2019 Program Highlights
This year PON completed and started the following projects:

Projects Completed

**Strengthening Family and Community Engagement Theory and Practice:**
- **Professional Learning Network:** Ten staff members from four school districts in Azusa, Lynwood, Pasadena, and Whittier completed a 2-year commitment to strengthen family and community engagement practice. Collectively, they completed 500 hours of training. Two reports were released in December to document the learning process and impact. Key conclusions: The PLN was effective at increasing knowledge of best practices in family engagement and helping participants begin improvement projects. However, the impact is not yet reflected in the district’s LCAPs.

**Removing Barriers Hindering Family Engagement / Conflict and Complaint Resolution:**
- Legal partners challenged parent bans or Disruptive Parent Letters in two courts and the cases concluded in 2019.
  - Camfield v. Board of Trustees of Redondo Beach Unified School District court case was argued by the Tiffany Law Group before the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals in May 2019. The court ruled in favor of the school district, upholding the status quo on parent bans.
  - Claudia Macias vs. Lisa Filippini; Bill Morones; and Brian Miller was argued by MALDEF at U.S. District Court in 2018. In this case the court ruled in favor of the parents, upholding parents’ right to advocate and the case was settled in August 2019.

New Projects

**Strengthening Family and Community Engagement Theory and Practice:**
- PON and the Opportunity Institute are co-hosting the California Family Engagement Network to support and promote authentic, culturally responsive, equitable, and transformative family engagement practices in the K-12 -- across the state.
- PON became a member of the San Diego State University team representing California at the National Pre-service Family Engagement Consortium. The consortium will develop a pre-service family engagement framework for culturally responsive family engagement.

Organizational Development
- With great gratitude, PON bid farewell to Stewart Kwoh and Advancing Justice – LA, founder and fiscal sponsor. PON is now sponsored by and housed at Community Partners.
- Established a new Advisory Board composed of Olga Gonzalez, community leader; Carolina Perez, community leader; Adrian Sandoval, MALDEF; Nancy Villareal, Los Angeles Education Partnership; and Joyce G. Watts, African American Parent/Community Coalition for Educational Equity (AAP/CCEE).

Looking Ahead
Next year PON will be releasing a report on family and community engagement requirements in pre-service. This work is attracting new partnerships with national and state organizations and agencies as well as higher education institutions. Also, in 2020 PON will be celebrating its 15th anniversary. We look forward to celebrating this milestone with you.

Sincerely,

[Signature]
Project Director
Introduction
This year PON experienced victories and loses in advocacy. PON and partners effectively influenced specific departments in agencies that are more open to or experienced with community engagement while other departments or agencies simply dismissed input from advocates and others.

Advocacy and Monitoring Implementation of Policies
This section reports the advocacy outcomes as well as progress implementing policies we advocated for and that were approved in previous years.

1. Strengthening Family and Community Engagement Practice

A. The State Board of Education Approved the Revised Parent Engagement Local Indicator Developed by CDE’s “Ad Hoc Family Engagement Group”

The revised version of the family engagement local indicator was presented to the State Board of Education in March 2019 and it was approved unanimously by members. The local indicators, along with state indicators, input from stakeholder engagement, and what was learned from continuous improvement cycles are supposed to inform a school district’s LCAP development to improve school conditions that impact student outcomes.

The self-reflection tool requires school districts to engage a diverse group of stakeholders in analyzing data and rating the school district’s implementation level for family engagement, to then identify improvement areas. The self-reflection tool asks 12 questions in three categories: relationship building between families and school staff, building partnerships for student outcomes, and seeking input for decision-making. Each category asks questions regarding best practices and training provided for staff and families to engage each other, upholding the Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships. For more information please visit CDE’s local indicator web page at https://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/aa/lc/documents/lioverview2019.pdf.

