterns
 - Phonological sound pool
- Five strategies exemplify culturally and linguistically responsive instruction:
 1. Culturally relevant literature
 2. Contrastive analysis
 3. Personal thesaurus
 4. Instructional conversations
 5. Building on learning styles and strengths of SELs
- **1) Culturally relevant literature** supports language and literacy acquisition. It engages the students' own experiences and better enables them to use, transfer, and create new knowledge and understanding.
 - For children to see their own culture reflected positively in literature is affirming and can act as a motivator for personal growth and achievement.
- **2) Contrastive analysis** is useful for facilitating students' increased use of standard American and academic English (SAE) in both oral and written forms.
 - The four contrastive analysis strategies use literature, student retelling of a story, and spontaneous student responses as vehicles for illustrating the differences

- between home language and SAE and emphasizing their situational appropriateness.
- **3) Personal thesaurus** of conceptually coded words supports the development of academic vocabulary by building on the knowledge that students already have.
 - Teachers should utilize “teachable moments” to build their students’ personal thesaurus.
 - The thesaurus contains conceptually coded words.
 - **4) Instructional conversations**, which are discussion-based lessons building on prior student knowledge, support higher-order thinking accountable to a knowledge core.
 - The teacher’s role is to encourage many different ideas through extensive discussion, aimed at establishing a common foundation of understanding rather than exact, specific answers.
 - The process enables students to be active creators of knowledge and critical thinkers.
 - **5) Building on learning styles and strengths of SELs** is generally different from the preferred learning styles expected by teachers.
 - Some general learning styles of African American students include the following: a greater tendency towards collaboration, verbal expression, and movement, and a greater acceptance of variation and improvisation.
 - By accommodating these learning styles and valuing SELs’ strengths, teachers can maintain high expectations for SELs.

Defining Measurable Student Outcomes for Parents, Students, and Communities to Take Action	
Speaker:	Julie Mendoza, ARCHES
Brief description of presentation	This session presented a process and set of guiding questions to use data as a diagnostic tool to improve retention, graduation rates, and student academic achievement in a college preparatory curriculum.

- Defining measurable outcomes requires building local capacity to analyze the data that currently exist within the district.
- Data analysis requires filtration and binding of pertinent data for diagnostic purposes. This filtration and binding may also require triangulation of data sources to provide a complete and reliable picture of district conditions.
- The Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) currently has an approximately ten times larger Latino student enrollment than any other school district in California.
 - The 300,000 English learners (ELs) in LAUSD would represent the fifth largest school district in the nation.
 - However, the majority of these ELs in LAUSD have been enrolled for over ten years and are still classified as ELs.



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- There is a significant dropout rate between the ninth and tenth grade. These dropout patterns are similar across the nation and are longstanding.
- Every year, approximately 20 percent of ninth grade students must repeat the year.
- Only 41% of Latinos entering the ninth grade are still enrolled three years later.
- Algebra 1 is very much a gatekeeper for many students who eventually end up being subject to the achievement gap.
- LAUSD developed an A-G coursework implementation blueprint plan for many of its schools in which it:
 - Develops a comprehensive research-based, K-12 implementation plan
 - Leverages services of the University of California and California State University Systems
 - Identifies implementation experts
 - Builds school and district capacity to analyze and use data
 - Supports purposeful data-driven analyses
 - Looks at guiding questions that may lead to predictive patterns of student achievement
- Some district high schools are participating in the transcript evaluation service to determine if students are meeting A-G benchmarks necessary to go on to college. Of the schools participating, 71% of Latinos are not meeting the appropriate benchmarks. The hope is that these schools will identify their students by those who are close to meeting the benchmarks by one to two courses to pinpoint the necessary interventions needed.
- What will it take for LAUSD to close the achievement gap?
 - Redistribute existing resources.
 - Provide additional resources.
 - Build capacity.
 - Make drastic changes in the delivery of professional development.
 - Increase community engagement.
 - Personalize learning and support and improve service delivery.
- Backward mapping is needed to arrive at A-G coursework indicators:
 - At the elementary school level: Students should be reclassified from ELs by fifth grade.
 - At the middle school level: Students need to pass algebra 1 by the eighth grade.
 - At the high school level: Students need to pass the CAHSEE by the tenth grade; students who do not pass by the tenth grade continue taking the CAHSEE until they are successful.

Meeting the Challenge: How to Accelerate Underserved Students	
Speakers:	Michelle Badovinac, San Joaquin County Office of Education Robin Kisinger, Advancement Via Individual Determination
Brief description of presentation	An interactive presentation described the role of Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) in successfully preparing low-income, under-represented students for college. The presenters shared data on the AVID program's successful 27-year track record, including the A-G completion rates.

- AVID teaches students, but it also teaches teachers. All students, especially the “least served,” will succeed in a rigorous curriculum, will complete a rigorous college preparation path, will enter into mainstream activities of the school, will increase their enrollment in four-year colleges, and will be responsible participants and leaders in a democratic society.
- AVID take students who have B through D grades, have college potential, are low income, and desire to go to college.
- To close the gap we need to help students with the following:
 - Develop as readers and writers.
 - Obtain deep content knowledge.
 - Know content specific strategies for reading, writing, thinking, and talking.
 - Develop habits, skills, and behaviors to use knowledge and skills.
- AVID develops a support team of teachers, tutors, and other students.
- AVID is not a class. It is a whole program, and it focuses on college readiness. It is a system of support for students.
- This program targets first-time college goers.
- Just having the label AVID gets kids feeling differently about themselves. It changes families as well and creates dreams and possibilities that parents may never have thought about.
- When teachers come back from AVID trainings, they share the information with other teachers so that the whole school benefits.
- AVID can impact the entire district. It goes beyond just the AVID teachers to affect others as well when they see that these students can achieve.
- AVID has a support system to work with teachers and programs to keep them on track. For this reason AVID is replicable.
- Eighty-nine percent of all AVID students are completing all college preparation requirements, compared to about 35% of all students nationwide. California data look about the same. This is one bit of evidence that AVID is replicable.
- This success is occurring across all ethnic classifications.
- Eighty-five percent of AVID students are applying to four-year colleges, and 75% are getting accepted. AVID does not have data as to what happens to kids once they get to college, i.e. completion rates.
- The most important factor in the college success rate is the level of rigor in high school.

