

**2018 Leadership Academy**  
February 20-22, 2018

**Bios**

**Geoff Belleau**

Mr. Belleau is an education program consultant at the California Department of Education. He has over 25 years of experience as a high school, middle-school, and elementary-school educator. Before joining the Department of Education, he was a county office administrator, serving as program manager for instructional technology. In this role, he coordinated instructional technology projects along with district IT administrators and worked with schools and districts on technology integration and professional development. He has presented at several state and national education technology conferences and is a member of the Technology Information Center for Administrative Leadership (TICAL) cadre. As a semi active blogger he has also published several articles to help educators and administrators implement technology in the schools.

**Angelov Farooq, Ph.D.**

Dr. Farooq is proudly born and raised in inland Southern California. He grew up attending local public schools in Riverside County within the Jurupa Valley community. Dr. Farooq and his two younger sisters were raised by a single mother who instilled the value of education to transcend their challenging economic circumstances. These experiences have shaped him to prioritize the advancement of equity and access to opportunities for diverse students. Dr. Farooq earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of California Berkeley and both a Master's Degree and Doctorate of Policy, Planning and Development degree from the University of Southern California. His local roots ensured that he would return back to his community upon completion of his education. Dr. Farooq's lifelong commitment to education continued as he became the Founding Director of the University of California Riverside (UCR) Center for Economic Development and Innovation and teaches *Introduction to Entrepreneurial Management* for MBA students at UCR A. Gary Anderson Graduate School of Management.

Dr. Farooq is passionate about promoting an innovation ecosystem for quality jobs in the Inland Empire region. He is a Founding Board Director for a technology incubator/accelerator in downtown Riverside called ExCITE. He is active in the community serving as an appointee for the Mayor of Riverside on his Innovation District Working Group, serves on the Board of Directors for the Latino Network and is a member of the Riverside East Rotary Club. He is a graduate of the 2015 Leadership Riverside class and serves on the Greater Riverside Chamber of Commerce Economic Development Council. Dr. Farooq has been an appointee of the Riverside County Board of Supervisors on the Workforce Development Board since 2007.

In 2013, Dr. Farooq was appointed by Governor Jerry Brown on the California Workforce Investment Board. In 2015, California's Chief Financial Officer, Controller Betty Yee, appointed him on her 10 member Council of Economic Advisors

### **Frances Gipson, Ph.D.**

Dr. Gipson is the Chief Academic Officer (CAO) for the second largest school district in the nation, Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). As a leader of leaders, she oversees the instructional plan and capacity building for over 600,000 students in preschool through adult school programs. The Division of Instruction includes all academic programs such as: elementary and secondary instruction, gifted and talented education, advanced placement courses, Linked Learning, instructional technology, multilingual and multicultural education, federal state education programs, student integration services, innovation, and the access equity and acceleration team.

A highly regarded educator, she has published and designed quality curriculum at the district, state, national and international level. With this passion for active learning, she has taught Educational Leadership at California State University, Los Angeles (CSULA), the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) Teacher Education Program, and the Principals Leadership Institute. Dr. Gipson's leadership has been formally recognized with the regional Administrator of the Year Award from the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA), the Tae Han Kim award for humanitarian and cultural accomplishments, CSULA Day of the Educator award for excellence in fieldwork supervision, and the Excellence in Urban Leadership Award from Claremont Graduate University. Dr. Gipson believes that "living in the system" and "disturbing the system" are critical to agency and advocacy for youth and ensures that our communities are at the center of all decisions.

### **Sophia Mendoza**

Ms. Mendoza has led instructional technology efforts district-wide for three years, where she has overseen the implementation of digital learning tools to over 400 schools. Ms. Mendoza's leadership helps provide a blueprint for the next iteration of how to address technology in schools. Her work is a synthesis of cutting-edge instructional frameworks, such as the International Society of Technology in Education (ISTE) Standards for Students, the Computer Science Framework, the National Ed Tech Plan, and the SAMR Model. She extends her leadership reach by leveraging technology in ways that models what she preaches, which would serve to help other school leaders determine how they can be change agents in their schools as well. Ms. Mendoza has also presented her work at national and international conferences such as the International Society for Technology in Education Conference, the California Emerging Technology Fund conference, and the Learning Counsel Gathering. Moreover, Ms. Mendoza shares her work with internal District leadership to continue building leadership capacity within L.A. Unified-- the nation's second largest school district. Thus, her work reverberates in both local and national ways as she is committed to taking her career to the next level.

