



2016 Annual Report



**Parent
Organization
Network**

Leading School Change

December 2016

To Our Members

Program Highlights

Two-thousand sixteen was a year of successful advocacy efforts. Our persistence is paying off as we are influencing decisions in plans, policies, practices and/or budgets. More specifically this year, PON influenced the following changes:

- Revisions to the LCFF supplemental and concentration budget in Lynwood Unified School District's 2016-2017 LCAP;
- Improvements on parent programming and resources for English Learners in Whittier City School District;
- Updates to the Los Angeles Unified School District's visitors policy. Although the district is still in the process of improving the policy thus far the district has added language on the practice of 'disruptive person letters' and an appeals process for parents to challenge the restrictions and restore access to their children's schools.
- Helped establish the state's initial version of the rubric for parent engagement.

Another important highlight this year is that a new parent organization from Long Beach, Latinos in Action, joined the network.

Operating Highlights

PON received its nonprofit status this year. It continued operating with one employee working on a half-time status that will become full time early in 2017. Also, it expanded its operational capacity and the added support from volunteers and partners enabled PON to coordinate trips to Sacramento, launch a website and a Facebook page, and release and promote a research study.

Looking Ahead

In 2017 we will continue advocating to improve education at the state and local level but will also be ready to collaborate with organizations leading efforts to protect and support the families we serve from anti-immigrant policy changes the Trump administration may implement.

Thank you for your commitment to serve the community through the work you carry out in schools and through PON. I look forward to your continuing working with you in the new year.



Araceli Simeón
Project Director

Program Highlights

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State Level Advocacy

Progress on the Parent Engagement Rubric: PON continued coordinating advocacy and mobilization efforts with PICO California, Families in Schools, California PTA, and Parent/Teacher Home Visit Project to maximize their impact. Consequently, PON parent leaders provided testimonials during three State Board of Education (SBE) meetings this year. In the summer, the groups and 23 other partners advocated for evidence-based parent engagement rubrics and metrics. As a result, the California Department of Education drafted the first version of the state's rubric for parent engagement modeled after recommendations that the aforementioned organizations provided in 2015 and promoted throughout the year. The SBE will finalize the first version of the rubric in early 2017.



PON Director Appointed to an Education State Advisory Committee: In March 2016, Araceli Simeón, Project Director was appointed by the State Board of Education to serve on the California Practitioners Advisory Group to advise on the adoption of a coherent and integrated K-12 education accountability system. For the next two year, Ms. Simeon's role is to share her viewpoint as a parent on critical policy discussions, including the rubrics for parent engagement and other state priorities.

Local Level Advocacy

Lynwood Unified School District (LUSD): PON and Lynwood SOS observed steady improvements in the areas they have advocated for and monitored during the past three years. These improvements include: 1) increases in graduation rates for all student subgroups; 2) access to AP courses doubled in two years; 3) programming for parents is stronger; and 4) budget data is more transparent. Although there are concerns with the plans and interventions for English Learners, how supplemental and concentration funding is not being spent, and accounting errors, overall progress is trending upward. Over time PON's and Lynwood SOS' relationship with the district has evolved from adversarial to more collaborative, strategic. At this point we have been invited by the Superintendent to provide ongoing input to improve outcomes for English Learners.

Whittier City School District (WCSD): Since the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) law has been implemented, WCSD has been receptive of input from teachers, parents, and other stakeholders, and their LCAPs reflect that. In 2015 and 2016, PON and Pro-Edu advocated for changes in parent programming and interventions for English Learners. As a result this year we saw the district re-open a parent center that had been closed previously, hired a coordinator and part time community liaisons. WCSD also hired coaches to support teachers of English Learners and we are beginning to observe growth in the district's reclassification rates.

Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD): PON released a report on LAUSD's issuance of 'Disruptive Person Letters' to parents, which restrict parents' access to their children's schools for a year. The report highlighted the lack of policy on this practice, lack of an appeals process, and how some principals misuse these letters to address conflict or silence vocal parent leaders, thus hindering engagement and infringing on parental rights. As a result, the district revised the visitors' policy to add language on 'Disruptive Person Letters' and an appeals process. The policy is still being refined to ensure this recourse is not abused by principals and that conflict between parents and administrators is resolved more constructively, according to restorative justice practices. Articles were published in the LA School Report and the Los Angeles Times. To view the articles, please visit PON's Facebook page at: www.facebook.com/ponlosangeles



Long Beach Unified School District (LBUSD): **Latinos in Action**, a grassroots nonprofit organization based in Long Beach joined the network this year. Their mission is to strengthen families, youth, and individuals by increasing their knowledge in areas of health and education and by developing their leadership skills so they can improve their quality of life.

To support their efforts, Latinos in Action's health and education promoters completed PON's and Pro-Edu's training on "Health and Safety in Schools" in November. One of this group's specialty is supporting parents with children in special education by coaching them to assert their rights when reviewing children's Individualized Educational Plans with school officials. Welcome to PON, Latinos in Action!

Priorities for 2017