- An AVID video showed a student who talks about how AVID has changed his attitude toward school and life. Within the first semester his grades rose from Cs and Ds to As and Bs. For the first time in his life, he had a 100% safe place to come and talk with someone.

State P-16 Council Subcommittee on Expectations	
Speakers:	Miguel Cordova, Closing the Achievement Gap (CTAG) Expectations Subcommittee member, California Department of Education Robert Hudson, CTAG Expectations Subcommittee Chair, Alpaugh Unified School District Superintendent
Brief description of presentation	The Expectations Subcommittee of the statewide P-16 Council reported its findings and tentative draft recommendations.

- Latino and African American 17-year-olds are doing math and reading at the same levels as white 13-year-olds.
- There are no teeth in the accountability system: What are you going to really do to us? No one pays attention until there are a couple of corpses in the road.

Recommendation: Evolve State Accountability System

- The Achievement Gap Index should involve more stakeholders and important indicators.
- Perhaps the Academic Performance Index should be expanded.
- The following are potential data needs:
 - Postsecondary program enrollment rates (including trade schools, military, two-year, four-year, and other paths)
 - Teachers' experience level, content area expertise, professional development training (cultural competency, English learners, special needs)
 - Type of professional development administrators have received
 - School surveys on culture/climate and community involvement
- The P-16 Council is looking for active participation from practitioners and parents.

Recommendation: Improve Awards System

- Distinguished Schools applicants should demonstrate success towards closing the gap.
- The state must align awards programs to address closing the gap.

Recommendation: Focus on Academic Rigor for All Students

- The lack of expectations has led to less rigorous courses and disengagement.
- We need to focus on ensuring relevant, quality, and equitable instruction.

- Perhaps we should form a statewide committee. How can California develop a system of rigor in courses that provides the skills and knowledge that employers and colleges expect? How does California increase enrollment in rigorous courses that will prepare them for college and/or successful careers?
- Most disadvantaged students do not have access to Advanced Placement (AP) courses.
- Should all students be forced to take and pass algebra 2 and geometry in high school? It may not be the right time for them.
- Long Beach Unified and Sacramento City have offered AP access to all students.
- There needs to be more interaction between the California Department of Education (CDE) and the education community to address curriculum issues.

Recommendation: Develop an Anchor Bank of Resources

- The CDE should provide models/examples of rigorous assignments, beginning with high school and consider various means of delivery to educators, such as online video and professional development opportunities.

Taking Center Stage – Act II: Middle Grades Success for All	
Speakers:	Carol Abbott, California Department of Education Rina De Rose Swinscoe, California Department of Education
Brief description of presentation	Taking Center Stage – Act II (TCSII) is an online resource that elaborates on 12 research-based recommendations for effective middle grade programs. TCSII is a California Department of Education-sponsored project dedicated to promoting educational excellence targeted at middle grades. Using the latest technology, the TCSII contains hyperlinked, research-based contents, vignettes of school practices, connections to middle grade organizations, professional learning opportunities, related links, and more.

- Taking Center Stage II is a Web-based project built by educators and for educators.
- The project, which is a result of a two-year, in-depth discussion among members of the Middle School Alliance, is based upon 12 recommendations. The recommendations represent research and the best practices of successful California educators.
- The Web site will go live on February 29, 2008: <http://pubs.cde.ca.gov/TCSII>.
- The 12 recommendations include the following:
 1. Rigor: Hold high expectations and provide numerous avenues of support.
 2. Instruction, assessment, and intervention: Engage students with challenging lessons.
 3. Time: Institute flexible schedules that provide recommended and required instructional minutes for core academic classes and accelerated interventions.
 4. Relevance: Develop a rich set of courses and enrichment opportunities.



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5. Relationships: Foster close relationships for accountability and engagement among students and adults.
6. Transitions: Work with elementary and high schools to inform students and families about academic and behavioral expectations.
7. Access: Provide all middle school students with equal access to well-prepared, qualified, caring staff, and a rich learning environment.
8. Safety, resilience, and health: Create and sustain a safe, fair, and healthy school environment.
9. Leadership: Foster distributed leadership, collaborative decision-making, and regular data analysis.
10. Professional Learning: Build and sustain professional learning communities.
11. Accountability: Organize all district, school, and community stakeholders to hold high academic and behavioral expectations.
12. Partnerships: Engage families, businesses, local and state agencies and organizations, higher education, and community members in supporting middle school students' achievement.

November 14, 2007, Session Six: 10:45 – 11:45 a.m.

Improving English Learner Achievement and Assessment: The Dynamic Interplay of Policy, Practice, and Research	
Speakers:	Jamal Abedi, University of California, Davis, Center for Research and Exploration in Space Science and Technology (CRESST) Richard Durán, University of California, Santa Barbara Kathryn Lindholm-Leary, California State University, San Jose Marguerite Ann Show, University of California, Los Angeles
Brief description of presentation	English learners (ELs) in California number nearly 1.8 million students in K-12 schools and constitute about one-quarter of all students. They are students for whom English is a second language and who are identified as needing additional development of English skills in order to benefit from instruction in English. Effective strategies for educating these students need to take into account the immense diversity in backgrounds of these students and ways that schooling practices can provide the services benefiting students given this diversity and education achievement goals stipulated in policy. This session examined strategies responsive to this concern based on careful analysis of education policies, practice, and research that contribute to 1) improved identification and assessment of EL students; 2) instructional programs at the school and classroom level serving the learning needs of EL students in their primary language and English; and 3) instructional practices assisting EL students in acquiring critical thinking and language skills supporting learning of subject matter content.