### **Kenneth Shelton**

Mr. Shelton currently holds an M.A. in Education with a specialization in Educational Technology as well as New Media Design and Production. He has worked as an Educator for over 14 years and most recently taught technology at the Middle School level. As a part of his active involvement within the Educational Technology community, Mr. Shelton is an Apple

Distinguished Educator and a Google Certified Innovator. He was also named to the California State Superintendent of Public Instruction's Education Technology Task Force. Mr. Shelton gives keynotes, presentations, and workshops, many of which are hands-on, covering a wide variety of Educational Technology, Technology Integration, Equity and Inclusion, Accessibility, Creative Expression, Visual Learning, Visual Storytelling, and Instructional Design topics. He is currently the Global Keynote Specialist and Educational Technology Strategist, for EdTech Team. Mr. Shelton has had the privilege to speak at many major conferences and events around the world as well as schools and school districts. He brings a worldly breadth of experience knowledge, and perspective. He also had the privilege to speak at the TEDx Burnsville ED event as well as CRESSTCon16 at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA).

### **Joseph South, Ph.D.**

Dr. South is a strategic national educational technology leader focused on evidence-based learning transformation. He formerly served as the director of the Office of Educational Technology at the U.S. Department of Education. In his role at the department, he was an adviser to the Secretary of Education and developed national educational technology policy, formed public-private partnerships to assist state and local education leaders in transitioning to digital learning, helped school districts expand the use of openly licensed educational resources (OERs), and collaborated with stakeholders to nurture a robust ecosystem of edtech entrepreneurs and innovators.

Dr. South also worked on a cross-governmental team to bring high-speed broadband, interactive devices, and professional development for educators and leaders, and high-quality affordable digital content to U.S. classrooms. He is a strong proponent of the active use of technology by learners. He has led learning product development teams at startups, museums, non-profit organizations, corporations and higher education institutions. He has also directed a host of learning programs and consulted on projects in China, Korea, Mexico, South America and the Middle East. He holds a doctorate in instructional psychology and technology from Brigham Young University.

### **Micah Studer**

Mr. Studer is the Coordinator of Educational and Informational Technology Services for the Winters Joint Unified School District. He oversees all aspects of technology within the district including network administration, server management, systems administration, VOIP, security systems, and end user support. Mr. Studer is relentlessly focused on integrating technology into the classroom to enhance teaching and learning. He received his B.A. from Sacramento State University, two M.A. degrees in Educational Technology and Educational Leadership from Touro University, and is currently working on completing his Ed.D. at University of California, Davis. He has a diverse background in teaching and educational leadership spending his teaching career teaching science and English in inner city schools, becoming a dean of students before moving to Winters as an Assistant Principal to launch the district's 1:1 program. Mr. Studer additionally serves on the CUE Legislative Advocacy Committee promoting policies of access to technology for all students and families. He serves as the president elect of the North Valley California Educational Technology Professional Association (CETPA) Regional group. He currently resides in Solano County with his wife Heidi and their four children.

### **Tom Torlakson**

Mr. Torlakson was re-elected to a second four-year term as California's 27<sup>th</sup> State Superintendent of Public Instruction on November 4, 2014. As chief of California's public school system and leader of the California Department of Education, Superintendent Torlakson applies his experience as a science teacher, high school coach, and state policymaker to fight for our students and improve our state's public education system. Mr. Torlakson's journey has led him from the classrooms of Contra Costa County's Mount Diablo Unified School District (where he remains as teacher-on-leave), to the Antioch City Council, Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors, and the California State Senate and State Assembly.

During his tenure in the California State Legislature, Mr. Torlakson acted to protect education funding, improve student nutrition and physical education, and ensure school safety. He also championed legislation to increase funding for textbooks, computers, and other instructional materials, and promoted efforts to close the digital divide, eliminate the achievement gap, and reduce the dropout rate. In 1998 Mr. Torlakson authored legislation leading to the development of the largest system of after-school programs in the nation. In 2006, he authored the bill that led to a 300 percent expansion in these programs—so they now reach 4,000 schools around the state. Mr. Torlakson authored the Quality Education Improvement Act (SB 1133) in 2006, which dedicates nearly \$3 billion to our lowest-performing schools. He also played a key role negotiating and authoring the \$9 billion Proposition 1A bond measure in 1998—which has led to public votes supporting over \$36 billion to build new schools and improve existing school buildings. As the chair and founder of the California Task Force on Youth and Workplace Wellness, Mr. Torlakson has been a leader on banning junk food from our schools, providing healthier school meals, promoting student health and fitness, and combating diabetes and obesity among our children.

Born in San Francisco, Mr. Torlakson served as a fireman in the United States Merchant Marine, earning the Vietnam Service Medal. He earned a Bachelor of Arts in History, a Life Secondary Teaching Credential, and a Master of Arts in Education from the University of California, Berkeley. Tom lives in Pittsburg with his wife, Mae Cendaña Torlakson, a member of the Ambrose Recreation and Park District Board of Directors.