



BHC Communities Profile of Advocacy Progress

Center for Evaluation Innovation

April 2013

BACKGROUND

The California Endowment's (TCE) mission is to build a healthier California by expanding access to affordable, quality health care to underserved communities and by improving the overall health of all Californians. TCE recognizes that doing this in a significant and sustainable way requires policy and systems change. As a result, advocacy is important to TCE's grantmaking and is a core element of the Building Healthy Communities (BHC) initiative.¹

In 2010, TCE launched BHC, a ten-year initiative that aims to help the state and 14 high-need and high-opportunity communities across the state to improve their health. BHC communities are doing this in diverse ways, such as by improving education, housing, safety, environmental conditions, and access to healthy foods. The overall goal is to create communities where children are healthy, safe, and ready to learn.

All BHC sites are engaged in advocacy as part of their place-based activities. With input from a diverse range of individuals and groups, each site has identified its own advocacy priorities and goals.

This report provides a snapshot of the most advanced policy efforts being pursued across TCE's 14 communities. It illustrates *a portion* of the policy progress being made within BHC sites; it does not represent all of the policy efforts taking place within sites or across the state.

BHC advocacy goals aim for policy, systems, or organizational change (see the box at right); focus on

Types of BHC Advocacy

- *Policy change*—Attempting to change public laws, regulations, rules, mandates (public policy), or budgets/funding.
- *Systems change*—Shifting the way broader systems (e.g., health, public safety, local government) make decisions about policies, programs, and the allocation or use of resources. They may involve changes, for example, in power, authority, habits, or the use of ideas and skills.
- *Organizational change*—Changing priorities, protocols, or practices within organizations, such as strategies, level of client involvement, allocation of resources, or perceptions of the staff and board.

¹ As a private foundation, TCE does not advocate for candidates, legislation, or ballot initiatives. TCE is permitted to use its funds to influence the public policy debate as long as activities are outside the definitions of lobbying or within exceptions created by the Internal Revenue Code and Regulations. The policy change efforts described in this report were primarily led by TCE grantees and partners.

a broad range of issues like housing, transportation, or school discipline; and target different geographic levels like specific neighborhoods, school districts, cities, or counties. BHC grantees and partners are either leading advocacy strategies or participating in strategies led by others in their communities. Strategies typically include a diverse mix of tactics like research, community organizing, coalition building, and communications, and typically play out over one to several years.

METHODOLOGY

Working with a BHC workgroup, TCE's Learning Department spearheaded the development of tools to help document the rich array of advocacy efforts occurring across BHC sites. The tools intend to help sites learn about their progress, the challenges being encountered, and what might help to further accelerate progress. They also intend to help TCE occasionally capture and aggregate data on that progress. The tools were developed, piloted, and revised using a participatory process that solicited significant input across all BHC sites.

During March 2013, BHC sites were asked to use one of these tools to submit data on their three most advanced advocacy efforts since the BHC initiative began. These are the issues on which sites felt they had made the most progress or were closest to achieving their advocacy goals (or had achieved them already). One or more individuals in the community who have played a role in each advocacy effort's planning and/or implementation submitted the data. Survey respondents or site Program Managers categorized each advocacy goal into one of TCE's three main campaigns—Health Happens in Neighborhoods, Health Happens in Schools, or Health Happens with Prevention. Data across all BHC sites are aggregated and summarized here.

All 14 BHC sites submitted data on a total of 43 distinct advocacy goals. Twelve sites submitted data on three advocacy goals. East Coachella submitted data on two goals because they determined only two goals in the site were particularly advanced (although they are working on others), and Boyle Heights submitted data on five.

The findings here should be read as a profile of BHC advocacy success. Most BHC sites are engaged in more advocacy efforts than are reported on here, but these are the efforts on which sites felt they had made the most progress.

ADVOCACY GOALS

Sites were asked several descriptive questions about the advocacy goals on which they have experienced the most progress, as well as how they generated those goals.