Show:

- Academic language is a major obstacle for English learners. She provided examples of how academic language is confusing and how to help students learn such content.
- Textbooks cause greater complexity with language.
- We need systematic instruction over an extended period of time.
- All teachers need to know about language development and strategies. Teacher education must help address this need.

Abedi:

- EL levels of proficiencies can greatly vary.
- Some ELs at lower levels of English proficiency may be misidentified/classified as having learning disabilities.
- Assessments that have the same high standards, are valid and reliable, and lead to improvements are necessary at the state level.

- Accountability issues that arise with ELs have to do with issues of classification and reclassification. How reliable is measurement quality?

Lindholm-Leary:

- Primary language programs can be used to provide a quality education for ELs.
- Programs vary in terms of time in primary language and English.
- Programs are still in existence despite controversies over bilingual education.
- We need strong community support and trained staff who are bilingual and able to provide quality education in subject areas. Teachers need to be trained for language development needs for all of their students – ELs and English-only students.

Puente Project: Partnering With California School Districts to Create a Pervasive College-Going High School Culture Through Academics, Community, and Culture	
Speakers:	Alex Flores, Whittier Unified School District Steve Gonzales, Anaheim Union High School District Jane Pieri, Anaheim Unified School District and Whittier Unified School District Art Ponce, Whittier Unified School District
Brief description of presentation	This presentation united district administrators and Puente trainers to describe their partnership and how the Puente model was implemented in the high school. The presentation also compared Puente and non-Puente students in the district using CAHSEE, A-G, graduation, and college-going data and the showcased the Puente strategies for working with students, high school faculty, parents, and the community.

Pieri:

- She presented the mission statement and gave an overview of the Puente Project.

Ponce:

- Whittier Unified has 80% Latino, 15% white, and 5% African American and Asian students.

Gonzales:

- Anaheim Union High School District has 40% Latino, 35% white, and 17% Korean students.

Ponce:

- He took the offer to apply for Puente to administrators and principals for their buy-in. The superintendent also supported it.



Flores:

- The success of Puente was seen in other schools, so Whittier took on the program.

Gonzales:

- It started in 1993-94.
- Parent involvement was missing, and Puente brought parents in. Parents voiced support.

Ponce:

- Puente offered opportunities for students who had no access to A-G programs. Puente brought parent empowerment to the school.
- It helped by incorporating Latino literature.

Gonzales:

- The district pulls the Puente counselors together to discuss the issues.

Flores:

- Partnerships extend past one teacher.

Gonzales:

- The whole school is benefiting from Puente, because it shares best practices with teachers and students.

Ponce:

- We are not a high-poverty district, but we are very successful.

Flores:

- Students are offered Puente days, which involve college visits to numerous colleges and universities.

Gonzales:

- Puente has created a culture of support.
- The college-going barriers have been reduced.

Ponce:

- The number of students going to four-year colleges has increased since Puente.



Solving California's Dropout Crisis	
Speakers:	Terry Hilliard, Senate Select Committee on High School Graduation Russell Rumberger, University of California Linguistic Minority Research Institute James "Gregg" Scott, Program Director, Mindspring Darrell Steinberg, California State Senate, Sixth District
Brief description of presentation	Fewer than 70% of ninth graders in California graduate from high school, with the percentage for Latino, African American, and linguistic minority students closer to 50 percent. The social and economic welfare of the state depends on finding a solution to this educational crisis. This panel discussed current efforts to address the dropout problem in California, including the work of the California State Senate Select Committee on High School Graduation, chaired by Senator Darrell Steinberg, and the work of the California Dropout Research Project, directed by Russell Rumberger, which is funding a series of studies on the nature of and potential solutions to the dropout problem in California. The panel also included a presentation by a high school dropout, Terry Hilliard, who enrolled in a special charter school that enabled him to earn his general education diploma (GED) and attend college, and by the founder of the school, James "Gregg" Scott.

Rumberger:

- His report will be released in February.
- California's 2006 high school graduation rate is at its lowest point in ten years. Dropouts are concentrated in a few schools. For example, alternative schools enroll 8% of the state's students, but 35% of its dropouts.
- The economic losses from one dropout cohort exceed \$46 billion per year. Therefore, the risk of NOT acting to address the issue is huge.
- The causes of the dropout crisis include both student and family/school/community factors. You cannot isolate the causes.
- Eighty-two percent of students name a school reason and 34% cite a family reason for dropping out.
- Forty-four percent of California's ninth graders are at risk of not graduating. Three indicators used to determine this are overage ninth graders, failing ninth grade (a grade point average of 1.0), or nearly failing ninth grade (a grade point average of 2.0).
- We need to look at eighth graders to identify early indicators to prevent dropping out.
- Schools are more effective at improving graduation rates than they are at improving test scores.
- We need to address the academic and social needs of students and begin before high school.

- There are economic benefits in investing in proven interventions. It is not simply the right thing to do. Each dollar invested in proven programs generates \$2 to \$4 in fiscal benefits.
- Proven interventions include class size reduction (15:1 in grades K-3), raising teacher salaries, and a high school reform effort called “First Things First.”
- There are eight to ten other promising interventions but not enough rigorous research on them.