To support CDE and the field with the implementation of the self-reflection tool, PON collaborated with CDE and WestEd staff in developing presentations and co-presenting before education leaders and practitioners at the following conferences or events:

   - Co-hosted a networking event for California participants at the conference. A session on the local indicator self-reflection tool was promoted before 65 event participants.
   - A presentation on the local indicator was co-presented with West Ed to about 25 participants, family engagement staff and nonprofit partners.

3. **California PTA First District Luncheon**, Arcadia in October 2019. Served as keynote for the luncheon, presenting on the local indicator self-reflection before about 100 participants, of whom 23 were school district superintendents from the San Gabriel and Pomona Valleys.

### B. **Forming the California Family Engagement Network**

Although the CDE Ad Hoc dissolved after it completed the revision of the self-reflection tool, PON partnered with Opportunity Institute to co-host the California Family Engagement Network. This is an emerging network coming together to support and promote authentic, culturally responsive, equitable, and transformative family engagement practices in the K-12 and adjacent early childhood settings across the state. The network’s purpose is to share information on best practices (including systems building, capacity building, professional development, etc.); influence state-level policy and guidance; monitor and assist with implementation of family-engagement policies (like the self-reflection tool); and build consensus among students, families, practitioners, and advocates to advise state-level agencies and existing and potential funders on promoting family engagement as an essential pillar of improving student outcomes.

### C. **State’s Educator Credentialing Requirements on Family Engagement**

PON and Public Advocates researched the issue of teacher and administrator credentialing requirements on family engagement and drafted the report. The report will include four sections: 1) analysis of existing laws about the topic; 2) analysis of documents published by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing to guide universities on carrying out the law; 3) a landscape analysis of how selected preparation programs fulfill the requirements informed by 22 interviews with representatives from universities, colleges, and county offices of education; and 4) policy recommendations. We will promote findings and advocate for change throughout 2020. However, the connections and relationships that have been built in the process are generating interest from the targeted audiences and are yielding partnership opportunities, preliminarily indicating there might be political will to make changes on this topic.

### D. **PON is Selected for National Consortium on Educator Pre-Service Requirements**

In November PON led the mobilization of 14 organizations to support the San Diego State University’s application to participate in a family engagement consortium on pre-service educator preparation. To be considered, NAFSCE required an application from the interested higher education institution and a letter of support from the State Education Agency or Credentialing Entity. PON requested letter from the Tony Thurmond, State Superintendent of Public Instruction and Mary Vixie Sandy, Executive Director of the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. This resulted in a letter of support from CTC, which allowed San Diego State University to be considered and then selected as one of six state teams for the consortium.

This December PON was selected a member of the San Diego State University team representing California at the National Pre-service Family Engagement Consortium. The consortium is hosted by the National Association for Family, School, and Community Engagement (NAFSCE) and is funded by NEA, W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Heising-Simons Foundation, and the David and Lucile Packard Foundation. The consortium is composed of Institutions of Higher Education (IHE) teams from six states to study and develop a pre-service family engagement framework for culturally responsive family engagement that will include recommendations for coursework, mentoring/supervision, and field experiences of students. The completed framework is intended for implementation and subsequent evaluation within the teacher/administrator credential programs of colleges of education.
E. Higher Education Institutions Interested in Family and Community Engagement

The higher education field showing a growing interest in the topic of family and community engagement. For example, in March 2020 the PON Project Director will be co-presenting on community engagement theory and practice with an Adjunct Professor at UC Irvine at the American Association of Hispanics in Higher Education, Inc in Costa Mesa. Also, the American Educational Research Association, a major conference for scholars will be hosting its annual meeting focused on "The Power and Possibilities for the Public Good When Researchers and Organizational Stakeholders Collaborate" - is a call to “to address educational challenges through policy and community engagement and to work with diverse institutional and organizational stakeholders.”

F. Professional Learning Network (PLN) Completion & Reports on Learnings and Impact

In June, ten Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) Directors and Family Engagement Specialists from four school districts in Azusa, Lynwood, Pasadena, and Whittier completed a 2-year commitment to strengthen family and community engagement practice. Collectively, they completed 500 hours of training, built a network of support, and are applying what they learned to improve their work. The training included mostly monthly meetings and some conferences, webinars, and site visits. In the sessions they learned about research, laws and resources; each other’s engagement systems; and reflected on their work. The following two reports will be released in January 2020 to share our learnings from the PON PLN.