More than half of the goals related to land use and school climate. As Figure 1 on the next page shows, of the 43 goals reported, 23 (53 percent) related to these two issues. Land use goals tended to fall into

two main categories—increasing community involvement in land-use decisions and achieving specific policies on how land is used (e.g., skate areas, joint use agreements, etc.). School climate goals related primarily to changing discipline policies to be less punitive and to instituting restorative justice approaches.

Other goals focused on *safety* (DUI checkpoints, bullying prevention, youth-police relations, public safety related to county jail expansion and incarceration, car impoundment); *public health* (walkable environments, alcohol and tobacco use, health equity, Boys and Men of Color); *transportation* (bus passes, transit design, public transportation access); *school wellness* (physical education, nutrition policy); *quality housing* (affordable housing); *economic and educational opportunity* (school reform, jobs agreement); *environmental justice* (freeway expansion); and *food access* (school district policies).

An examination of the specifics on what sites are doing within these ten issue areas shows a rich diversity of advocacy efforts occurring across the BHC sites. The Appendix offers a more detailed list of advocacy goals by issue and site.

Reflecting a local community focus, the majority of advocacy goals focused on cities and school districts (goals could target more than one level). Looking at Figure 2, more than half (53 percent) focused on changing citywide policies, and almost half (42 percent) aimed to change school district policy. This is consistent with the pattern of findings above on the substantive focus of goals, with many land use policies relating to city policy,

Figure 1. Number of Advocacy Goals by Issue

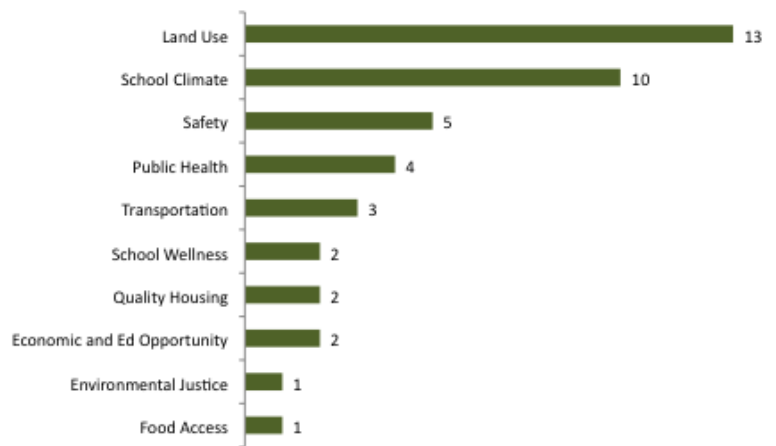


Figure 2. Number of Advocacy Goals by Level

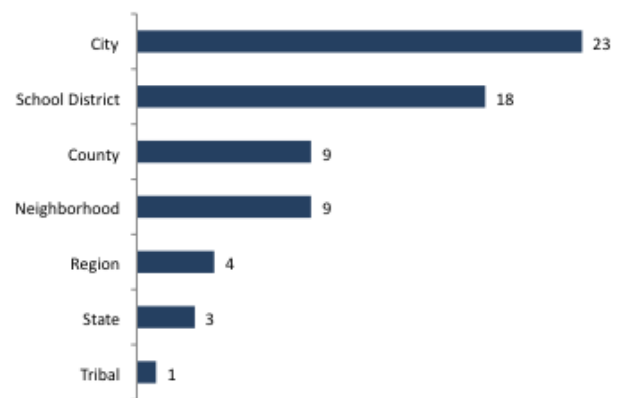
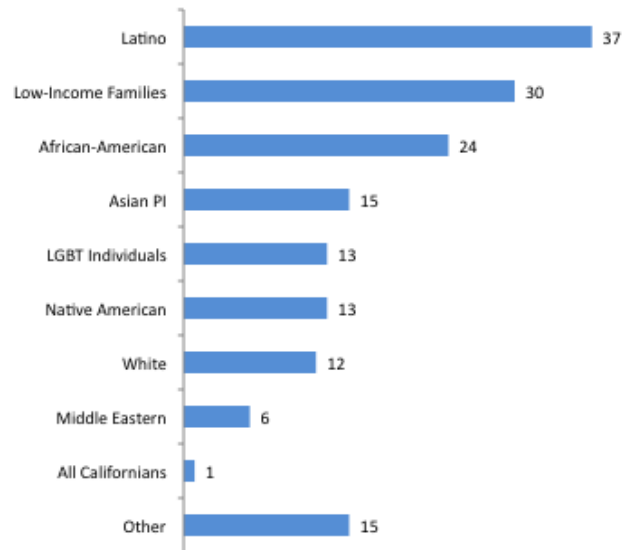