Hilliard:

- When asked why he dropped out, Hilliard responded that his home life included drugs, abuse, molestation, and lots of anger. With all of that going on, he said, “It’s hard to study for a math test.” He went on, “What’s the reason for school? We are hungry.” Hilliard was involved with gangs; when his mother was shot, he felt guilty and went back to school to help out.
- Hilliard believes that families in similar circumstances have levels of expression that “are not up to par because they’re suppressing so much.” Families are not “mentally straight.” Schools are not paying attention to mental health needs of students. They need to address the suppression that is going on.
- Currently, Hilliard is a peer counselor using a model called 12 Ways to Success.

Steinberg:

- Proposition 63 provides \$250 million per year for mental health services. Twenty percent of these dollars are for prevention and early intervention, i.e., school-based services. It is imperative that stakeholders advocate for these dollars.

Scott:

- When asked, “How can traditional high schools learn from your program?” Scott responded that teachers need a paradigm shift. Teachers want to teach but students need more. Counselors and teachers need to be on the same page, and counselors need to teach the teachers. Kids will go back to their own group or home and unlearn what counselors have just taught them, so counselors need to prepare kids for this (and tell them what will happen). Kids do not know how to reach out for the help they need, but they need allies they can trust.
- Teachers need to call home (not the school recorder) when a kid does not come to school. They should meet with parents twice a month, and if there is not a parent, ask the student “Who do you look up to?” and call that person.
- A replicable program/grant opportunity is called California Access to Recovery (CARE).

Steinberg:

- When asked if we have the political will to take on huge costs of tackling the dropout problem, and what will prevent schools from getting rid of low-performing students under accountability pressures, Steinberg replied that Assembly Bill 219 sets a timeframe for when the school is accountable for dropouts. He was not sure if we have

the political will, but he knows that what is counted matters. That is, we have a culture of testing and Academic Performance Index scores. Dropouts now count. We need political will so that schools can succeed.

- When asked, “How can I get involved?” he replied, “Political organizing. Visit your legislator once a month. Raise the importance of the dropout issue; keep going back.”
- An audience member highlighted methodological issues. For example, some students get their GED through adult education schools, and they get counted as dropouts.
- He agreed that we have not implemented a data system that accounts for this, and it must be done. We also need a data system that tracks highly mobile students, from school to school.

Rumberger:

- Motivation does decline in middle school. Our middle school system fails our kids, just when they need more individual attention, not less. We need middle school reform.
- The What Works Clearinghouse is a federal initiative to share promising practices.

State P-16 Council Subcommittee on Strategies	
Speakers:	Jose Ortega, California Department of Education Rhonda Rios-Kravitz, Sacramento City College, Co-Chair of P-16 Subcommittee on Strategies Barbara Ross, Apple, Inc., Co-Chair of P-16 Subcommittee on Strategies
Brief description of presentation	The Strategies Subcommittee of the California P-16 Council presented and discussed its draft recommendations on what the state can do to close the achievement gap.

Recommendation 1: Robust Data Collection System

- We need a robust data collection system:
 - To promote continuous improvement
 - To create conditions for performance management
 - To create data-driven insight and decision-making
 - To construct statewide policy reforms and supports based on data
- We are trying to support the field and be useful for schools and districts. This is not just another data exercise. We are looking to give a clear, holistic view for all stakeholders.
- The state definitely needs to move beyond discrete and disconnected data silos. The California Department of Education (CDE) now has over 100 data collections. The P-16 Committee is very committed to this linkage.
- We need to expand data collected under California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CalPADS) and California Longitudinal Teacher Education Data System (CalTIDES), add value-added measures, and track students over time.



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- We must also start looking at P-16 education from a developmental perspective and consider school readiness.
- Right now, CalPADS is merely a shell; we need to reevaluate what data we collect and how we use them.
- We need to do the following:
 - Evaluate current level of data usage (state and local).
 - Understand how data are used (diagnostic and accountability).
 - Determine opportunities and data coherence.
 - Determine needs for stakeholder professional development.
- We are not advocating use of social security numbers, but rather a unique identifier for linkage across systems.
- We are not yet talking about incarcerated students, but it is important.
- The data system will be a multi-year process. Right now it is just a policy discussion of implications. There are no talks yet about development and implementation. We will protect individuals and will not use social security numbers.

Recommendation 2: Data Professional Development

- We need professional development in data collection, analysis, and interpretation to make informed programmatic and fiscal decisions at the state and local level.
- The data should be used to allocate resources to students most in need. We should have proactive rather than reactive measures. We want to pinpoint instructional delivery and interventions and establish and maintain a culture of data-supported decision-making.

Recommendation 3: Share Successful Practices

We should do the following:

- Collect and disseminate a high-quality comprehensive body of knowledge, expertise, resources, and research on effective and successful practices.
- Create a central and coherent knowledge bank with research and proven and promising practices.
- Share models of success, and focus on results of schools and districts working on the gap.
- Facilitate conversations and encourage dialogue across the state.
- We can share information through publications, research, success stories, events, Webinars/Web dialogues, and surveys. The Web site <http://www.closingtheachievementgap.org> includes the Brokers of Expertise Web portal, which is under development. It will provide content, live help, lesson plans, assessments, and research. Its goal is to share relevant resources, interventions, and assessments, by standards.
- Every school needs to have access to high-speed Internet.
- We are trying to get more student voices involved in P-16 Committee work.

What Makes the Difference Between High Achievement and Mediocrity?	
Speaker:	Joseph Johnson, National Center for Urban School Transformation, San Diego State University
Brief description of presentation	Although achievement gaps are pervasive, some schools and districts have successfully narrowed or eliminated gaps in achievement among diverse racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic populations. How have leaders in these schools and districts influenced these impressive results? How are policies, programs, and practices in these schools and districts different from those found in other schools and districts? What nuances in leadership behavior might stimulate the attitudes, behaviors, systems, and cultures that maximize learning for underserved students and minimize achievement gaps?

