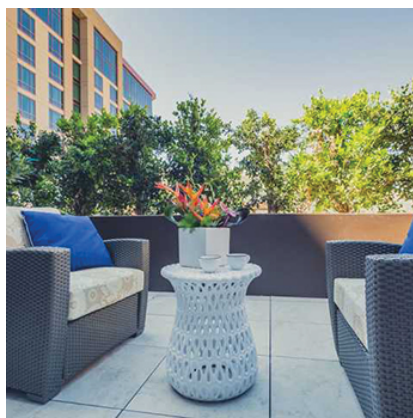


SCHOOL CLIMATE CONFERENCE

APRIL 22ND - APRIL 24TH 2026, PECHANGA RESORT, TEMECULA CALIFORNIA



THE SCHOOL CLIMATE CONFERENCE BRINGS THE LATEST RESEARCH, DATA TRENDS, AND PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES TO ALL WHO ATTEND.



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A Survey Development Platform Made For Educators By Educators!

Direction Survey helps schools not only develop Local Surveys to find answers they seek, but more importantly it DIRECTS schools to the resources they need



Build Your Survey

Our library of questions are aligned to specific behaviors. Survey development to meet your local needs



See Your Results

Immediately after the survey is complete, get access to results, trending charts for comparisons, & alerts if you vary from the norm.



Use Your Data

By using Direction Survey, you are guided to resources categorized by specific behaviors. Data provides direction.



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SCHOOL CLIMATE CONFERENCE

WELCOME

Welcome to the 9th Annual School Climate Conference hosted by Protect Connect Educate Solutions, and presented by Direction Survey. This year we are proud to welcome more than 800 attendees from across the country. Educators, school administrators, district leaders, law enforcement professionals, and community partners have gathered with a shared commitment to strengthening safe and supportive learning environments for all students.

Protect, Connect, Educate continues to guide our work. Throughout the conference you will experience sessions designed to provide practical strategies and evidence-based approaches that can be implemented immediately. Together we will explore student voice, school climate improvement, prevention planning, mental health supports, restorative practices, and collaborative systems that improve outcomes for students.

This conference continues to bring together professionals who believe school climate is the foundation of prevention and student success. We encourage you to connect with colleagues, share ideas, and build partnerships that extend beyond this week. Our presenters represent schools, districts, and organizations from across the nation and are committed to supporting your work.

Thank you for being part of the 9th Annual School Climate Conference.

Protect | Connect | Educate
pcesolutions.org

School Climate Conference Social

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Join us at Journey's End at the Pechanga Resort to kick off the
School Climate Conference.

Come enjoy a drink and network with colleagues, speakers, sponsors and new friends!

Wednesday April 22nd • Journey's End, Pechanga Resort • 5:30pm - 7:00pm
All Conference Attendees, Speakers, and Sponsors Welcome!

pcesolutions.org

CONFERENCE AGENDA

4/22/26 WEDNESDAY

9:00 am - 11:30 am	Pre-Conference
9:00 am - 4:30 pm	Registration
1:00 pm - 2:30 pm	General Session / Keynote Speaker
2:45 pm - 3:45 pm	Workshop 1
4:00 pm - 5:00 pm	Workshop 2
5:00 pm - 5:30 pm	Break / Room Check In
5:30 pm - 7:00 pm	Social at The Journey's End, Pechanga Resort Presented by Direction Survey

4/23/26 THURSDAY

6:45 am - 8:00 am	Coffee & Registration
8:00 am - 9:15 am	Workshop 3
9:30 am - 10:45 am	Workshop 4
11:00 am - 12:00 pm	General Session / Keynote Speaker
12:15 pm - 1:15 pm	Luncheon - Presented by PCE Solutions
1:30 pm - 2:45 pm	Workshop 5
3:00 pm - 4:15 pm	Workshop 6

4/24/26 FRIDAY

8:00 am - 9:00 am	Coffee and Pastries
9:00 am - 10:30 am	General Session / Keynote Speaker
10:30 am	Conclusion of Conference



**Rooms Summit A & Summit B
are on the first floor of
Conference next to Main Ballroom**

WEDNESDAY KEYNOTE

Welcome to School Climate Conference!

School climate is not an initiative—it's the foundation that shapes who our students become, what they experience each day, and why our work matters. As we gather for the School Climate Conference, this opening keynote invites participants to pause and ask the essential questions: Who is responsible for school climate? What does it truly look like in action? Where do we begin? And why is this work so urgent right now?

John Vandenburg will guide attendees through an engaging, reflective, and energizing kickoff session designed to frame the next several days of learning. Through a series of conversations, shared stories, and interactive moments, John will help participants explore the “how”—how we build systems where students feel seen, connected, and supported; how adults create consistent conditions for safety and belonging; and how data and student voice become drivers for meaningful change. This keynote sets the tone for a conference dedicated to discovery, collaboration, and actionable solutions.

John brings a career at the intersection of education, youth development, and school safety. A former teacher, school site administrator, and district Safe Schools administrator, he is the author of the evidence-based PLUS Program, a Youth Participatory Action Research model used in districts nationwide. He pioneered early cyberbullying response systems for youth, developed the Direction Survey platform for real-time school climate data, and serves as the Lead Instructor of the Safe School Climate Certificate Program at the University of Southern California. His work continues to influence school climate practices, elevate student voice, and support educators who are building safer, more connected learning environments.

This welcome keynote is more than an introduction—it is an invitation. An invitation to lean in, collaborate deeply, challenge assumptions, and discover what is possible when we commit to improving school climate.



John Vandenburg

**April 22nd / 1:00pm - 2:30pm
Main Ball Room**

A pattern of experiences students, staff and parents go through while on a campus. Based in 3 areas:

1. Academic Achievement
2. Effective Risk Prevention
3. Positive Youth Development

PLUS

PEERLEADERSUNITINGSTUDENTS

Learn how to use student voice activities to assess, measure and address the critical issue impacting school climate and student engagement. Come discover how to **empower youth leadership** to engage students to **gather data** and work alongside the PBIS/MTSS Team, School Safety Team and the School Climate Committee **to address the critical issues impacting their school climate.**

The PLUS Program, an evidence-based Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR) model will be developed as a tool for schools to utilize as part of their action plans. When we stop doing the research on the students, and let the students do the research on themselves, we find effective Solutions!

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Wednesday April 22

2:45 p.m – 3:45 p.m.

Transforming Identity-Based Harm and Conflict Through Restorative Justice Practices

How can we meaningfully address identity-based harm in our schools and communities? Restorative approaches are one possibility if we do not shy away from having tough and necessary conversations about power, race, and identity in our approach to harm and conflict. This workshop invites participants to reflect on their own identities as facilitators, gain new reflective tools, and engage in dialogue about real-world scenarios. This session is best suited for those who have a foundational understanding of Restorative Justice Practices.

