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2017 ANNUAL REPORT

INFLUENCE

LEADERS POLICIES BUDGETS
To Our Members

Program Highlights
This year PON continued influencing policies and practices in education, but our role is evolving as the paradigm shift from compliance to collaboration and continuous improvement begins to take place in the field. Consequently, our activities transitioned from advocacy and mobilization to bridging communication between different actors and building capacity for successful policy implementation. Thus, we worked alongside district staff, department of education staff, other community organizations, and parents in committees such as:

- The State Board of Education’s California Practitioners Advisory Group;
- The California Department of Education’s Ad Hoc Family Engagement Workgroup;
- The California Collaborative for Educational Excellence’s (CCEE) Dashboard Toolkit Committee;
- The CCEE’s Support Team for Professional Learning Network Facilitators; and
- The LAUSD’s Restorative Justice for Parents Committee.

To equip you for this collaboration era, PON expanded training beyond technical skills (i.e. data analysis, budgeting, Dashboard) to strengthen parents’ soft skills in communication, teambuilding, and conflict resolution. Also, PON is now working with staff from four school districts to refine districtwide policies, plans, and build capacity to implement effective parent engagement practices.

Looking Ahead
PON is only as strong as its members and in 2018 we commit to continue investing in training that will help you achieve individual and collective goals, and that can address families’ immediate and long-term needs so children can have the best-possible present and future.

Thank you for your resilience in 2017 and for your unwavering commitment to continue learning and sharing hope, compassion, wisdom, and resources with families in your local community.

Sincerely,

[Signature]
Araceli Simeón
Project Director
Introduction

This year PON expanded its participation to new state advisory committees and continued building trust and relationships with district and state level staff, which is increasing our influence in these circles. We also strengthened parent leaders’ capacity to communicate and collaborate with other parents and district staff, and to help immigrant families navigate systems so they can access resources.

State Level Advocacy

**PON Director Re-Appointed to CPAG for a Three-Year Term:**

In March 2016, Araceli Simeón, Project Director was appointed by the State Board of Education (SBE) to serve on an advisory committee to provide input on the adoption of a coherent and integrated K-12 education accountability system. Her role is to share her viewpoint as a parent on critical discussions. Her two-year term expired this month, but the California Department of Education (CDE) staff recommended her re-appointment for a three-year term and the SBE approved it. Her new term ends in December 2020.

**CDE’s “Ad Hoc Family Engagement Workgroup” Evolving Parent Engagement Local Indicator:**

PON continued to advocate for evidence-based parent engagement rubrics and metrics but the SBE opted not to approve specific metrics due to wide variance in practice across the state. Instead, CDE created the “Ad Hoc Family Engagement Workgroup” to foster regular, meaningful two-way communication between its staff and family engagement stakeholders (including PON) to better inform statewide family engagement initiatives and improve technical assistance to local educational agencies. The first task of the group is to evolve the state’s local indicator for parent engagement in 2018 so that a revised version can be adopted by SBE in March 2019.

**PON Selected to Lead a Professional Learning Network on Parent Engagement:**

This year, the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence (CCEE) selected PON to establish a Professional Learning Network (PLN) to support school districts in strengthening their LCAP stakeholder engagement process and to integrate a continuous improvement cycle for their parent engagement work. The CCEE is an agency created by the Legislature to provide “advice and assistance” to county offices of education, school districts, and charter schools. The CCEE funded 57 PLNs, of which only three are focused on school climate/parent engagement (the other two networks are led by Families In Schools). The PON will support four LA County districts in Azusa, Lynwood, Pasadena, and Whittier for the next two school years.

**Connecting Parent Voices to State Efforts in Education:**

- **Parent Input on California’s “Every Student Succeeds Act” (ESSA) Plan:** In May and June, PON collaborated with other organizations, CDE and SBE Board Members to facilitate and co-host community forums so parents could provide direct input to the ESSA state plan on school improvement, English Learners, and school climate. Ninety-two parents (75 from Los Angeles County and 17 from Coachella) provided input, and the themes raised in the meetings were reflected in the plan.

- **Collaborating with CCEE to Develop Parent Training on LCFF, LCAP and the Dashboard:** PON is part of a collaborative assisting CCEE in developing and piloting a two-hour training on the LCFF, LCAP and the Dashboard. The toolkit will be a resource for school
districts to familiarize parents with the new accountability and support system and to highlight the key role they play in this process. The material is in development and it will be piloted across the state in 2018.

- CDE is also reaching out to support their efforts to revamp their family engagement website and to identify promising practices in the field. PON will provide input in 2018.

**PON Director Invited to Speak at Conferences to Explain or Comment on the State’s New Accountability System.** This fall the PON Director spoke at the following conferences:

- **10/5/2017 | EdSource Symposium in Oakland:** Spoke on a school climate panel regarding parent engagement in schools and in the new accountability system. About 750 education practitioners, policy makers, advocates, funders and researchers attended the event.