Figure 3. Number of Advocacy Goals by Population Affected

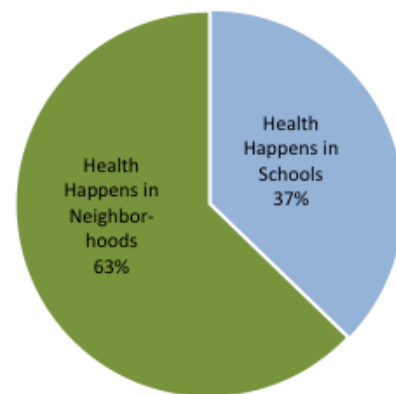


and school climate policies linked to school districts (other district-related goals focused on school wellness, safety, transportation, and land use).

Advocacy goals focused on improving policies or conditions for a range of groups in BHC sites whose voices often go underrepresented in the policy process (goals could target more than one group). As illustrated in Figure 3 on the previous page, the vast majority of all advocacy goals reported (86 percent), if and when achieved, would benefit Latinos. About 70 percent (30 advocacy goals) would benefit low-income families, and 56 percent (24 advocacy goals) would benefit African-Americans. Goals falling into the “other” category generally would benefit all individuals in a particular geography regardless of ethnicity or income. Several goals also included a particular focus on immigrant families—documented and undocumented.

As shown in Figure 4, the majority of goals (63 percent) fell under Health Happens in Neighborhoods. Mirroring results reported earlier by issue, these 27 goals related primarily to land use, safety, public health, transportation, and quality housing issues. Thirty-seven percent (16 goals) related to Health Happens in Schools, primarily covering school climate (discipline and restorative justice), school wellness, and economic and educational opportunity issues.

Figure 4. Percentage of Advocacy Goals by TCE Campaign



No goals fell under the Health Happens with Prevention category, which focuses primarily on health care policy and practice. When sites selected outcomes on which to focus as they developed their logic models several years ago, outcomes related to the prevention category were not as prevalent. Given the current focus on Affordable Care Act implementation across the state and TCE’s support of that effort, more prevention-related efforts are likely to be reported in the future. But because sites were asked to report only on three most advanced advocacy strategies, it may be worth exploring whether Health Happens with Prevention is not a strong advocacy focus for sites and why, or whether advocacy in that area might be more challenging, slower to emerge, or take longer to show results.

Advocacy goals were selected based on a range of community-based factors. Table 1 on the next page displays the reasons BHC sites cited for selecting their goals (some goals fell into more than one category). Reflecting the intent that the work occurring in BHC sites be community-driven, sites most commonly selected goals based on resident input and prioritization. Goals either surfaced during the BHC planning process or through other resident engagement and organizing efforts. Other reasons reflected responses to emerging needs and opportunities (e.g., plans being updated, data and research demonstrating need, community crises), demonstrating that sites are being both responsive and strategic in their advocacy efforts.

PROGRESS ACHIEVED

With all advocacy, some goals are achieved quickly while others take more time to shepherd through the change process. As stated earlier, BHC sites tend to adopt advocacy goals with estimated timeframes that generally range from one to several years. But those timeframes can be affected by many unanticipated factors and so it is difficult to predict with precision how long it may take to achieve advocacy goals.

Understanding again that BHC sites were asked to submit data on their three most advanced advocacy efforts since the start of BHC three years ago, sites were asked how much progress they had achieved on their goals.

As Figure 5 illustrates, 8 of 43 goals (19 percent) already have been *achieved*. Sites had experienced *a lot of progress* on 22 goals (51 percent), and *some progress* on 13 goals (30 percent). The Appendix also shows the amount of progress sites reported on each goal.