Room: Tule

Presenter: Lan Nguyen, Program Specialist - Restorative Justice Practices – San Diego County Office of Education

Culture by Design

Sustainable school climate does not happen by accident-it is intentionally built. This interactive workshop will equip educators and leaders with human-centered, design-thinking strategies to intentionally shape culture. Participants will explore how daily routines, relationships, leadership behaviors, physical space, and shared values create the lived experience of school. Through reflective practices and collaborative tools, attendees will identify key cultural drivers impacting belonging, safety, engagement, and staff morale. Participants will prototype practical, low-risk shifts and learn about a measurable 365-day culture plan that strengthens student voice, staff alignment, and long-term climate impact.

Room: Elderberry

Presenter: Mike Smith, – Mike Smith Live

The Journey to Becoming a Brain-Based School: Strengthening Tier 1 Through Practice and Belonging

In today's educational climate, students and educators face increasing exposure to socio-political instability, community violence, economic stress, and environmental uncertainty. These conditions impact the nervous system, influencing emotional regulation, trust, and readiness to learn. Neuroscience shows that when safety is compromised, executive functioning and behavior are affected. While many schools use trauma-informed language, translating neuroscience into effective Tier 1 practices remains a challenge.

Continued at the top of next page . . .

WORKSHOPS

This session highlights how two partner schools examined their systems through a brain-based lens. Participants will explore practical strategies such as belonging mapping, relational check-ins, adult co-regulation routines, and data reflection to strengthen school climate, reduce behavioral escalations, and increase psychological safety.

Room: Cottonwood

Presenters: Dr. William Pulgarin, Chief Of Operations – Los Angeles Institute For Right Brain Practices and Research Inc.
Candice Dagnino Executive Vice President of Strategy, Systems and Leadership

Comprehensive School Safety Plan, improving school climate, reducing critical incidents

Schools are required update their CSSP annually, by conducting a gap analysis of practices, policies, and procedures to improve their social and physical climate, (including mental health). All school stakeholders should be involved in the analysis to develop and implement action plans creating a safer learning environment. We will discuss the components of a CSSP, based on the Educator's Guide to Comprehensive School Safety Plans, methods to improve school climate and answer FAQ's.

Room: Manzanita

Presenter: Tom Steele, School Climate and Safety Consultant – Campus Safety Group

Student YPAR in Action - A Case Study in Bullying Prevention

A powerful case study of how Stockton Unified PLUS students used Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR) to drive data-informed bullying prevention through authentic parent engagement and school climate data. Participants will see how students identified campus needs, analyzed root causes through training, forums, and surveys, and launched targeted peer-led campaigns. The session spotlights measurable impact, student voice, and public showcases at district events, offering a high-leverage, replicable model for sustainable, student-led school climate transformation.

Room: White Sage

Presenter: Jillian Glende, PLUS/School Counselor Program Specialist – Stockton Unified School District & a cast of amazing K-12 PLUS Advisors.

WORKSHOPS

Wednesday
2:45 p.m – 3:45 p.m.

Calming Anxiety Through Writing for Wellness – Self-Care for Staff

This workshop helps educators and school staff manage anxiety and prioritize self-care through creative writing practices. Participants will engage in guided writing exercises that use metaphors, reflective prompts, and imaginative expression to explore emotions, gain clarity, and calm the mind. The session introduces practical techniques for navigating stress and anxiety while strengthening emotional resilience and self-awareness. Staff will learn how writing can serve as a powerful tool for processing experiences, restoring focus, and maintaining mental wellness. Participants will leave with simple writing strategies and prompts they can continue using to support their personal well-being and professional sustainability.

Room: Rabbit

Presenter: Maia Akiva, kid-grit, Mental Health & Creativity Specialist – kid-grit

Accountability That Connects: Reimagining PBIS to Build Belonging

This session explores how intentional systems, dedicated staff, and purpose-driven events can transform PBIS into a powerful driver of student connection and belonging. Participants will examine how clear, high expectations paired with meaningful accountability allow for immediate, practical shifts that create more frequent and authentic opportunities for students to connect with staff and peers. The session highlights actionable strategies that can be implemented right away to ensure every student feels seen, supported, and valued within a safe and affirming school climate.

Room: Red Tailed Hawk

Presenters: Eric Morton- PBIS Coordinator– Great Oak High School
Sadiki Ellis (Lead Campus Supervisor) and Juan Carbajal (Attendance Intervention Specialist),
Michael Hubbard Assistant Principal - Great Oak High School.

From Burnout to Breakthrough: Transforming School Culture Through Evidence-Based Strategies

This interactive session examines the hidden crisis impacting our schools: teacher burnout and toxic workplace relationships that directly harm student outcomes. Whether you're a site administrator, district leader, or aspiring to leadership roles, you'll leave with research-backed tools to prevent burnout, repair fractured relationships, and build the thriving school communities our students—and staff—deserve.

Room: Fox

Presenters: Alysia Odipo, Assistant Superintendent, Educational Services – Los Nietos School District
Edward Resnick, Ph.D, Project Director III, PBIS, Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion, LACOE

Connection Before Correction: A Mental Wellness Framework for High-ACEs Youth

Connection Before Correction: A Mental Wellness Framework for High-ACEs Youth Schools serving vulnerable youth in continuation, alternative, and juvenile justice settings face the challenge of educating students who often arrive in “survival mode.” Many carry high ACEs, chronic stress, and systemic disruption that traditional discipline models fail to address. This session introduces the Life-Skills 4 Change (LS4C) model, a trauma-informed, culturally responsive framework grounded in the Ten Dimensions of Wellness and aligned with SEL, MTSS, and PBIS. Participants will explore how life-skills instruction and trusted-adult relationships create psychological safety for growth. Educators will gain practical regulation tools, coping strategies, and actionable techniques to shift from behavior management toward resilience-building and meaningful connection with students.

Room: Bear

Presenters: Phillip Falcetti, CEO – Partners4Wellness
Mabel Salvador, MS; & Bryn Desmarais

The Behavior Crisis: Why What Used to Work No Longer Does

Managing behavior feels harder, not because educators are failing, but because classrooms are carrying more stress than they were designed for. Grounded in neuroscience, developmental psychology, and systems theory, this session helps participants leave with relief and a more grounded understanding of behavior they can bring back to their schools to restore stability, access, and sustainability.

Room: Mountain Lion

Presenter: Christopher Mukiibi, Educational Consultant – BrightStar Education

Wednesday April 22

2:45 p.m – 3:45 p.m.

From Vision to Impact: The First Three Years of PLUS

This session highlights how Patterson High School transformed PLUS from a new initiative into a campus-wide force for connection and student leadership. It traces the launch in year one, the strengthening of systems and student voice in year two, and the measurable culture shift by year three. Attendees will gain practical strategies, lessons learned, and a clear framework for building momentum and sustaining impact.

Room: Summit A

Presenters: Dwight Jones, PLUS Program Advisor –
Patterson Joint Unified School District,
Steve Cardoso - Creekside Middle School
PLUS Program Advisor

WORKSHOPS

Fentanyl/Drug Awareness

Detailed discussion about the dangers of Fentanyl and other illicit drugs that are poisoning our communities. Fentanyl is the leading cause of drug overdose deaths in the United States. Fentanyl is 50 times stronger than heroin and 100 times stronger than morphine. It only takes 2 mg, equivalent to two grains of salt to be fatal.