- The basic logic seems to be that students from various groups are not taught to the same high standards and that if all children are taught the same standards-based curricula, the achievement gap will close. This is not working.
- However, he notes that there are places where students of color are doing well. Fourth grade Latino students in 48 states are doing better than in California. Eighth grade students in Massachusetts read 1.5 grade levels higher than their counterparts in California. For those who say that the achievement gap will never be closed, how do we explain these disparities in performance? For example, African American students in some states are scoring better than the average students in California.
- Our current systems are structured to produce the results we are obtaining
- However, there are examples in California that are indeed closing gaps:
 - Edison Elementary School in Long Beach
 - Kelso Elementary School in Inglewood
 - Leroy Doig Middle School in Garden Grove
 - Imperial High School in Imperial
- These results show that while there are substantial gaps throughout the state, they do not have to be there.
- How can California educators establish systems that ensure diverse student populations achieve high results? We can do that through implementing standards-based reform at a high level and with fidelity. It is all about the quality of our implementation of standards-based reform.
- What does full implementation of standards-based reform look like?
- You do not have a common understanding of standards if teachers in less affluent, more diverse schools have a less rigorous, less complete understanding of standards that is found at more affluent, less diverse schools. At gap-closing schools, teachers have well-informed, in-depth conversations about key standards and the level of achievement expected by these standards. There is clarity about which standards are most critical. The schools do not have reform if they feel they have to do “drive by”



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teaching to cover all the material. In gap-closing schools, educators make wise decisions about which standards should be their focus.

- We must provide educators compelling evidence that the diverse students they teach can achieve critical standards. Otherwise, teachers can just rely on their self-fulfilling prophesy and belief that the kids cannot do it. Teachers must know going in that their children can achieve high standards. The teachers are smart about how they use their own data, as well as information from other schools and districts.
- Principals sometimes approach Johnson and say they believe their students can achieve but their teachers do not. He responds, that is the principal's job – to show the teachers that they are wrong and to provide clear evidence that these kids can achieve.
- When he goes to high-performing schools, he finds that educators are thinking thoughtfully and thoroughly about how they can provide skills at earlier levels. How can they have early opportunities to build and develop concepts that are critical later on? This effort means starting at preschool and having vertical articulation across grade levels in the district.
- There is not standards-based reform if we have not provided plentiful, no-shame opportunities for teachers to build their understanding of the content they teach related to key standards. There is always room for teachers to grow.
- We have not implemented standards-based reform if we are using uniform methods that are insensitive to student learning differences.
- If you are teaching to someone's concept of the average child (e.g., the Beaver in "Leave It to Beaver"), all you have to do is get the materials out there; the child will take them home and figure them out based on the help of his parents and all the resources available in the home (e.g., the Internet). Under this scenario, the child will pass the test regardless of how poorly you have taught the subject. The Beaver has left California, and no matter how much you miss him, he is not coming back. We now have to bring new excitement and dedication to the way our children are taught.
- Johnson offered the example of a high-achieving school in Boston. He went into a middle school algebra class. He had an electronic keyboard that he could use as illustration and that the students could manipulate before the class. He compared this instruction to the teacher who shows four examples and then tells students to do the rest of the work at their seats with no talking.
- We have not implemented standards-based reform if teachers do not have accurate ways of knowing (immediate, short term, and long term) whether students have learned critical standards.
- He cited the example of a principal in a turn-around school. Before we were "feeding the chickens." We threw out the grain; if they got it that was OK, and if they did not that was OK too, but we had done our job. Once we threw out the material, we were done. Now, our job is not over until we have clear evidence that the children have actually learned the material set out for them.
- We have not implemented reform if students do not have easy, timely access to effective support when regular programs prove insufficient.



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- We have not succeeded if educators do not perceive that they are part of a unified effort to make a positive difference in students' lives. Rather, educators should understand that their goals go beyond making Adequate Yearly Progress and that they are working together to make a fundamental difference in the quality of students' lives.
- Leaders must have the supports and skill to help educators and students as they work toward teaching standards. These leaders are in classrooms a lot. At gap-closing schools, principals spend an average of 40% of their time in the classroom. If you are not where instruction is taking place, you are not the instructional leader of the school.
- We must help students and parents to believe that students can achieve standards with reasonable effort. Educators are implementing systems that help students and parents find new hope.
- Students and parents must have a clear understanding that educators care deeply and sincerely about them. In gap-closing schools, educators are finding multiple ways to build relationships with parents and students. People do not want to engage with people they perceive do not like them and do not care about them.
- We have tremendous potential in California to close the achievement gap. We can learn from the experiences of other states and from successful schools and districts in our own state. Our diversity in California is a strength that can help us to achieve equity and excellence. Equity without excellence is mediocrity for all. Excellence without equity is an oxymoron. If our schools are not excellent for all children, they are not excellent at all.
- The Web site from Johnson's Center lists high-performing schools every year. Educators can go to the Web site to see how they can apply for this status. Johnson also holds a conference every spring where representatives from effective schools from across the country present what they have achieved and how they have done it.
- At highly successful schools, teachers have three jobs:
 - Teach their own kids.
 - Constantly learn more about their area of expertise and how to teach it.
 - Help others do the same.
- In these high-performing schools and districts, teachers find that they are at a place where they are valued and are part of a community that is making a difference, and they want to stay.
- Johnson also pointed out that his same presentation could be applied to districts, i.e. what they need to do to fully and deeply implement standards-based reform.

November 14, 2007, Session Seven: 1:45 – 2:45 p.m.

