

California Mayors Education Roundtable

AN INITIATIVE OF WestEd



Vision Statement

Mayors from many of California's largest cities have formed the California Mayors' Education Roundtable with the purpose of addressing education and youth-related issues that confront our cities and the state. The Roundtable has been made possible with support from The James Irvine Foundation.

Mayors are held responsible for the health, safety, economy, and education of their cities whether or not they have legal authority or responsibility for these areas. The time is appropriate for mayors to join with the leaders of education systems in their cities and the state to help improve the lives of the children.

We have come together because the educational needs of our children and youth are not being adequately met. Meeting the educational and social needs of our children and youth is more than just a school issue. Mayors need to take an active role in state and local conversations as new policies, programs, and practices are discussed and developed.

The current conversation about improving education has not addressed the broader issues that affect our youth, and their attendance and performance in school. From our perspective, the focus has been too narrow to successfully improve education in our cities and the state. The vision for education in this state must be expanded beyond a goal of improving test scores of children in K-12 to increasing educational attainment, and providing integrated and comprehensive support for youth.

We need to examine the policy barriers—legislation, rules, guidelines and practices—that prevent flexibility in the use of state and local funds to address the needs of our children and youth; increase the capacity of cities to address their needs; link funds and programs across agencies and authorities; and encourage partnerships, joint ventures, and working relationships between and among agencies and organizations.

Some of the strategies we plan to investigate and address include:

- Integrating policies, programs, practices and funding for education, health care, workforce

development, social and human services, out-of-school time, and community initiatives including joint use facilities;

- Creating more flexible funding streams that reflect the changes in policy and practice, by not only utilizing the old smokestack solutions of categorical funding to address problems;
- Providing adequate, transparent and flexible funding to address the developmental needs of all children and youth, and the resources and services that affect their development; and
- Enabling mayors to implement comprehensive youth support programs and systems in conjunction with school and county services to address the social and safety problems confronting our urban centers.

We therefore call for reframing the vision for educational and school improvement in ways that acknowledge that if students are to be successful in education and the workplace a more comprehensive set of policies, programs, services and practices need to be put into place. Our focus at the Mayors' Roundtable will be to work together within and across cities as well as with state leaders to achieve these goals.

Signed November 2007 by the following California Mayors:

Berkeley Mayor Tom Bates
Chula Vista Mayor Cheryl Cox
Fresno Mayor Alan Autry
Long Beach Mayor Bob Foster
Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa
Modesto Mayor Jim Ridenour
Oakland Mayor Ron Dellums
Pasadena Mayor Bill Bogaard
Riverside Mayor Ronald Loveridge
Sacramento Mayor Heather Fargo
San Bernardino Mayor Patrick Morris
San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom
Santa Ana Mayor Miguel Pulido
Santa Barbara Mayor Marty Blum
Stockton Mayor Edward Chavez