Room: Summit B

Presenter: Raine Ritchey, DDA IV –
District Attorney Office, Riverside County



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EDUCATE**
PCE SOLUTIONS

**TRAININGS
CURRICULUM
CONFERENCES**
A SYSTEM OF PROVEN SOLUTIONS

Protect Connect Educate Solutions (PCE) addresses the challenge of building a safe and supportive school environment by providing K-12 schools with evidence-based professional development, data-driven tools, and leadership training focused on student engagement, school climate improvement, and crisis detection and prevention.

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WORKSHOPS

Wednesday April 22

4:00 p.m – 5:00 p.m.

Unseen Voices: Understanding Arab American Students in Our Classrooms

The presentation centers on personal narratives and first hand accounts, incorporating testimonies from Arab American students reflecting on their educational experiences. These voices offer insight into identity development, belonging, and challenges encountered in U.S. schools.

The session also presents relevant statistics on the Arab American population in the United States, followed by an examination of common stereotypes and implicit biases and their impact on student engagement and well-being. Key topics include the importance of name pronunciation, everyday microaggressions, media portrayals, and the lasting effects of September 11 on Middle Eastern communities.

Room: Tule

Presenters: Donia Ismail, ELA Teacher, MAED –
Corona-Norco Unified-Orange Grove &
Student Panel

Transform Student Behavior Through the Power of Connection

Everyone knows connection matters - but this session shows you exactly how to use it to create real change in student behavior. You'll learn practical strategies to de-escalate students, maintain your own calm, avoid power struggles, and respond with greater confidence. This fast-paced, engaging session is packed with real-life examples and back-pocket strategies that actually work to build a culture of connection. If you're ready to reduce behavior challenges and increase connection, join us to learn tools today that you'll use tomorrow!

Room: Elderberry

Presenters: Erika Bare, Superintendent/Author –
Connecting Through Conversation
& Tiffany Burns

Third Eye Writings: Inspiring Writing via Meditation and Yoga

Dr. Jacqueline Mantz Rodriguez is a teacher, published author, and yoga practitioner who blends mindfulness with creative expression. In this interactive workshop, participants begin with guided meditation and gentle stretching to awaken creativity and focus. They then respond to a journal prompt, share their writing with a partner, and engage in a supportive community circle. Each participant receives a copy of the school's literary journal. Yoga and writing are for everyone—come ready to move, write, and connect.

Room: Cottonwood

Presenter: Dr. Jacqueline Mantz, Third Eye Writings –
Palm Springs Unified School District

The Students We're Struggling to Reach: Identity and Purpose Change Everything

How does a child shaped by trauma find resilience and purpose? When John Broussard was asked this question, it began a journey to understand the mindset and choices that helped his future outshine his past. Today, Broussard, an assistant principal, educator, author, and poet, shares that discovery through *The Greatness Within: EMC*, a framework helping students embrace identity, manage their growth, and connect their purpose to school and community.

Room: Manzanita

Presenter: John Broussard, School Administrator -
Athletic Director - Author

Family & Student Voice as a Catalyst for Bullying Prevention

This district case study highlights how Stockton Unified turned parent engagement into a catalyst for bullying prevention and safer school climates. Through data walks, parent forums, and shared decision-making, families became co-designers of solutions that shaped student YPAR action across multiple sites. Participants will examine high-impact strategies, measurable growth in family leadership and trust, and key lessons learned, and leave with practical guidance for replicating sustainable, family-centered prevention systems.

Room: White Sage

Presenter: Jennifer Robles, School Counselor
Program Specialist – Stockton Unified
School District

Wednesday April 22

4:00 p.m – 5:00 p.m.

Teach, Don't React: Prevention-Based De-Escalation Strategies for the Classroom

This session equips educators with practical, prevention-focused strategies to reduce escalating student behavior before it becomes disruptive. Using the phases of escalation as a framework, participants learn to teach procedures, build critical social and emotional skills, communicate effectively, and respond calmly during challenging moments. Attendees will walk away with ready-to-use tools for de-escalation, problem-solving, and self-management that strengthen classroom relationships and improve student success.

Room: Rabbit

Presenter: Eric Landers, Associate Professor –
Georgia Southern University

Creating Moments and Celebrations:

Join us for a fast-paced session where you'll discover how to transform school culture by shifting from teacher-driven to student-led leadership. Just like trail guides set the pace and direction, students can inspire peers, and build connections. You'll leave with practical tools and fresh ideas you can implement tomorrow to empower your students to guide the pack—strategies that have already been successfully implemented in student leadership programs across the U.S.

Room: Red Tailed Hawk

Presenter: Don Skaggs, Activities Director –
Temecula Valley Unified

Overcoming Case Fatigue in Long-Term Threat Management

Case fatigue in threat assessment and management cases can occur when a situation remains open for a long time without clear resolution, causing teams to become less attentive or to normalize concerning behavior. Teams can address this by building structure, shared responsibility, and periodic reassessment into their process. Preventing case fatigue means treating TAM as a dynamic, ongoing prevention process rather than a static case file, supported by predictable review cycles and shared team accountability.

Room: Fox

Presenter: Jeffrey Cugno, CEO –
SOS Global Consulting, Inc.

WORKSHOPS

Gangs In School: Gang Issues Vs Gang Problems, The Climate, The Approach, The Solution

The Workshop will focus on the Collaborative Approach by Law Enforcement (Police, Probation, Sheriff's District Attorney's and School Officials to combat the increasing rise of Gang Membership in the School Setting. Gang Membership in the School is an on-going dilemma. Administrators and Teachers are at times at a disadvantage because their knowledge of the Gang Culture is limited. There are Gang Members in School who benefit and profit because of their affiliation with the "Gangster Lifestyle." If Law Enforcement and School Officials have knowledge of the Levels of Gang Membership, they will understand which Gang Members can be salvaged or placed in Prevention and Intervention Programs. The Suppression Component is important in order for the previous programs to work.

Room: Bear

Presenter: Robby Robinson, Retired Gang Probation
Officer/ Intervention Specialist – LA County
Sheriff's Department/ City of Santa Clarita

They're Asking for MORE, Not Less: Using Data to Build Staff Buy-In for PBIS Implementation

PBIS implementation often faces resistance disguised as "lack of buy-in." But what if the resistance isn't about the framework—it's about how it's being implemented? This session shares how Los Nietos School District used systematic data collection to uncover the truth: staff weren't rejecting PBIS; they were requesting better implementation support.

Room: Mountain Lion

Presenters: Rocio Crisostomo, PBIS Teacher on Special
Assignment – Los Nietos School District
Alysia Odipo, Ed.D., Assistant Superintendent,
Educational Services
Diana Mireles, PBIS Teacher on Special
Assignment

WORKSHOPS

Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR): Research, Tools, and Partnerships for Student Voice and Systems Change

Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR) is a youth-driven approach that engages young people in designing and conducting research to improve their lives, communities, and the institutions meant to serve them. Interest in connecting youth voice to systems and policy change is growing rapidly among school districts, researchers, and policymakers. Our UC Berkeley research team has been brokering and facilitating YPAR partnerships, building a national network of researchers, practitioners, and in-school programs focused on critical issues like school climate and belonging. Whether you are new to YPAR or looking to deepen existing efforts, this session will offer an overview of the current state of YPAR research and practice, showcase usable tools and resources to implement in your own work, and explore how our research team and the broader YPAR research network can partner with schools and districts to support student voice, youth development, and systemic change.