Goals that already have been achieved tended to be more specific. For example,

four of the eight goals that have been achieved related to specific land use policies—adopting a specific ordinance and joint-use agreements, and providing culturally appropriate and language-based training on city planning. Two more related to safety on changing DUI checkpoint policy and bullying prevention in a school district. Goals on which *some progress* has been achieved tended to be broader and more comprehensive (e.g., district-wide policy on discipline, department-wide policy on health equity), or involve issues that can take longer to move (e.g., housing, economic opportunity, zoning).

Reason	# Goals	Description
Resident engagement	9	Resident input and prioritization of issues (e.g., land use, school wellness, public health, youth development)
BHC Planning Priority	8	Issues emerging from the BHC planning process
Political/policy opportunity	8	Updating of plans, implementation of new legislation
Alarming statistics/data/research	7	Dropout rates, truancy tickets and expulsions, discipline patterns
Economic circumstances	5	Gentrification, public transportation costs, jobs crisis
Upstream prevention	3	Preventing the school to prison pipeline
Need to strengthen existing policy	2	School district policy on food access and safety (bullying)
Community fear and safety	2	Fear of getting vehicles towed, youth safety on streets
Precipitating event	2	Youth hit by a car, deaths from pollution
Budget cuts	2	Affecting transit, the public swimming pool
Pre-existing community priority	1	Long-term systems change campaign

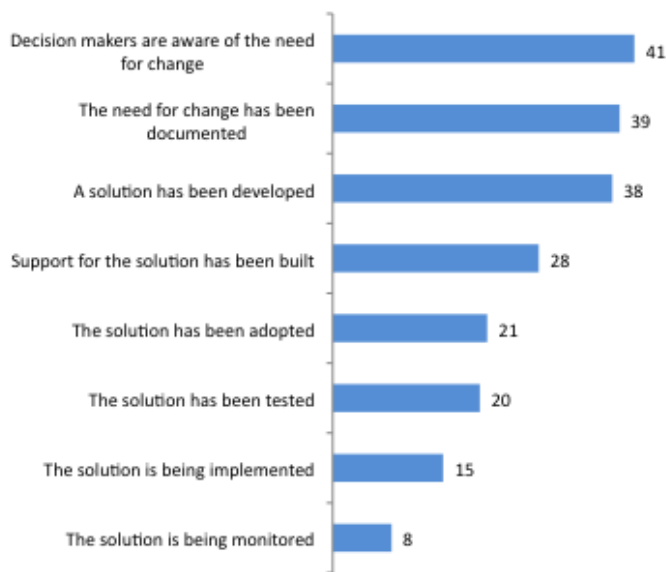
Figure 5. Percentage of Goals by Overall Progress Achieved



In addition to giving an overall assessment of progress, sites were asked to be more specific about what had been accomplished so far. Figure 6 illustrates the results. Responses from top to bottom generally reflect how the change process unfolds over time. First there is awareness about the problem and a documented need for change, and then a solution is developed, endorsed, and adopted. After that it must be implemented and monitored.

Almost all goals have progressed to the point at which a solution has been developed. And, as shown in Figure 6, for almost two-third of the goals (65 percent; 28 goals), support for that solution has been built. For goals that have not yet been achieved, most are at the later points of the change process, either trying to get a solution adopted or trying to make sure it is adequately and appropriately implemented. Because it is important that advocates not stop the advocacy process once a particular policy has been adopted, but continue to follow it through to implementation, BHC commitment to these “later stages” is important and notable.

Figure 6. Number of Goals by Specific Progress Achieved



IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

Sites were asked two open-ended questions about the advocacy implementation process to understand what challenges have affected their progress, as well as how BHC grantees and other partners have collaborated in support of the advocacy goal.

Almost all advocacy efforts experience challenges, anticipated or unanticipated. Those challenges can be categorized into three main types: (1) *advocacy capacity* (tactical, collaboration, funding), (2) *hard-to-reach milestones* during the change process (political will, public will, cultural competency, political credibility), or (3) *political barriers* that tend to be outside of the control of advocates but still affect advocacy progress (policy implementation and monitoring, issue maturity, agency capacity, economic factors).

