



Panelists and Key Speakers

Panelists



Dr. Katharine Strunk

Dr. Katharine Strunk is an Assistant Professor of Education and Policy at the Rossier School of Education, University of Southern California, with a courtesy appointment in the School of Policy, Planning and Development. She is also a faculty affiliate of the Center for Education Governance at USC and of Policy Analysis for California Education (PACE). Dr. Strunk's work examines teacher labor markets, education governance and education finance.



Dr. Julie Koppich

Dr. Julia Koppich is a San Francisco-based education consultant and President of J. Koppich & Associates. Dr. Koppich holds a Ph.D. in Educational Administration and Policy Analysis from the University of California Berkeley. Her areas of specialization include teacher effectiveness, education policy analysis and public sector labor relations.



Dr. David Plank is a former Superintendent of Glendale and Palo Alto Unified school districts – two of California's highest performers – as well as Lompoc Unified, Cambria Union Elementary and Coast Union High school districts. He brings more than 38 years of experience as an educator, serving as a teacher, assistant principal, principal, and district administrator, including more than 25 years as a California superintendent.

Hosts and Key Speakers



Jim Brown

Jim Brown is the former Superintendent of Glendale and Palo Alto Unified school districts – two of California's highest performers – as well as Lompoc Unified, Cambria Union Elementary and Coast Union High school districts. He brings more than 38 years of experience as an educator, serving as a teacher, assistant principal, principal, and district administrator, including more than 25 years as a California superintendent.



Dr. Johanna VanderMolen

Dr. Johanna VanderMolen recently retired after nearly ten years as the Superintendent of Campbell Union School District. Working in California school districts for over 35 years, she served as a teacher, an elementary and middle school principal, a Director of Instructional Services, and an Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources. She has received the YWCA's 2008 Tribute to Women Award for Silicon Valley and been honored by Pepperdine University in January 2010, receiving their Superintendent of Distinction award.



Dr. David Plank

Before joining PACE in January 2007, Dr. David Plank was a Professor at Michigan State University, where he founded and directed the Education Policy Center. He was previously on the faculties at the University of Pittsburgh and at the University of Texas at Dallas, where he taught courses and conducted research in the areas of educational finance and policy. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago in 1983 and is the author of six books.



Dr. Merrill Vargo

Dr. Merrill Vargo is both an experienced academic and a practical expert in the field of school reform. Dr. Vargo was selected by an elite group of Bay Area educators and philanthropists to create the Bay Area School Reform Collaborative (BASRC), one of nine urban school reform initiatives funded by the Philadelphia-based Annenberg Foundation. She led BASRC through a successful transition to Pivot Learning Partners as it is known today.