Room: Summit A

Presenter: Alan Mozaffari, MPH, EdM, nan –
UC Berkeley School of Public Health

Wednesday April 22

4:00 p.m – 5:00 p.m.

Culture is Everything: A Case Study on Leading Through Change

For school administrators and supervisors navigating complex challenges, culture is the foundation that shapes performance, morale, and outcomes. This leadership-focused workshop explores how intentional culture-building drives trust, accountability, and sustainable change across an organization. Through a compelling case study of institutional transformation, participants will gain practical strategies to lead teams with clarity, empower staff, and strengthen school-wide systems during times of uncertainty.

Room: Summit B

Presenter: Paul LeBaron – Chief of Police (ret)
& Gen7 Leadership LLC

REGISTRATION OPEN SOON

SCHOOL CLIMATE CONFERENCE

APRIL 20th • APRIL 23rd • 2027

SPRING SESSION 2027

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THURSDAY KEYNOTE

Aaron Stark and Autumn Bignami: The Power of Human Connection

Aaron Stark - Known nationwide for his viral TEDx talk "I Was Almost a School Shooter." Aaron Stark came dangerously close to becoming a school shooter. His life was shaped by relentless physical and emotional abuse that began in early childhood and intensified through his teenage years. Consumed by pain, isolation, and hopelessness, Aaron reached a breaking point-formulating a plan to inflict mass harm. But that trajectory was changed not by punishment or intervention, but by an unexpected act of kindness. A single friend's consistent compassion pierced through the darkness and ultimately saved lives, including Aaron's. Today, Aaron shares his story with raw honesty in his widely viewed TED Talk, seen by over 15 million people-delivering a powerful message: sometimes the ones who seem to deserve love the least are the ones who need it the most..



Aaron Stark

Autumn Bignami is a beloved and dedicated educator who was at the height of her teaching career when her life was forever altered by the Route 91 Shooting in October 2017. A survivor of that tragic night, Autumn sustained life-altering injuries and continues to navigate the lasting physical and emotional impacts. Despite the trauma, her steadfast devotion to her students and family became a powerful symbol of resilience. Autumn's story is not only one of survival but of profound transformation - turning pain into purpose and trauma into a message of hope and healing. Through her strength and authenticity, she has inspired her children and countless others to discover courage and connection in the face of overwhelming adversity.



Autumn Bignami

April 23rd / 11:00am - 12:15pm
Main Ballroom

SCHOOLS SAFETY

CONFERENCE

JUNE 21ST THROUGH JUNE 23RD • 2027

SUMMER SESSION 2027

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WORKSHOPS

Thursday April 23

8:00 a.m – 9:15 a.m.

Culture By Design

Sustainable school climate does not happen by accident—it is intentionally built. This interactive workshop will equip educators and leaders with human-centered, design-thinking strategies to intentionally shape culture. Participants will explore how daily routines, relationships, leadership behaviors, physical space, and shared values create the lived experience of school. Through reflective practices and collaborative tools, attendees will identify key cultural drivers impacting belonging, safety, engagement, and staff morale. Participants will prototype practical, low-risk shifts and learn about a measurable 365-day culture plan that strengthens student voice, staff alignment, and long-term climate impact.

Room: Tule

Presenter: Mike Smith – Mike Smith Live

Student Engagement and Building a Positive School Climate in Independent School Settings

This workshop focuses on practical, evidence-informed strategies drawn from independent studies programs and alternative education settings, while emphasizing that these approaches are adaptable to all educational environments. Participants will explore concrete tools to strengthen student connection, emotional safety, and belonging for students who may be disengaged or credit-deficient. Emphasis is placed on flexible relationship-building practices, trauma-informed and restorative approaches, and collaborative staff efforts that support resilience, re-engagement, and meaningful student success.

Room: Elderberry

Presenters: Andrea Carandang, Wellness Coordinator, LMFT, CATP – Wilson High School
Pamela Galano, Ed.D., Principal, Wilson High School & Post Secondary, Santa Clara Unified School District

Neuroscience of Student Behavior: Building a Right-Brain School

In today's rapidly changing world, students are increasingly exposed to socio-political unrest, rising violence, and environmental crises, all of which erode their sense of safety in our schools. Research indicates that a compromised sense of security directly impacts brain function, emotional regulation, and learning capacity (Perry, 2009; Van der Kolk, 2014). Managing student behavior and fostering motivation now require more than traditional behavioral redirection. Instead, schools must shift towards brain-based strategies that support emotional regulation, social-emotional learning, and restorative practices.

Room: Cottonwood

Presenter: Carlos Alvarez, CEO – Los Angeles Institute For Right Brain Practices and Research Inc

Leveraging Artificial Intelligence (AI) to Strengthen School Mental Health and Behavior Systems

Artificial intelligence is transforming school mental health by strengthening early identification, intervention and student support. This session examines how AI can be effectively integrated into school mental health systems within an MTSS framework. Participants will explore practical applications such as a student wellness chatbot, counselor co-pilot, and intervention plan generator. Ethical, equity and compliance considerations will also be addressed, providing educators with insights and strategies to responsibly harness AI for effective student well-being supports.

Room: Manzanita

Presenters: Callie DeVriendt, Project AWARE Coordinator, Minnesota Department of Education;
Prashanth Brahmandam, CEO, Neural Web

Navigating Grief and Trauma in the School Setting

Grief affects every aspect of a child's life, yet many families struggle to discuss it openly. As a result, schools often become the primary place where students receive support while navigating loss and trauma. This session helps educators understand the prevalence and impact of grief among children and teens in school settings. Participants will learn to recognize signs of traumatic grief, including reexperiencing, avoidance, hyperarousal, emotional dysregulation, and learning challenges. The presentation explores developmental and cultural differences in grief responses and helps distinguish normal grief from traumatic grief. Attendees will gain practical strategies for supporting students and learn how to plan and facilitate age-appropriate grief and trauma support groups in schools.

Room: White Sage

Presenter: Regina Siez, LCSW – TVUSD

Thursday April 23

8:00 a.m – 9:15 a.m.

When the Heat is On: Communicating Through Conflict

Keep your cool when the heat is on! So much of our job success depends on the strength of our communication. This session will increase our skill set navigating the tricky conversations that are guaranteed to come our way. Together, we will explore practical strategies to ensure you remain calm when things get heated, and help others catch that calm from you as you work towards resolution. We will apply communication strategies to de-escalate and diffuse potentially explosive situations, as well as discuss ways to avoid escalation in the first place. Additionally, we share a number of practical and immediately applicable strategies to build and repair connection in these increasingly divisive times. Learn strategies and tools today that you can use tomorrow!