BHC sites have dealt with a wide range of advocacy challenges during the advocacy process—some internal and some external. As Table 2 shows, sites most commonly reported experiencing advocacy capacity barriers. Advocacy capacity is the ability of a community or group to lead, adapt, manage, and technically implement an advocacy strategy. BHC sites started three years ago with different levels of overall advocacy capacity. In addition, that capacity often differed within each site by issue. Specifically, as part of their capacity challenges, many sites reported *tactical* challenges on the complex task of resident organizing and mobilization, whether those residents were parents, youth, or any member of the community.

Table 2. Advocacy Implementation Challenges

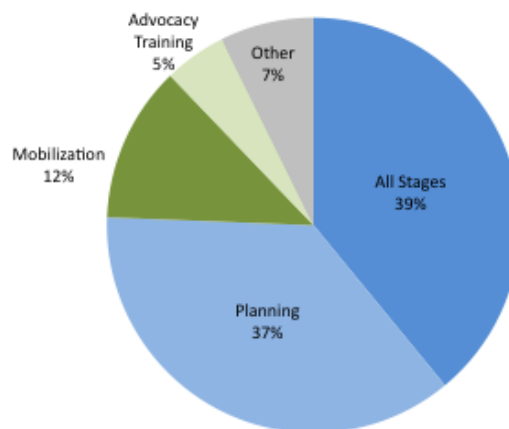
	Challenge	# Goals	Description
Advocacy Capacity	Tactical	14	Having adequate tactical capacity (e.g., resident engagement and mobilization, issue framing, leadership capacity, social media, youth engagement, parent organizing)
	Collaboration	4	Developing trust among organizations advocating together
	Funding	4	Generating adequate resources for advocacy
Hard-to-Reach Milestones	Political Will	11	Developing political champions (city council, school board, county board of supervisors)
	Public Will	4	Generating public support as demonstrated through a willingness to take action
	Cultural Competency	2	Ensuring decision makers value and incorporate resident voice and input.
	Political Credibility	2	Establishing credibility on issues with decision makers
Political Barriers	Implementation and Monitoring	9	Facing daunting implementation challenges once policies are adopted.
	Issue Maturity	3	Promoting issues that decision makers are not used to hearing (non-punishment, land use) or need more the technical expertise to address (waste water)
	Agency Capacity	2	Working with new or unaware decision makers
	Economics	1	Loss of funds to address issues due to economic crisis

The challenge of achieving the hard-to-measure milestone of building *political will* also came up frequently. This refers to success in building the willingness of decision makers (e.g., school board members, city council members, county supervisors, legislators) to support or champion an issue or policy proposal.

Finally, BHC sites cited a number of political barriers associated with policy *implementation and monitoring*. As demonstrated above, many BHC sites do not consider their goals achieved until policies are implemented and monitored as intended. But policies often encounter challenges during the implementation process, as BHC sites reported. These challenges are diverse and have come, for example, in the form of insufficient funding, language differences, adequate training and professional development, tight timeframes, philosophical differences, specific tactical challenges (e.g., identifying land or space, moving parking spaces, hiring locally), and maintaining advocacy interest and support.

BHC grantees and partners have been very involved in the advocacy process from planning through implementation. As sites might be working on advocacy goals that BHC grantees and partners lead or that other organizations in those communities lead, sites were asked how BHC grantees and other partners have supported the advocacy goal. Open-ended responses were coded into mutually exclusive categories and results depicted in Figure 7.

Figure 7. Percentage of Goals by Types of BHC Grantee Involvement



For three-fourths of all advocacy goals reported, BHC grantees and partners either have been involved in *all stages* of the advocacy strategy (39 percent; 16 goals) or specifically during the *planning* process (37 percent; 15 goals). Planning is a broad category that refers to ongoing advocacy strategy development. It ranges from participation in weekly tactical meetings to the contribution of meeting space and translators. For another 12 percent (5 goals), BHC grantees and partners have *mobilized* their networks in support of the advocacy goals. Finally, for another 5 percent (2 goals), BHC grantees and partners primarily have contributed *advocacy trainings*.