Report I describes the PON process to foster peer-learning and continuous improvement on family and community engagement. Based on surveys and interviews we found that PLN participants:

- Increased their knowledge and use of family and community engagement research and frameworks and continuous improvement science;
- Built a network of support by developing or strengthening relations with colleagues within their district and other districts;
- Improved communication between LCAP Administrators and Family Engagement staff by strengthening relationships, and between their respective school districts and families through the LCAP Stakeholder Engagement process.
- Increased the level of parent engagement as evidenced by an increased number of parents on decision-making committees, attendance at family events and workshops at both the school site and district levels.

Report II reviews the impact of the PLN in the participating district’s LCAPs. To assess the impact, four LCAP sections were reviewed: 1) LCAP goal, activities, and metrics on family engagement; 2) Budget allocation and actual expenditures for the family engagement plan; 3) Descriptions of “Increased or Improved Services for Unduplicated Pupils” related to family engagement goals; and 4) Stakeholder engagement.

Although Report I established growth in knowledge and practice, these changes are not reflected in the districts’ LCAP family engagement plans and budgets. Growth was detected in community engagement. Each district refined existing processes to better integrate continuous improvement, and/or developed new ways to reach specific audiences, including families or students from specific subgroups.

For FE initiatives to be successful, it will require more guidance from state agencies and greater involvement from administrators.
2. Removing Barriers Hindering Family Engagement

A. Challenging Parent Bans from their Children’s Schools in Court:
In 2018 two lawsuits were filed to challenge the practice of banning parents from schools. These cases are against school administrators for permanently restricting parents’ access to the public school that their children attended. The restriction is a violation of state and federal law. These bans are issued when parents criticize or raise objections to what is happening in their child’s school. Some school administrators retaliate against parents under the guise of maintaining order. The information for each of the cases is as follows:

- Claudia Macias vs. Lisa Filippini; Bill Morones; and Brian Miller was argued by MALDEF at U.S. District Court in 2018. In this case the court ruled in favor of the parents, upholding parents’ right to advocate and the case was settled in August 2019.

- Camfield v. Board of Trustees of Redondo Beach Unified School District court case was argued by the Tiffany Law Group before a U.S. District Court in 2018 and then the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals on May 17th. About 20 PON members including four members from San Diego that have also experienced parent bans, supported the plaintiffs by attending the hearing and coordinating a press conference. Telemundo and KNX radio coverage of the hearing. The court issued a decision on September 18, 2019. Two of the three judges on the panel ruled in favor of the school district, upholding the status quo. The attorney for the Camfields filed an appeal, as the ruling ignored one of the two cases of letter issuance and cited legal precedents unrelated to parents. However, court seldom grants re-hearings.

B. Resolving Conflict Between School Staff and Parents in LAUSD: Progress

- 2016: PON releases report on LAUSD’s Issuance of ‘Disruptive Person Letters’
- 2017: LAUSD establishes an appeals process; and the LAUSD Board passes “Increasing Trust and Strengthening Relations Between Schools and Parents” resolution which required developing a pilot program to equip district administrators to mediate conflict between principals and parents.
- 2018: LAUSD committee develops the program and it is piloted with local district staff in the summer and fall.
- 2019: LAUSD continued training; the last local district will be trained in 2020. LAUSD training participants recommend providing training to principals. The principal training will begin in 2020. PON submitted a 2nd Public Records Act request in March to get data on the number of Disruptive Person Letters issued from May 2016 – 2019. PON is yet to receive the data.

