

Families Improving Education *Advocacy Plans*

Families Improving Education (FIE) is an initiative managed by Families In Schools and supported by a grant from The James Irvine Foundation. FIE aims to improve the capacity of organizations in the Inland Empire and Central Valley to engage underserved families in advocacy and educational decision-making at the state and local levels. The Initiative is designed to foster more responsive and appropriate educational policies and practices that ultimately yield better academic outcomes for children and youth. Families In Schools awarded 11 grants to community-based organizations in the Central Valley and Inland regions. Each grantee organization developed a 3-year advocacy plan to be implemented in their respective communities starting July 1, 2009. For more information, please contact:

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Organization: Californians for Justice (CFJ)

Impact Area: Fresno Unified School District

Advocacy Plan Summary: Californians for Justice (CFJ) is a statewide grassroots organization working for racial justice by building the power of communities that have been pushed to the margins of the political process. CFJ will address factors that lead to the dropout rate crisis through the *Educación Sin Barreras* (Education Without Barriers) campaign, which engages students, parents, and other family and community members in policy advocacy efforts, to change district-wide policies and practices.

Organization: California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation (CRLAF)

Impact Area: Yolo and San Joaquin Counties

Advocacy Plan Summary: California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation's (CRLAF) mission is to provide advocacy, assistance, and community education/outreach to help rural, low-income immigrants improve their economic, social, and political conditions. The ultimate goal of the advocacy plan is to better prepare children who are English learners from rural, migrant and immigrant communities of Yolo and San Joaquin Counties for college and career success.

Organization: Community Services & Employment Training, Inc. (CSET)

Impact Area: Earlimart Unified School District

Advocacy Plan Summary: Community Services & Employment Training, Inc. (CSET) is the community action agency for Tulare County and their mission is to strengthen youth, families, and caring communities. CSET's advocacy goal is to reclassify more English Language Learners (ELL) as English proficient by 5th grade, ensuring they are prepared to take "A-G" coursework needed to qualify them to apply for CSU and UC admission.

Organization: Congregations Organized for Prophetic Engagement (COPE)

Impact Area: San Bernardino City Unified School District

Advocacy Plan Summary: Congregations Organized for Prophetic Engagement (COPE) is a faith-based organization with a mission to train and develop the capacity of religious and lay leaders in congregations across the Inland Empire to play an active role challenging poverty, hopelessness and despair. The *Parents and Communities Engaged in Education* (PCEE) is a collaborative effort between COPE and Blu Educational Foundation, an educational and human service provider serving youth and families in San Bernardino County. The PCEE Project seeks to address achievement gap among African American and Latino students by training and mobilizing parents and community leaders to increase monitoring and accountability for the Targeted Instructional Improvement Policy (TIIP).

Organization: Consejo de Federaciones Mexicanas en Norteamérica (COFEM)

Impact Area: Coachella Valley Unified School District

Advocacy Plan Summary: The Consejo de Federaciones Mexicanas en Norteamérica (COFEM) mission embraces a community centered approach to promote the advancement of the Latino community through public policy, advocacy, educational and cultural programming, strategic mobilization, community organizing, and binational economic development. COFEM seeks to address the lack of established district-wide programs that integrate parental involvement in the education of their children, lack of resource centers that provide support for parents to become empowered, a lack of tools parents can utilize to provide their children with the guidance they need to advance academically and socially.

Organization: Faith In Action Kern County (FIA)

Impact Area: Bakersfield and surrounding area

Advocacy Plan Summary: Faith In Action Kern County (FIA) is a network of churches building relationships, identifying neighborhood issues and working together for grassroots solutions. FIA aims to create leadership groups in neighborhoods throughout Kern County that will engage public officials and other local leaders to address the education concerns of families and neighborhoods from underserved communities. FIA's work will foster a culture of achievement in education so more students graduate from high school prepared for college or meaningful work.

Organization: Fresno Center for New Americans (FCNA)

Impact Area: Fresno Unified School District

Advocacy Plan Summary: Fresno Center for New Americans (FCNA) is a non-profit organization that strives to empower new American communities. FCNA plans to target low parental engagement and high drop out rates. In addition to collaborating with school officials and providing advocacy tools to parents, FCNA will engage in academic activities to increase high school graduation rates and college accessibility and enrollment.

Organization: Lao Family Community of Stockton, Inc. (LFCS)

Impact Area: Stockton and Lodi Unified School Districts

Advocacy Plan Summary: Lao Family Community of Stockton, Inc. (LFCS) a non-profit organization that strives to assist and empower families and individuals by promoting health, safety, economic success, community and civic engagement, learning opportunities, and cultural and generational connections. LFCS aims to strengthen the English Learner Advisory Committees (ELAC) in Stockton and Lodi Unified School Districts as a strategy to improve academic outcomes for minority students.

Organization: Inland Congregations United for Change (ICUC)

Impact Area: City of San Bernardino

Advocacy Plan Summary: Inland Congregations United for Change (ICUC) carries out community organizing to empower people of faith to transform and revitalize their communities by working in the civic arena for the common good. ICUC aims to address the drop-out crisis and the lack of a community-wide plan. Through advocacy and parent/student organizing, the initiative will work towards policy changes and the assurance of their implementation.

Organization: People and Congregations Together (PACT)

Impact Area: Stockton Unified School District

Advocacy Plan Summary: People and Congregations Together (PACT) is an organization comprised of 24 congregations of various faiths and community organizations that strives to train and empower individuals within their communities to become effective leaders capable of surfacing issues and working towards systemic change. The issue PACT Clergy and leaders are concerned about is the high dropout rate, and the lack of parent involvement at Stockton Unified School District. PACT will work to create changes that will increase graduation rates by empowering parents to have an active role within the school district and their children's education.

Organization: Reading and Beyond (R&B)

Impact Area: Fresno Unified School District

Advocacy Plan Summary: Reading and Beyond's mission is to empower children and families to reach productive, self-reliant lives. R&B plans to address the inequities of the current English Learner reclassification system in California. Specifically, R&B plans to inform and empower families in Southeast Fresno to advocate on behalf of their children to help improve educational outcomes for English Learners.