SUMMARY THOUGHTS AND NEXT STEPS

TCE is committed to supporting BHC advocacy in multiple ways, including support on the application of tools like the one used here that aim to help BHC sites track and learn from their advocacy efforts over time. Summary thoughts follow about what TCE might take away from this data collection and do in response.

1. **Explore opportunities for cross-site dialogue on success factors.** Again, this report offers a profile of advocacy progress and success. Sites reported particular progress in two areas on which many are working—land use issues and school climate. Because of rich and wide-ranging BHC experience on this issue, opportunities may exist to engage sites in cross-site dialogue and learning on what has worked and contributed to advocacy success on these issues. TCE is working with the California Center for Rural Policy and site-based learning and evaluation consultants to develop an approach to utilize data collected from this tool and others being developed as part of a cross-site learning system. This process is being designed to help identify and then address cross-site learning opportunities.
2. **Determine whether there is a need for tactical support on cross-site challenges.** Sites expressed particular challenges with resident engagement and political will building. It may be

worth exploring whether further supports are needed in these areas, or whether more time is simply needed to allow these challenges and sites' responses to them to play out.

3. **Dig deeper on advocacy capacity challenges.** Sites expressed challenges with advocacy capacity, even here where advocacy has been successful. This indicates capacity may be an even bigger issue where advocacy efforts have made less progress. Digging deeper on this issue and understanding if and how TCE might support further capacity building may be useful.
4. **Provide individual reports back to sites.** Site-level reports should show how site responses relate to the aggregate reporting here. This is in process and will be completed in May.
5. **Help connect sites working on similar issues.** For 40 of the 43 policy goals (93 percent), sites indicated that they would like to be connected to other BHC sites working on the same or similar advocacy goals. The Appendix offers an initial guide of where similarities exist across sites. TCE should facilitate the next step by sharing contact information across sites where appropriate. This is in process.

APPENDIX

SUMMARY OF ADVOCACY GOALS

Issue Area	Goal
Land use	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. [Santa Ana—ACHIEVED] Approve the Sunshine Ordinance for participation and accountability in government—open calendars, pre-meetings, budget outreach, and lobbyist transparency. 2. [Fresno—ACHIEVED] Engage diverse community residents and provide culturally- and language-based training on the city of Fresno’s general planning process. 3. [Del Norte—ACHIEVED] Support drop-in recreational activities in Smith River with a joint-use agreement. 4. [Merced—ACHIEVED] Execute a joint use agreement enabling access to school facilities for the community to access expanded evening and weekend opportunities for physical activity 5. [City Heights—LOT OF PROGRESS] Procure a safe place for skaters. 6. [Del Norte—LOT OF PROGRESS] Adopt a comprehensive, reservation-wide burn plan for the Yurok Tribe. 7. [Eastern Coachella—LOT OF PROGRESS] Assist the City of Coachella to develop and adopt a health and wellness element with greater public engagement. 8. [South Kern—LOT OF PROGRESS] Address the continuous violations from the Arvin/Lamont Community Recycling Center that shows the center to be a serious air polluter. 9. [South LA]—LOT OF PROGRESS Get USC to commit to health promoting benefits that improve the quality of life for residents of the USC Specific Plan target area. 10. [Boyle Heights—SOME PROGRESS] Put land use decision-making power in the hands of affected low-income residents. 11. [Boyle Heights—SOME PROGRESS] Legalize food vending on sidewalks and other public spaces, with healthy food incentives, throughout LA. 12. [Sacramento—SOME PROGRESS] Ban additional fast food establishments; and promote pesticide-free environments, zoning that permits urban agriculture, local and organic school lunches for children, and food outlets that sell local and organic food. 13. [Merced—SOME PROGRESS] Establish safe spaces in the community for youth and others to access positive youth engagement activities.
School Climate	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. [Richmond—LOT OF PROGRESS] Create a shared strategy for improving the alignment of public and private sector practices and resources in ways that improve outcomes for students and families. 2. [Richmond—LOT OF PROGRESS] Decrease the overuse of exclusionary disciplinary practices in the West Contra Costa Unified SD. 3. [South LA—LOT OF PROGRESS] Amend the daytime curfew law to decriminalize truancy. 4. [South LA—LOT OF PROGRESS] Increase capacity within the Fremont HS community to implement and sustain a School Wide Positive Behavior and Intervention Support system. 5. [Merced—LOT OF PROGRESS] Establish and implement a comprehensive restorative justice (RJ) program for all students at Le Grand and Granada HS. 6. [Boyle Heights—LOT OF PROGRESS] Transform school discipline policy at Roosevelt High School from a punitive approach to a supportive policy. 7. [Boyle Heights—LOT OF PROGRESS] Push for alternatives to district and state punitive discipline policies that uplift and fund the social welfare state (Amend the day-time curfew law to decriminalize truancy.) 8. [Fresno—LOT OF PROGRESS] Adopt a Restorative Justice Resolution in the Fresno Unified SD and develop policies and procedures to enforce it. 9. [East Salinas—SOME PROGRESS] Implement Salinas City Elementary SD restorative practice resolution. 10. [Long Beach—SOME PROGRESS] Achieve a district-wide policy on discipline that would include: piloting restorative justice and removing "willful defiance" as a suspendable offense.