8-hour Training on Conflict Resolution
- Session I – Aims to change mindsets about conflict and how to resolve it. It provides a theoretical foundation of human relations, how trauma impacts response to conflict, customer service, restorative justice and empathic listening.
- Session II – Is focused on practice with role plays, scenarios discussions, and seeing RJ harm circles demonstrations. The sessions are led by psychologists, social workers, and specialists on human relations and diversity, and restorative justice.
C. CDE’s Effort to Improve the “Uniform Complaint Procedure” (UCP)  PON co-leads a coalition with the Legal Services of Northern California to coordinate efforts among legal and parent organizations to issue a comprehensive stakeholder report that would include recommendations for regulatory and legislative changes. After 12 months, the work did not progress as expected. Neither a state audit nor advocacy organizations influenced any substantive changes in the CDE regulations to improve the UCP process. Advocates are still interested in pressing for change but are re-calibrating strategies. Below is a description of activities we carried out during year:

- January 2019: Hired a parent to conduct 22 interviews with parents about UCP. The interviews provided education on the UCP process and gathered information for PON’s advocacy letter.
- May 13, 2019: PON provided comments on proposed regulations to improve the UCP process at a meeting and via letters. Our letter was signed by 11 organizations and four legal partners submitted letters too.
- November 6, 2019: PON and partners provided a letter to CDE expressing disappointment about the missed opportunity to improve the UCP process.

Key Recommendations on the UCP Process:
- Simplify the process and improving access for users;
- Address issues of timelines for investigation which create long delays in resolving complaints;
- Track data and reporting it;
- Provide training to districts to conduct thorough investigations;
- Improve CDE enforcement; and
- Clarify that administrative remedies under UCP is not required for parties to file a suit.

3. Other Advocacy Efforts in Education
A. Providing input in CDE’s LCAP Template Redesign
PON provided substantive feedback on redesign of the LCAP template through the California Practitioners Advisory Group (CPAG) meeting and the online survey. Although we provided comments in every section, colleagues and advocates looked to us to provide comments in the community/stakeholder engagement section. The CPAG as a whole, recommended combining both options offered, as neither one provided enough information. The updates will be presented before the State Board of Education in January.

B. Ed Trust West’s Advocacy Day
Nine PON members and staff participated in the Advocacy Day on May 1, 2019. They visited at least fifteen state legislators to advocate for a Statewide Longitudinal Data System and to require high school seniors to complete the FAFSA form or Dream Act application to ensure they have funding for post-secondary education after graduating from high school.

C. Opposing CSU’s Quantitative Reasoning Proposal for A-G Completion
PON joined Ed Trust West’s and the Campaign for College Opportunity’s efforts to oppose efforts by the CSU Chancellor to require an extra year of quantitative reasoning in A-G requirements. By December, 90 organizations, state agencies and legislators opposed the proposal as it is likely to result in lower admission rates for students of color from low-income communities and students from rural communities for historically they have had less access to quantitative reasoning courses and are more impacted by teacher shortages. In addition to signing on to opposition letters, and meeting with the Assistant Vice Chancellor, at least seven PON members representing multiple organizations will attend a study session to discuss the issue with CSU staff and the CSU Board of Trustees on August 29th, and three others attended the November 20th meeting. The PON will send a delegation again in January when the actual vote is expected to take place.
Capacity Building
PON develops tools, training, and resources to orient, update, and continuously develop staff, parent leaders, and partners so they can engage with staff in schools and lead PON projects. In 2019 we led the following trainings and developed the following tools:

A. Training
This year PON’s Capacity Building Committee developed an inventory of skills and interests to identify training needs in the coalition. We learned that members are at various stages of personal and professional development. Currently, the group is identifying and agreeing on topics that may address collective needs (i.e. cross-cultural training, facilitation skills, emotional awareness and conflict resolution). To meet the needs and interests of members, PON offered ten trainings or learning events, providing or giving access to 42 hours of training to 67 participants.