Room: Rabbit

Presenters: Tiffany Burns, Faculty Instructor/Author – Connecting Through Conversation;
Erika Bare, Superintendent & Author, Connecting Through Conversation

Targeted Violence in the Modern Landscape: AI and Gamification

This presentation will examine the evolution of the threat landscape since the unprecedented isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic. It will discuss online nihilistic encouragement, copycat communities, and coordination across common gaming platforms that have produced several attackers since the return to in-person learning. Lastly, it will use several real-world case examples of students managed in Los Angeles County who are members of these communities and examine how artificial intelligence use can sometimes produce unintended consequences.

Room: Red Tailed Hawk

Presenter: Nicolas Beliz, Psy.D., Supervising Psychologist
Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health

WORKSHOPS

Working With Digital Natives: Pop Culture's Impact on Youth

From TikTok trends to viral influencers, from music videos to online gaming—our kids are growing up in a constant stream of messages, images, and influences. Many are fun. Some are inspiring. But others? Confusing, misleading, or downright dangerous. This workshop takes an honest, practical, and sometimes humorous look at how today's popular culture competes for our children's loyalty and attention—and how parents and teachers can use effective communication to cut through the "noise" and truly connect. ****This Workshop Includes Adult Themes****

Room: Fox

Presenter: Paul LeBaron, Chief of Police (retired),
Gen7 Leadership LLC

Transforming School Culture and Climate, A Principal's Perspective:

This session explores how principals can intentionally shape school climate and culture to support the physical, social, and emotional well-being of students and staff. Participants will examine how leadership practices, respectful relationships, and collaborative systems influence the daily experience of school communities. The session highlights strategies for building strong leadership teams, empowering teacher leaders, and creating structures that support student attendance, engagement, and belonging. Attendees will learn practical approaches to fostering a culture of respect, strengthening collaboration among staff, and implementing systems that ensure every student feels valued, supported, and prepared to succeed academically and socially in a positive school environment.

Room: Bear

Presenter: Doc West
Educational Consultant/Guest Administrator –
Columbus City Schools

Human Trafficking

This presentation provides an inside look into the world of human trafficking while educating youth on how to protect themselves from potential tricks and tools commonly used to lure them into this dark world. It also educates parents and educators of the signs and vulnerabilities of human trafficking.

Room: Mountain Lion

Presenter: Kristopher Hiraoka, Deputy District Attorney –
Riverside County District Attorney's Office

WORKSHOPS

Student Voice: Information to Action!

Sustainable school climate improvement requires authentic measurable student voice. This session explores how schools intentionally gather and act on both quantitative and qualitative data to strengthen PBIS/MTSS frameworks, inform safety planning, and drive meaningful, student-centered change. The Direction Survey is unique in that it allows schools to design customized surveys tailored to their campus realities, producing reliable, trendable data aligned to behavioral, climate, and safety indicators. PLUS (Peer Leaders Uniting Students) brings that data to life through structured student-led forums and Youth Participatory Action Research, empowering students to confront the issues that most directly impact their safety, belonging, and overall campus climate.

Together, these tools create intentional 30-day data cycles where students collaborate with PBIS, MTSS, and school safety teams to analyze findings, identify root causes, and implement targeted action plans. When schools move from researching students to researching with students, interventions become more precise, culture shifts become sustainable, and every stakeholder gains clarity and shared ownership.

Room: Summit A

Presenter: John Vandenburg, Executive Director – Protect Connect Educate

Thursday April 23

8:00 a.m – 9:15 a.m.

Regaining School Muscle Memory: The Fundamentals of Behavior

This engaging and practical session equips educators, school staff, and administrators with the tools needed to proactively address student behaviors in the wake of disruption. Participants will gain a foundational understanding of behavioral principles while exploring the impact of unexpected environmental changes on student performance and behavior. The presentation will cover key strategies such as identifying and teaching replacement behaviors, adjusting environmental arrangements for optimal classroom management, and implementing proactive systems to support all students. Additionally, we will discuss methods to disseminate these approaches across school sites to ensure cohesive, school-wide implementation.

Room: Summit B

Presenter: Ariel Clark
Prevention and Intervention Specialist – DM/SELPA



PEERLEADERSUNITINGSTUDENTS

PLUS Social, Thursday April 23rd

A dedicated networking and connection space for PLUS participants, partners and those interested in the PLUS Program

2:45pm - 4:00pm, Room - Summit A

pcesolutions.org

Thursday April 23

9:30 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.

Interview Strategies for Students of Concern

This workshop will provide attendees with a methodology for interviewing students of concern. Existing types of interview strategies will be presented along with those that typically yield good data and outcomes. Attendees will learn how to engage students in difficult conversations using a care-frontation over confrontation approach designed to build rapport, engage the student, and develop a collaborative rather than unilateral approach to problem solving. Using the principles of Operational Psychology, attendees will learn about conflict resolution styles and best practices under difficult situations.

Room: Tule

Presenter: Tony Beliz, Clinical & Forensic Psychologist – Beliz & Associates

Students at the Center: Building a High-Fidelity PBIS System Through Student Leadership

Transform your school climate by putting students in the driver's seat! Learn how Firebaugh High School's student-led PBIS Club fueled a three-year journey from Bronze to Platinum status. This session provides a practical framework for integrating diverse student leaders into Tier 1 systems, managing high-engagement incentive economies, and hosting school-wide celebrations. Discover how a student-centered approach increases fidelity and creates a vibrant, inclusive culture where every student can thrive.

Room: Elderberry

Presenters: Viviana Hamilton, SEL Lead – Firebaugh HS
Dr. Yvette Reynoso, Administrator
Rex Wang, Teacher
Waheeda Sherif, Teacher

Beyond Posters:

Reshaping the Social Structure of Bullying

Stopping bullying takes more than declaring a “no bullying zone.” Bullying thrives on social structures—peer dynamics, group norms, and misread conflicts—that posters and slogans can't fix. In this session, school leaders will learn how to: 1) distinguish true bullying from everyday conflict or poor social skills, 2) recognize the social structures that sustain bullying, and 3) build a proactive, school-wide plan that predicts and prevents conflict before it escalates.

Continued at the top of next column . . .

WORKSHOPS

By shifting from a reactive to a prevention-focused approach, participants will leave with practical strategies to address the root causes of bullying and strengthen the higher-order social-emotional skills students need to create safe, connected school communities.

Room: Cottonwood

Presenter: Eric Landers, Associate Professor – Georgia Southern University

The Hidden Hallways of the Internet: Esports, Safety, and School Climate

Students are building leadership, teamwork, and real community through gaming, esports, and online spaces—and schools can harness that upside while reducing risk. This session spotlights the latest research on youth digital behavior and harm prevention, then translates it into practical, school-ready strategies. You'll learn what healthy gaming culture looks like, how to strengthen protective factors (belonging, trusted adults, clear norms), and which prevention moves measurably reduce harassment, exploitation, and escalation.

Designed for educators, SROs, and administrators, the workshop offers insights into building safer online climates without “banning what students love”—including policies, reporting pathways, student-led norms, and family communication that support both safety and engagement.

Room: Manzanita

Presenter: Matthew Soeth, (TIGG)

The Effective Development and Use of Behavioral Threat Assessment & Management Teams

Threats of targeted violence must be addressed in a holistic way by a multidisciplinary team of community stakeholders, who have received specialized training. Attendees will learn how the development and deployment of Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management (BTAM) teams affords communities the opportunity to engage in proactive measures aimed at mitigating violence, harm, or disruption to the school environment through the deployment of structured strategies and interventions.