Breaking the Silence: Ushering in Courageous Conversation About the Impact of Race on Student Achievement	
Speakers:	Manny Barbara, Superintendent, Oak Grove School District Chris Lim, Superintendent, San Leandro Unified School District Glenn Singleton, Chief Executive Officer, Pacific Educational Group
Brief description of presentation	The racial achievement gap persists at national, state, and local levels. Despite federal legislation mandates and what we have discovered in analyzing district disaggregated data, still relatively few educators possess and demonstrate the will, skill, knowledge, and/or capacity to engage in, sustain, or deepen effective interracial conversations about the impact of race on student achievement. Providing professional learning opportunities that assist educators in participating in courageous conversations about race quickly leads to more meaningful and productive curriculum, instruction, and assessment reform. In this session, panel members discussed how courageous conversation can heighten educators' awareness around issues of equity and focus school/district leadership towards eliminating the racial achievement gap.

- There are ground rules for courageous conversations. Despite feeling discomfort, one must engage with other participants when they speak their truths, experience the discomfort, and expect and accept non-closure.
- Leadership demands that we challenge the status quo with regard to learning and teaching.
- We must organize learning and systems thinking.
- We need to establish equity teams.
- Given multiple perspectives, we need to identify and define race and white privilege.
- Oak Grove faced many challenges in addressing the equity/race gap. The district had a changing context, and everyone had a role in its plan to close the gap. The district developed a "Constitution," and the Board of Trustees adopted it in 1999.
- Oak Grove looked at everything it did from an equity perspective. It created a five-year plan that is updated annually and approved each year by the board.
- The equity teams met each Friday nights at African American students' homes, and each Tuesday night at Latino students' homes.
- The challenges included:
 - Staff turnover
 - Reaching critical mass
 - Accepting nonclosure
 - Having as a common standard that all students must benefit

- Oak Grove experienced a shift from whether it would do the work to how to do the work better. It became easier after that.

(Write-up is incomplete; note taker was unable to attend the entire session.)

Governor’s Committee on Education Excellence	
Speaker:	Theodore Mitchell, Governor’s Committee on Education Excellence
Brief description of presentation	Ted Mitchell provided an overview of the Governor’s Committee on Education Excellence (GCEE) and the Committee’s objectives and progress. The session will be an opportunity for community and education leaders to discuss the work of the Committee on Education Excellence and to provide feedback to the Committee regarding important priorities for 2008 and beyond.

- The GCEE was appointed by the Governor at the same time as the P-16 Council was appointed by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction.
- The four focus issues for the GCEE are a) finance; b) governance; c) quality and quantity of teachers; and d) quality and quantity of administrators.
- The GCEE reviewed a variety of California research and requested 12 to 13 GDTF reports; it had stakeholder meetings, but no public input.
- The GCEE collaborated closely with Secretaries Long and Bersin.
- Nothing was off the table. For example, the committee explored Proposition 98 and Proposition 13 in the finance area.
- The system is a structural impediment to effective teaching and learning; there are systemic barriers, and the system is “fundamentally flawed.”
- What matters most is the way in which existing resources and any new resources are used. Everybody is in charge, and nobody is in charge. Resources not allocated according to student needs, and there is no real accountability.
- The GCEE is about fixing systems, not blaming people, and getting rid of red tape, inefficiencies, and perverse disincentives.
- We need to build on existing successes, such as California’s high-stakes standards; initial implementation of an accountability system (although “stick based”); thousands of dedicated professionals; good progress toward rigorous coursework; data systems (California School Information Services [CSIS] and California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System [CalPADS] are a foundation); and “beating the odds” schools.

Recommendation – World-class data and information system

- CalPADS development was driven by costs. It has only 40 data elements so it will not meet the needs of educators or other stakeholders.
- We need P-20 student data (potentially integrated with other systems, such as health and social services).

- We need to be able to assess growth and value-added; we need vertically scaled tests (and revisit the contract with the STAR vendor).
- We need to integrate the California Longitudinal Teacher Education Data System (CalTIDES) with student data to assess programs.
- We need to overhaul the School Accountability Report Card; it reflects an unwillingness “to impose requirements.”

Recommendation – Strengthened teaching and leadership

- Peer and administrator evaluations should involve portfolios and student achievement.
- Teachers need incentives for mentoring, coaching, and working in hard-to-staff schools.
- We need to narrow opportunity gaps and the teacher and administrator quality gap via improved working conditions.
- We need deregulate and expand flexible alternative paths.

Recommendation – Fair and flexible funding that rewards success

- We need to support continuous improvement and students’ attainment of learning goals (adequacy).
- Equity is not related to equal dollars. The Committee looked at weighted student formulas and simpler finance models with fewer categories (poverty, language, special education needs); in California these kids get about 10% more than the average student (while in other states it is 20% to 80%).
- We need to monitor distribution of state resources better to ensure they get to kids; this means financial transparency.
- Incentives should be aligned with students’ attainment of standards; now more money goes to low-performing schools.

Recommendation – Streamline governance and strengthen accountability

- Accountability is not about “gotcha” but promoting student achievement.
- We need to reduce compliance regulations (for instance, collapse categoricals) and enhance autonomy for high-performing schools and districts.
- Decisions should be made close to students; the state has an enhanced role in supporting success.
- We should reward success but have no tolerance for failure in the accountability system.

Recommendation – Preparation for success

- This issue was not within the scope of the four focus areas. We should expand access to early childhood education and start with disadvantaged students.

Context

- We need to be aware of impediments/challenges to categorical reform and get past “narrow interests.”

- We cannot have gridlock when times are lean and simply add programs when funds are available.
- We could be in Test 1 for Proposition 98 for five to seven years. We need to fix the system’s flaws and give educators an opportunity to succeed.
- There is a different tone in Sacramento. Lawmakers are visibly engaged.
- We have a chance for focused deliberation and a great opportunity for change. “What are we willing to give?”
- There are costs attached. The Committee examined revenue sources and did not avoid third rail issues (such as taxes and tenure).