- 3/30/2019 | Latinos In Action Mujer Latina Conference (emotional awareness & resilience) 9 (7 hrs)
- Spring 2019 | Computer Literacy: 4 (16 hrs)
- 4/18/2019 | Parent Teacher Home Visits: 6 (2 hrs)
- 4/22/2019 | Media Training for Press Conference: 8 (4 hrs)
- 5/1/2019 | Advocacy Training and Preparation 9 (3 hrs)
- 6/8/2019 | Understanding College Access: 16 (2 hrs)
- 8/1/2019 | Board Development and Strategic Planning – 6 (2 hours)
- 8/13/2019 | Brain of the Leader: 1 (4 hours)
- 8/20/2019 | CSU Quantitative Reasoning Proposal and Prep – 7 (1 hours)
- 11/20/2019 | CSU Quantitative Reasoning Proposal and Prep – 1 (1 hours)

B. Tools: Family Engagement Timeline
As a result of presenting the self-reflection tool to multiple audiences, PON developed a handout on the family and community engagement movement and current shifts in theory and practice. The tool aims to help provide the background and context for current priorities in staff training and relationship building. The tool will be available on the website in January.

Growing & Sustaining the Network
Every year PON carries out activities to engage the members in assessing the community’s needs; strengthen relationships and improve communication among members; promote the members’ campaigns and initiatives; and recruit new members. In 2019, PON supported Latinos In Action Conference by providing contributions, volunteer work, and 7 members participated. The conference featured panels, workshops and campaigns on health-related and parenting topics. About 200 women attended the even in Long Beach, CA.
In 2020 we will be co-hosting or contributing to the following events:
- Networking event in the San Fernando Valley on January 25th, co-hosted with Plaza Comunitaria Sinaloa, LAEP, AAP/CEE, Padres Pioneros.
- National Family Engagement & Community Schools Conference that will be hosted in Los Angeles in May.
- 15th Anniversary Celebration and Summit

**Organizational Development**

To strengthen the organization, staff continually engages members, supporters, and funders to raise funds and develop the infrastructure (e.g. policies and systems) necessary to carry out the work. This year we engaged the following.

**Fiscal Sponsor**

With great gratitude, PON bid farewell to Stewart Kwoh and Advancing Justice – LA, founder and fiscal sponsor. Advancing Justice -LA remains a supporter of PON. As of January 1, 2020 PON, will be sponsored by and located at Community Partners. Their mission is to accelerate ideas into action to advance the public good. They do this through fiscal sponsorship, intermediary services, and knowledge sharing. Community Partners has existed for over 25 years, and currently provides fiscal sponsorship to an average of 175 projects annually, providing structure, finance and administrative services, and expert counsel that help nonprofit leaders succeed. Community Partners and now PON are located at The California Endowment building at 1000 N. Alameda St, Los Angeles, CA 90012.

**Advisory Board**

In 2019, PON formed an advisory board. All five Advisory Board members have been PON members for 10 years or more and they include:

- Adrian Sandoval, MALDEF | Co-Chair
- Dr. Joyce G. Watts, African American Parent/Community Coalition for Educational Equity (AAP/CCEE) | Co-Chair
  Olga Gonzalez, Bookkeeper and a Parent/Community Leader | Treasurer
- Nancy Villareal Los Angeles Education Partnership | Secretary
- Carolina Perez, Parent/Community Leader | Member

Advisory board members and members at large will be participating in a retreat in 2020 to update PON’s 3-year strategic plan.
Priorities for 2020

**Advocacy & Monitoring Impact**
- Influence decisions thru committees in SBE, CDE, and CCEE.
- Engage the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) and Pre-Service Consortium to update family engagement requirements.
- Develop local district advocacy strategies, including monitoring LAUSD trainings and DPL issuance.

**Capacity Building**
- Promote report on PLN reports and tools at conferences.
- Provide opportunities for parents and groups to lead including attendance at conferences, and leading a summit.

**Grow & Sustain Network**
- Host one-to-two networking events.
- Co-host events and sponsor projects that will strengthen PON leadership.
- Increase frequency of PON meetings/calls.

**Strengthen Organization**
- Continue developing the Advisory Board and recruit new members.
- Update the website.
- Host retreat & update the strategic plan.
- Celebrate PON’s 15th Anniversary.