Room: White Sage

Presenter: Jeffrey Cugno, CEO – SOS Global Consulting, Inc.

WORKSHOPS

Restoring Community: Collaborative Problem Solving After Campus Critical Incident(s)

James Williams III, retired U.S. Department of Justice, Community Relations Service (CRS) mediator, provides an overview of how students can effectively address school-based conflicts through structured, student-led engagement and dialogue. Drawing on decades of experience in community relations and conflict resolution, he will share strategies that empower students to lead the way in resolving tensions on campus.

In this session, attendees will learn how to use a student empowered initiative to address issues related to race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, or disability. Using adult facilitated sessions, diverse student groups convene over a full day or two half-days to identify concerns, engage in discussions, and develop collaborative solutions. This student-driven approach builds leadership skills, enhances problem-solving abilities, and cultivates an inclusive and safe and supportive school climate.

Room: Rabbit

Presenter: James Williams III, Partner/Founder – JAW Consulting

THE CHANGING UNIVERSE OF ONLINE EXPLOITATION OF MINORS

Online exploitation of minors is soaring. Artificial intelligence, digital currency, geolocation software are used by global criminals and predators to exploit our youth. In 2025 NCMEC received over 30 million reports of sextortion, deepfakes, and financial blackmail of minors including 45 teen suicides of young males. This presentation addresses how criminals access, groom and exploit young people, how to recognize it and how to intervene and prevent it.

Room: Red Tailed Hawk

Presenter: Opal Singleton Hendershot, President and CEO – MillionKids.org

AI as a Thought Partner for School Climate Leaders

School climate work is complex: student crises, staff dynamics, policies that keep changing. What if AI could help you think through the hard stuff, not just summarize it? This session features a live demonstration of AI applied to school climate research. You'll leave with one powerful question to guide any AI use and the confidence to apply it on Monday morning.

Room: Fox

Presenter: Enrique Noguera, Principal Consultant – EduTech Nation

Thursday April 23

9:30 a.m – 10:45 a.m.

TKF Session: Teaching a Restorative Mindset Through Social-Emotional Learning

This interactive session introduces the Tariq Khamisa Foundation's (TKF) Training Institute model, which integrates classroom instruction, project-based learning, student assemblies and professional development to build a schoolwide restorative culture. Participants will explore how TKF's Restorative Workshop Curriculum, Forgive It Forward project-based learning, Peacemaker Assemblies and Staff Training and Professional Development equip students and school staff with the social-emotional skills needed to manage conflict, repair harm, and build healthy relationships.

Room: Bear

Presenters: Lynn Oska Ritchie, Program Manager – Tariq Khamisa Foundation
Tony Hicks, Community Impact Facilitator, Tariq Khamisa Foundation

Getting Started with PBIS

This workshop will explain to participants how PBIS may be the next best step to improving school climate and student outcomes. The national PBIS Framework will guide participants to understand why PBIS is important and what it might look like at their school.

Room: Mountain Lion

Presenters: Edward Resnick, Project Director, PBIS – Los Angeles County Office of Education
Tate Burns, Coordinator II, PBIS, Los Angeles County Office of Education

SCHOOL CLIMATE CONFERENCE

Thursday
9:30 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.

Systems Approach – Examining the Behavioral Background of the Marysville Pilchuck High School Attacker

This case study utilizes the Systems Approach based on an attacker who perpetrated the 2014 school attack at Marysville Pilchuck High School in Marysville, WA. The Systems Approach is an effective way to gather information as part of a threat assessment, as it identifies sources (e.g., law enforcement, employment, community, family, etc.) that may have information on the individual of concern's actions, stressors, changes in their life, and behaviors that may have concerned others. In utilizing post attack interviews and open-source information, this case provides a plethora of information about the attacker in the weeks and days leading up to the attack. The information collected from the attacker's systems provide insight as his feelings, thoughts, and behaviors grew more concerning in the week before the attack. Additionally, this case highlights the importance of collecting information from multiple sources and corroborating the information, as some sources had contradictory information (e.g., some observed nothing out of the ordinary with the attacker, whereas others stated they noticed significant changes in his actions and thoughts).

Continued at the top of next column . . .

WORKSHOPS

When gathering information for a threat assessment, it is essential for public safety professionals to be able to identify these systems, use their training and knowledge on the best information to collect, and recognize potential opportunities of support within these systems.

Room: Summit A

Presenter: Arlene Macias, Domestic Security Strategist – U.S. Secret Service National Threat Assessment Center

***The Vibe Shift:
When Youth Lead, School Climate Follows***

Facilitated by Terence and Keli Berry of 1 Shine Culture Coaching™, this 60-minute workshop blends storytelling, interactive dialogue, and performance elements to show how authentic youth voice shapes school climate and culture. Drawing on culture-centered strategies, arts-based engagement, and transformative SEL practices, participants will explore the realities students face and discover practical strategies to strengthen connection, engagement, and accountability on campus. Attendees will leave with actionable tools to build belonging, trust, and leadership, combining insight, entertainment, and capacity building. This session reflects 1 Shine's mission: transforming youth spaces through culture, creativity, and purpose.

Room: Summit B

Presenters: Terence Berry – Co-Founder, Culture Coach
Kehli Berry – Co-Founder, Culture Coach

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Meaningful Participation • Parent Involvement • School Climate • Staff Climate

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WORKSHOPS

Transparency to Transformation: Using Data Chats to Grow Student Leaders

Using Aeries, our school conducts in-class Discipline Data Chats to review referral trends at the school, grade, and classroom levels. Students help set goals, offer feedback, and strengthen their sense of voice. These chats also keep us proactive by identifying students who may need early support and shifting discipline from punishment to understanding, restoration, and stronger relationships across our campus community.

Room: Tule

Presenters: Kristina Villarreal, Vice Principal -
Farmdale Elementary / Weaver School District
Julia Robertson, Vice Principal -
Farmdale Elementary / Weaver School District

PRIDE in Action: Elevating Student Voice and Welcoming Incoming Students Through PBIS

This workshop will highlight how Bell Gardens Intermediate uses PBIS and the PRIDE expectations—Preparation, Respect, Integrity, Determination, and Effort—to build a positive and inclusive school culture. Participants will learn how student voice is embedded through writing, fine arts projects, and performance-based activities. The session will also showcase our comprehensive 6th Grade Welcome Program, including a red-carpet arrival, live band, dance performance, PRIDE rally, and student-led campus tours. These practices strengthen belonging, ease student transitions, and empower students to take ownership of school expectations.

Room: Elderberry

Presenters: Dr. Jennifer Escobedo, -
Bell Gardens Intermediate School/Montebello
Unified School District
Dr. Jesse Mendoza,
Teacher/Dance Director/PBIS team member/
BGI

A survivor's perspective on the power of connection in preventing and navigating crisis.

The Power of Human Connection: Drawing from former teacher and Activities Director Autumn Bignami's experience surviving the Route 91 concert tragedy, this session explores how authentic relationships shape school climate, strengthen safety, and position every adult on campus as a critical part of prevention, response, and recovery. Through discussion,

Continued at the top of next column . . .