Status of the Report

- The Governor had an initial briefing; a lot of dialogue still will occur. It was “just a first conversation.” The Governor was absorbed with fires, health care, and water debates. The report will be released to the public in two to three weeks.

Pasadena Unified: Making a Difference in an Urban School District	
Speakers:	<p>Meg Abrahamson, Pasadena Unified School District</p> <p>Edwin Diaz, Superintendent, Pasadena Unified School District</p> <p>Steven Miller, Principal, Marshall Fundamental High School, Pasadena Unified School District</p> <p>Kathy Onoye, Principal, Willard International Baccalaureate Magnet School, Pasadena Unified School District</p>
Brief description of presentation	<p>Pasadena Unified has achieved academic progress over the past four years based on a unified curriculum, assessments and data, professional development, and teacher collaboration. A focus on accountability, leadership, inquiry protocol, and data access and decision-making has helped close the achievement gap. Superintendent Diaz shared tips on leadership, accountability, and process development based on the works of Marzano, Waters, and Reeves. Coaching (based on Perroti and Bloom), inquiry protocol, building capacity, interventions, and a rigorous curriculum propelled Pasadena’s schools to the top of the rankings. An improved accountability system also supported growth.</p>

Edwin Diaz:

- Schools need to focus on student achievement with consistent standards-based curriculum, use of formative data, teacher collaboration, and professional development. An internal accountability system also needs to be established. Closing the achievement gap must be a priority goal, and high expectations for all students should be integrated in all practices.

Meg Abrahamson:

- Schools should establish data teams, which are grade-level or department teams. They should have a clearly defined collaborative inquiry protocol and norms for structured meetings. The use of data teams helps improve and guide instructional practices. Common assessments are critical components of accountability.

Steve Miller:

- Schools need to provide a challenging program for all students.
 - Marshall has an extensive Advanced Placement program (40% of the total student body) accessible to all students. Incoming sixth graders who are struggling readers are expected to be in Honors ninth grade English. All courses must have rigor; the expectation is that all students meet the A-G course sequence. The instructional focus includes strong standards-aligned courses, ongoing assessments, and regularly scheduled collaboration.
 - It is essential to establish a schoolwide climate where courageous conversations take place.

Kathy Onoye:

- Willard School is one of the few elementary schools in the nation to be granted an International Baccalaureate Program.
 - Instructional focus is central; collaboration meetings are well structured, data driven, and frequent.

Edwin Diaz:

- Success is due to the following:
 - Using an established inquiry protocol
 - Establishing supportive, meaningful relationships between students and adults
 - Ensuring a rigorous, relevant curriculum for all students.

Project Lead the Way – A Proven Model for Closing the Achievement Gap	
Speaker:	Duane Crum, Project Lead the Way
Brief description of presentation	<p>Students are left behind in our educational system for a number of reasons, many of which are outside the control of our schools, such as lack of support from families. However, a large percentage of poorly performing students have simply stopped trying due to several reasons, including boredom, a feeling that the material is irrelevant, an inability to grasp material presented in the typical lecture format, and a complete lack of interest. Project Lead the Way (PLTW) is a proven program that can re-involve many of these students by offering a rigorous technical curriculum based on project and problem-based activities. Students learn complex science, technology, engineering, and math concepts in a hands-on learning environment that integrates science, math, technology, and language skills. Instructors attend intensive, course-specific professional development prior to teaching any PLTW course.</p>

- PLTW was initially started to close the achievement gap in science and engineering in the United States in relation to other countries in the world. One of the first things the founders realized is that it is hard to do this when these fields lack full involvement of women and minority students.
- We need professional development – course specific teacher training – and counselor conferences that provide full-day training.
- To get kids prepared for science and engineering in college, you have to get them involved in middle school and to keep them motivated. You can decide you want to go to law school mid-way thru college. However, for science and engineering, transferring in that late in the game will not be an option without the proper groundwork.
- Who does well in PLTW? Students who like applied application, who like problem solving, who are relatively strong in science and math, and who are perhaps under-achievers in relation to what they might be able to do if challenged with real problems are a good match for the program.
- Nationally, as the demand for engineers is growing and will continue to grow, the number of graduates in these areas has actually been declining. This decrease is because the typical high school in the U.S. today does not have rigorous science and math programs. These schools are not producing kids with the kinds of preparation colleges are seeking for these programs.
- The middle school program has five nine-week units. It is essential to catch kids in middle school to maintain their interest. Sally Ride notes that while about 80% of fifth grade girls say they like science, by eighth grade this drops to about 30%.

- By high school, PLTW has basic courses it offers. The first is Principles of Engineering. The second is a design class. There is also digital electronics and civil engineering and architecture.
- There is some evidence that this program is closing the achievement gap for students who get involved. Also, although the program still has some difficulty attracting women, the ones it does attract seem to do the best in the program.
- A biomedical science program is now being developed, based on the success of PLTW in science and engineering.

Quality Early Education Programs – Assets to Student Achievement	
Speakers:	Catherine Atkin, Preschool California Ellin Chariton, Orange County Department of Education Jay Hoffman, Superintendent, Nuview Union School District Roberta Peck, California County Superintendents Educational Services Association (CCSESA) Gaye Riggs, Merced County Office of Education
Brief description of presentation	This session highlighted high-quality prekindergarten programs as an effective strategy to address California’s achievement gap and promote success for all children. Longitudinal studies reveal that children with effective preschool experiences are less likely to need special education or be retained, and are more likely to have higher test scores in reading, writing, and math. This panel analyzed California’s school readiness gap by reviewing research and state and national educational policy directions. The panel discussed innovative collaborations, including the California First 5 Power of Preschool Projects and the universal preschool program in Nuview Union School District, Riverside County.