- **11/2/2017 | Families In Schools in Los Angeles:** Co-presented with CCEE and FIS on the California Dashboard and how parents can use the tool for advocacy. The conference reached about 400 parents, practitioners, and local policy makers and advocates.

- **11/30/2017 | California State Board Association Annual Conference in San Diego:** Spoke on a panel regarding the California Dashboard, the new system of support, and families’ role in school improvement. The session was attended by about 300 participants: board members, superintendents, and county office of education staff from across the state.

**Local Level Advocacy**

**Lynwood Unified School District (LUSD):**
This district continued growing and PON's and Lynwood SOS’ relationship has become strategic. LUSD is a member of PON’s Professional Learning Network. Through this work, PON is coaching district staff to help them integrate their parent engagement work throughout the LCAP, and to standardize effective practices across school sites.

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<tr>
<th>Improvements:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Declined number of LTELs</td>
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<td>• Budget increase for parent engagement</td>
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<td>• Focus on school climate, relationships:</td>
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<tr>
<td>o Access to psychologists for students,</td>
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<td>o Access to Positive Behavior Intervention and Support program for staff, and</td>
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<td>o Social Emotional Learning for parents</td>
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<th>Maintained Status on:</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Reclassification rates</td>
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**Need to Improve:**

- Welcoming environment in some schools

**Continued Growth On:**

- Graduation rates for all student subgroups
- Access to AP courses doubled
- Parent programming

**Need to Improve:**

- Plans and interventions for ELs

**Whittier City School District (WCSD):**
Given the anti-immigrant political climate, PON was pleased that WCSD partnered with Pro-Edu (PON member) to co-host an immigration forum in April where over 200 community residents turned out. The families learned that the district was already working closely with local leaders to ensure school and police do not carry out immigration-related duties.
Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD):
For five years PON and parents submitted letters and provided testimonies requesting to improve the services and leadership in the district’s Parent and Community Services Branch (PCSB). To document some of the retaliatory practices against parents, last year the 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 silence parents, thus hindering engagement. Results in 2017:

Positive Unintended Consequence: The months-long process to expand restorative justice to parents became a catalyst for healing relationships and re-building trust between LAUSD parents and staff. While some of the most vocal parent leaders had been notified in July 2016 that they could no longer attend PCSB meetings because their children had just graduated, by July 2017 they were invited back to serve in committees (under different roles) and offered opportunities to teach leadership skills to new parents.

Long Beach Unified School District (LBUSD): This spring, Latinos in Action, our newest member, collaborated with Public Advocates to file a Universal Complaint Procedure (UCP) against Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) and Long Beach Unified to challenge how supplemental and concentration funds were used. After investigating the complaint, LACOE concluded the Long Beach Unified had misspent $24 million dollars in textbooks and teacher salaries and that need to be repaid in future budgets.
Local Capacity Building

**Reprioritizing Goals after the Election:** Over the past three years PON has focused primarily on building capacity to advance the network’s collective long-term policy education advocacy goals. However, the outcome of the presidential election and the anti-immigrant rhetoric shook our membership at its core and it became a priority to build capacity for members to respond to more immediate family needs. Consequently, PON sponsored training on:

- **Responding to Mental Health Needs of Immigrants**
  - Ten parents completed a 143-hour online training provided by Mexican universities

- **Communication, Conflict Resolution, Restorative Justice**
  - Seventeen parents completed a 16-hr training from Leadership Development in Intergroup Relations and the Partnership for Los Angeles Schools.

- **Resiliency, Storytelling, and Effective Outreach**
  - Four parents attended Vision & Compromiso's two-day annual conference.

**Priorities for 2018**

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<th>State Advocacy</th>
<th>Local Advocacy &amp; Capacity Building</th>
<th>Strengthen Network</th>
<th>Strengthen Organization</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Continue influencing decisions thru committees in SBE, CDE, and CCEE</td>
<td>• Review and adjust process to impact LCAPs and school practices</td>
<td>• Update member commitments</td>
<td>• Build team of consultants to maintain and if possible, expand PON's work</td>
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<td>• Continue supporting education-related legislation</td>
<td>• Build district staff capacity to strengthen parent engagement</td>
<td>• Host four networking meetings</td>
<td>• Evaluate work with districts</td>
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<td>• Document successes in LAUSD’s RJ project, and LUSD’s parent project to show case in 2019</td>
<td>• Co-host events with members (Conference in March 2018)</td>
<td>• Find new sources of funding</td>
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<td>• Sponsor trainings and projects that will strengthen PON leadership</td>
<td>• Update 3-year strategic plan</td>
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