Thursday April 23

1:15 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Mrs. Bignami and Dr. Stone will examine the role of intuition, self-awareness, and situational awareness in empowering action. Attendees will leave with a clear reminder: school safety and culture are not just systems and procedures — they are built through human connection.

Room: Cottonwood

Presenters: Autumn Bignami, Speaker –
The Power of Human Connection
Sherry Colgan Stone, Ed.D.; CEO,
Stone Campus Safety

PBIS for whole school support staff

Participants will learn techniques and strategies in order to train non-classroom or other support staff to understand PBIS Tier 1 strategies in their role. Participants will also learn how non-classroom staff can be trained to support Tier 2 interventions, including Check in and Check out (CICO). Those in beginning, intermediate, and advanced implementation stages can benefit from this training.

Room: Manzanita

Presenters: Tate Burns, –
Los Angeles County Office of Education
Dr. Ed Resnick, PhD, Project Director III,
PBIS, Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion

From Vision to Impact: The First Three Years of PLUS

This session highlights how Patterson High School transformed PLUS from a new initiative into a campus-wide force for connection and student leadership. It traces the launch in year one, the strengthening of systems and student voice in year two, and the measurable culture shift by year three. Attendees will gain practical strategies, lessons learned, and a clear framework for building momentum and sustaining impact.

Room: White Sage

Presenters: Dwight Jones, PLUS Program Advisor –
Patterson Joint Unified School District
Steve Cardoso
Creekside Middle School PLUS Program
Advisor

Thursday
1:15 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

WORKSHOPS

Using Student Voice within MTSS to Build Alternatives to Suspension

In Alhambra Unified, we are transforming MTSS by re-defining what "discipline" looks like by moving away from exclusionary practices and moving towards a robust, student-centered Multi-Tiered System of Supports. This workshop demonstrates how AUSD integrates YPAR, peer leadership, and PBIS to build meaningful alternatives to suspension. By analyzing attendance and suspension data, we address disproportionality and cultural needs, shifting from exclusionary practices to skill-based supports. We will explore how centering student voice doesn't just improve school climate, it fundamentally transforms our approach to equitable practices.

Room: Rabbit

Presenter: Wendy Molina-Solis, Director of MTSS, Ed.D.
Alhambra Unified School District

Cultivating Grit Through Growth Mindset

This dynamic session invites participants to explore how a growth mindset can strengthen resilience and build grit over time. Through hands-on activities and thoughtful discussion, attendees will learn to recognize and replace limiting habits, create intentional new ones, and foster stronger connections with others. The session supports personal and collective growth while encouraging a deeper sense of purpose, belonging, and community.

Room: Red Tailed Hawk

Presenters: Julia Gabor, MA Ed, Founder – kid-grit
Maia Akiva, kid-grit
Mental Wellness Ambassador

Cultivating Connected Schools: Lessons from Two Years of Community Schools Implementation

La Mesa–Spring Valley School District's Community Schools initiative demonstrates how shared leadership, intentional partnerships, and integrated supports strengthen school climate. This session highlights principal–CSF collaboration and the Parent/Community Liaison role as anchors for culture, family trust, and student belonging. Participants will explore strategies for engaging historically underserved families, aligning work to the Four Pillars, and applying real-world lessons to improve engagement, equity, and connection across school communities.

Room: Fox

Presenter: Roberta Ewing-Kuhns, Coordinator,
Community Schools –
La Mesa-Spring Valley School District

The Power of Prevention. Introduction to Positive Community Norms

PCN is the application of the Science of the Positive "the positive exists and is worth growing." Learn about social norms/social norms marketing to grow and uncover the positive that already exists in our schools and communities. How to grow protective norms and reduce risk factors to change perceptions to change behavior. Learn how to put data into action and how Broward County Public Schools District promotes health, peace, challenge misperceptions about youth substance use/violence.

Room: Bear

Presenters: Cynthia Tapia-Rodriguez, Family Counselor –
Broward County Public Schools -
School Culture & Student Support Department
Diana Cabot, Instructional Facilitator;
Broward County Public Schools;
School Culture & Student Support Department

Strategies and Mindsets for Managing Difficult Adults in the Schoolhouse

Student conflict? We got that! Adults, however? Maybe less so. Join Dr. Huson in this dynamic session on navigating essential adult partnerships (parents, colleagues, administrators). The session will provide evidence-based theories, mindsets, and actions to build bridges and perspective-taking, foster win-win relationships, and highlight the good, bad, and truly hopeful aspects of conflict to collaboration. Expect humor, connection, and practical steps to enhance adult interactions: All aimed at our shared goal of student success.

Room: Mountain Lion

Presenter: Tammy (Fisher) Huson, Ph.D –
Seattle Public Schools / Seattle University

*** **Room: Summit A - Open for District Collaboration Meeting**

*** **Room: Summit B - Open for District Collaboration Meeting**

WORKSHOPS

Data, Data and more Data!

What's up with Engagement Data? Discover methods to justify your program and budget by gaining insights into student engagement data. Learn how to collect and understand information from school activities, events, interventions & PBIS. You will also learn how to incentivize and reward students for their participation. Hear insights from an activities engagement expert on the latest technology and ideas for data collection and integration.

Room: Tule

Presenter: Greg Hroch, CEO / Founder – 5-Star Students

How We Earned Silver in Year 1 and Built Sustainable Systems

We will share how our school launched PBIS, earned Silver recognition in Year One of implementation, and built sustainable systems for long-term success. Participants will gain practical steps for establishing Tier 1–3 supports, using data effectively, and creating structures that promote consistency and staff engagement. Attendees will leave with clear next steps, templates, and tools they can immediately apply to strengthen PBIS implementation at their own schools.

Room: Elderberry

Presenters: Wendy Cano, Assistant Principal –
Corvallis Middle School
Natalie Rodriguez, Teacher
Erika Vesper, Counselor

Human Connection: Preventing Violence Through Belonging and Understanding

Human connection is one of the most powerful forces in preventing violence, isolation, and despair. In this session, Aaron Stark—whose TED Talk has reached millions—shares his personal journey from the brink of tragedy to healing through connection, compassion, and community. Learn how schools, staff, and students can build a culture that nurtures belonging, fosters resilience, and transforms possibility into prevention.

Room: Cottonwood

Presenters: Aaron Stark, Lead Presenter –
Framework Synergy Solutions &
Dr. Kathryn Hamel

Thursday April 23

2:45 pm – 4:00 pm

Innovative Approaches to School Attendance: A Collaborative Model from La Mesa- Spring Valley School District

Discover how La Mesa–Spring Valley School District is re-defining attendance as a cornerstone of positive school climate. Learn how trauma-informed outreach, attendance teams, and flexible strategies like Independent Study Agreements strengthen relationships, belonging, and student engagement through shared leadership and data-informed practices.