Peck:

- Focused prekindergarten research complements K-12 “adequacy and sufficiency studies.”
- RAND studies show that school readiness gaps are evident at kindergarten and first grade. The same groups have achievement gaps at grades two and three.
- High quality prekindergarten programs improve readiness, especially for Hispanic, African American, and disadvantaged children.
- California ranks 37th out of 50 states in preschool/childcare enrollment.
- Only 25% of preschool teachers have a B.A. degree.
- Access to effective preschool is split on economic and ethnic lines; many parents want it but there are no programs they can access or afford.
- Research shows that children who attend high-quality preschool are less likely to need special education services; are less likely to be retained; are more likely to graduate



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from high school; and have higher test scores in reading, writing, and math. They are less likely to be delinquent, end up on welfare, or be in jail.

- A Tulsa School District prekindergarten study showed that children had gains in pre-reading, pre-writing, and pre-math, and that all racial and economic groups showed gains, with Hispanics showing the highest gains.
- Key elements of effective prekindergarten include the following: Target children at-risk first and begin early; recognize that more is better in terms of duration; provide high intensity of services, and small group size and child-staff ratios; hire responsive, well-educated teachers (B.A. degree with Early Childhood Education credential) and compensate them; provide a rich curriculum, a menu of comprehensive services, and a transition to early elementary; establish a strong accountability and improvement system; and provide adequate funding.

Hoffman:

- Prevention is easier than remediation; let us give our kids a great start early in the game.
- The Nuview Union School District is a success story. The district has less than 2,000 students and four schools.
- There are six steps from the dream of universal prekindergarten to reality:
 - *Step 1:* Create a vision that is understood and embraced by key community stakeholders. Create a vision development team, do an environmental scan, identify current strengths, acknowledge deficits, and disseminate the vision.
 - *Step 2:* Build the plan for prekindergarten. Create a research-based program. Emulate best practices. Involve key players.
 - *Step 3:* Select the best people; provide high-quality staff development for capacity building; and devise incentives to keep the best people, including compensation, a quality work environment, and career ladder opportunities. It is about the people!
 - *Step 4:* Identify collaborators and resources.
 - *Step 5:* Implement the program. Celebrate with everyone.
 - *Step 6:* Practice continuous improvement. Involve staff, parents, and collaborators. Share successes and failures.
- The district had sustainability efforts and results including the following:
 - Developer built and/or funded childcare facilities.
 - Service and technical support for other facilities.
 - Advocacy at all levels.
 - Groundswell of students prepared for kindergarten.
 - Highly informed parents with new skills to assist their kids at home.

Riggs:

- The Merced County Office of Education has innovative prekindergarten collaborations, including the First 5 Power of Preschool (PoP) Project; linked school readiness programs; special needs project; CARES (comprehensive approaches to raising educational standards); CPIN (California Preschool Instructional Network); and a P-16 business education alliance.

- First 5 PoP is a project to demonstrate the effectiveness of improved access to high quality preschools and inform the field about how to do it. There are nine learning sites: San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Merced, San Joaquin, two in Los Angeles, Ventura, and San Diego.
- CPIN is a collaboration between the California Department of Education and California County Superintendents Educational Services Association; It establishes a network of leaders in 11 regions and provides professional development.

Chariton:

- The Orange County Office of Education has an innovative prekindergarten collaboration and county-level planning process that aims to increase quality; improve coordination between preschool and K-12 systems; maximize existing resources; and increase access for families with the greatest need.
- It is a collaborative planning process, with five work groups.

Atkin:

- Nationally, there is progress. Forty states offer state-funded prekindergarten; most target at-risk children. Oklahoma, Florida, Georgia, West Virginia, Iowa, and New York are committed to four-year-olds.
- Illinois is committed to universal preschool for all three- and four-year-olds.
- The goals for California preschools include:
 - Develop quality learning foundations.
 - Build a professional, first-class learning system for preschool teachers.
 - Implement a results-based accountability system.
 - Create seamless transitions from prekindergarten to kindergarten to first grade.
 - Involve all stakeholders in the learning process.

Racial Achievement Gap Reflects Racial Opportunity Gaps	
Speaker:	Jeannie Oakes, University of California, Los Angeles
Brief description of presentation	Jeannie Oakes presented new data showing that the racial gaps in test scores mirror racial gaps in such basic educational resources and opportunities as safe, uncrowded school facilities, rigorous curriculum, and qualified teachers. Schools without these resources and opportunities have severe difficulties achieving even minimum standards and meeting the No Child Left Behind standard for Adequate Yearly Progress. Every California community feels the effect of under-funding and shortages of basic resources and opportunities, but all communities do not suffer equally. African American and Latino students are more likely to attend overcrowded schools, schools with the highest rates of unqualified teachers, and schools with shortages of college preparatory courses. These students are not given a fair and equal opportunity to learn. Efforts to close the achievement gap among racial groups must remedy these fundamental gaps in educational opportunity.

- There is a national opportunity gap. California lags behind the other states with regard to several indicators, including the large size of our schools, large class sizes, the limited access to counselors, and the low per-student spending. Oakes showed many data slides detailing this information.
- There is also a lot of racial segregation in California. Black and Latino students are isolated from white peers and are more likely to be in high minority schools that are overcrowded with a low number of highly qualified teachers. Oakes again showed many data slides to detail this information.
- This lack of opportunity maps onto the achievement gap. High-minority, high-poverty schools are six times as likely to be in Program Improvement (PI) and 19 times as likely to be in PI at the high school level. Data slides explained this and provided several examples. Since students in high-minority, high-poverty schools have limited opportunities, this perpetuates the achievement gap.