Issue Area	Goal
Safety	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. [Santa Ana—ACHIEVED] Change DUI checkpoint policies so they do not inhibit residents from moving freely in the city. 2. [Sacramento—ACHIEVED] Continue implementation of violence prevention, specifically bullying prevention within SCUSD. 3. [Richmond—LOT OF PROGRESS] Lower recidivism and improve overall public safety by blocking a county jail expansion, increasing resources for community-based alternatives to incarceration, and establishing formal mechanisms for improved community participation. 4. [City Heights—LOT OF PROGRESS] Improve community-police relations and develop a restorative justice approach. 5. [Fresno—SOME PROGRESS] Continue support for the Youth Liaison Officer within the Fresno PD
Public Health	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. [East Salinas—LOT OF PROGRESS] Build a BMoC strategy in 3 counties (Monterey, San Benito, Santa Cruz) to narrow the achievement gap, suspend the school-to-prison pipeline, and improve health outcomes. 2. [Santa Ana—SOME PROGRESS] Hold the city accountable to a timeline for creating safe walkable environments in areas that have been ignored. 3. [East Salinas—SOME PROGRESS] Implement Monterey County Health Dept’s Health in All Policies approach across systems and sectors to achieve health equity. 4. [South Kern—SOME PROGRESS] Make four South Kern parks safer, cleaner and more accessible by reducing alcohol and tobacco use.
Transportation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. [City Heights—LOT OF PROGRESS] Achieve free bus passes for students and greater safety on the buses. 2. [East Oakland—LOT OF PROGRESS] Achieve “revitalization without replacement,” in transit design that increases accessibility, air quality, and job opportunities. 3. [Eastern Coachella—SOME PROGRESS] Increase public transportation in one year; improve mobility access and safety in three years.
School Wellness	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. [Sacramento—LOT OF PROGRESS] Create systemic change in physical education—updating, implementation, and enforcement of policies. 2. [South Kern—LOT OF PROGRESS] Create, approve, implement, and monitor a revised Lamont SD school wellness policy that goes beyond federal nutrition guidelines.
Quality housing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. [East Oakland—SOME PROGRESS] Promote healthy, safe, affordable housing for renters and homeowners through improved private and public sector practices. 2. [Long Beach—SOME PROGRESS] Pass progressive housing policies in the Long Beach Housing Element, including development of more affordable housing and improving existing housing stock.
Economic and educational opportunity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. [Del Norte—ACHIEVED] Adopt a school reform model that supports all students to be college or career ready in the Del Norte Unified SD. 2. [East Oakland—LOT OF PROGRESS] Implement and monitor the good jobs agreement with the City of Oakland for their portion of the army base project.
Environmental justice	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. [Long Beach—LOT OF PROGRESS] Get Cal Trans to select Community Alternative 7 as the preferred alternative for the I-710 freeway expansion project—no new passenger lanes, zero emission truck lanes, and investment in public transportation, green space, and local hiring.
Food access	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. [Boyle Heights—ACHIEVED] Strengthen Board of Ed school food policy: food access, grab-n-go, quality and variety, nutrition ed, student and parent feedback, local purchasing.