Room: Manzanita

Presenters: Cindy Knight -

District Attendance Administrator -
La Mesa-Spring Valley School District
Jessica Ramirez, District Social Worker -
LMSV

Nathan Saucedo, Principal -
Bancroft Elementary School LMSV
Jessica Nobles, Community Schools Facilitator -
Bancroft Elementary School LMSV

Suspend or support? Dealing with highly at risk male students.

The students we suspend/expel are too often male, brown, angry, typically fatherless, and in need of a restorative school climate. In this dynamic presentation participants will receive evidence based strategies to address root causes and foster an environment of hope. If I don't suspend, then what do we do? Let's dive into an appropriate response to this question. Mentoring models that address fatherlessness, and restorative response to behavior are at the core of this discussion.

Room: White Sage

Presenters: Carlos Guillen, Principal –
Orange Grove High School/Corona-Norco
Unified School District

Thursday April 23

2:45 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

How Representation and Family Identity Create Joyful, Inclusive School Climates.

This workshop explores how representation and family identity can transform school climate and strengthen student belonging. Drawing from the bilingual superhero themes in *My Mother Is a Superhero* and *My Father Is a Superhero*, participants will learn how joyful, culturally affirming storytelling helps children feel seen, valued, and connected to their school community. Through real examples from school assemblies, interactive activities, and SEL-focused strategies, educators will discover practical ways to honor students' families, integrate diverse books, and create classroom environments where every child's identity is celebrated.

Room: Rabbit

Presenters: CJ Charles, Author –
My Mother is a Superhero
& Alice Elzie

Changing the Narrative of Credit Recovery: A Data-Driven Approach to Engagement, Belonging, and Purpose

Changing the Narrative of Credit Recovery showcases how Workforce—an evening credit recovery program (3:45–10:00 p.m.)—uses data-driven Tier I, II, and III supports to build engagement, belonging, and purpose for students facing significant life stressors. Through student surveys, SEL-aligned strategies, and hands-on workforce classes (Welding, Woodshop, Art), teams transform prevention campaigns and targeted supports into meaningful, student-led experiences that strengthen school climate, motivation, and identity beyond credit recovery.

Room: Red Tailed Hawk

Presenters: Ashleigh West, -
Behavior Specialist/ Workforce Tier I
Student Engagement Lead -
Kern High School District -
Kern Workforce Academy
Frank Rodriguez- Behavior Specialist/ Tier I
Team Member
Michael Pawloski-School Mental Health
Clinician/Tier I Team Member
Bianca Sommers-Behavior Specialist/ Tier I
Team Member
Veronica Kenison-Munoz-
School Social Worker/ Tier II/III Lead

Room: Summit A - PLUS Social : Dedicated networking and connection space for PLUS participants and partners.

WORKSHOPS

Restorative Pathways for Student Success: Reintegration Strategies That Work

Explore Restorative Pathways for Student Success through a Restorative Tiered System of Support (RTSS) that integrates restorative practices, SEL, and community building to strengthen reintegration after suspension. Learn how five middle schools implemented restorative day programs that have abolished traditional in-school suspension, resulting in a 43% reduction in subsequent suspensions and a 15% recidivism rate. Participants will leave with practical tools to support reintegration and implement restorative systems on their campuses.

Room: Fox

Presenters: Candia Sierra London, Program Specialist -
Restorative Practices –
Cajon Valley Union School District

Compassionate Learning Spaces: Practical Strategies for Creating Trauma-Responsive Schools

In Riverside Unified, specialists in crisis prevention and staff wellness partnered to create a workshop series for sit teams, entitled “Compassionate Learning Spaces.” The series presents evidence-based practices for creating and developing trauma-informed schools. This presentation highlights the intentional steps taken to empower educators, specific evidence-based strategies taught through the training, and lessons learned during implementation with the ultimate goal of creating a community of educators who are champions of trauma-responsive practices.

Room: Bear

Presenters: Diana Twiss, Teacher on Special Assessment for
Staff Wellness – Riverside Unified School District
Veronica Martinez,
Crisis Prevention & Intervention School
Psychologist for Riverside Unified School District,
Suzanne Beran, Crisis Prevention & Intervention
School Psychologist for Riverside Unified School
District

Tier 1 Back to Basics

This session refocuses school teams on the core elements of strong Tier 1 systems through a prevention-first and equity-centered lens. Participants will revisit foundational practices such as clearly defined expectations, explicit instruction, consistent acknowledgment, and data-informed decision-making. Emphasis is placed on creating predictable, inclusive environments that reduce the need for reactive responses and ensure all students feel safe, valued, and supported across settings.

Room: Mountain Lion

Presenters: Angela Mgbeke, Project Manager, Prevention
and Intervention – Desert Mountain SELPA

***** Room: Summit B - Open for District Collaboration Meeting.**

FRIDAY KEYNOTE

The Divas and Drummers of Compton Featuring Professor Kehli Berry, Terrence Berry, and 1 Shine Youth!

Closing out the School Climate Conference on Friday, the Divas and Drummers of Compton—along with founders Professor Kehli Berry and Terrence Berry—will deliver an unforgettable blend of keynote inspiration and high-energy performance that embodies the heart of Transformative Social-Emotional Learning through the performing arts.

Kehli, a proud Compton native, and Terrence, a Long Beach native, built 1 Shine Youth as a family-run movement committed to keeping kids safe, seen, and supported. Their program has offered more than 500 young people a haven where leadership, creativity, and belonging come to life. Many of their students face significant challenges—poverty, parental incarceration, instability—yet on his stage they shine with national-level talent, having been featured on America's Got Talent, The Kelly Clarkson Show, and The Jennifer Hudson Show.

The Divas and Drummers of Compton represent more than performance—they Represent possibility. Through dance, drumline, mentorship, and academic support, 1 Shine Youth builds community one child at a time, proving what happens when youth are empowered with purpose, encouragement, and a village that believes in their brilliance.

This closing session is not just a presentation—it is a celebration of resilience, culture, community, and the transformative power of giving youth a platform to lead.



**April 24th / 9:00am - 10:30am
Main Ball Room**

**We are not just a youth center.
We are a safe-haven, a place
where youth can come and thrive
as leaders and explore the world
of performing arts.**

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*Brain-Centered Professional
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Transforming Schools Through Neuroscience, Regulation, and Restorative Practices

LAIRP (Los Angeles Institute for Right Brain Practices and Research) helps schools create learning environments where both students and educators can regulate, connect, and succeed.

Across the country, schools are facing unprecedented levels of ambient, collective, and individual trauma that are spilling into classrooms. When the nervous system is overwhelmed, learning becomes significantly harder.

It is nearly impossible to teach a dysregulated brain.

LAIRP partners with schools and districts to build brain-centered systems that strengthen regulation, belonging, and engagement through Right Brain Restorative Practices.

NOTES

SCHOOL CLIMATE CONFERENCE

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SAFE SCHOOL CLIMATE EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

Elevate Leadership. Build Safer Schools.

DATES : • October 17th - 18th, 2026
• November 14th - 15th, 2026

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- Advance violence prevention strategies policies and research
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- Leverage student voice through YPAR
- Apply threat assessment & prevention strategies
- Strengthen MTSS/PBIS and restorative practices
- Contribute to the national security environment in a time of increasing threats.

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Thank you for attending the 2026

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