

## Leadership Transition Announcement

[en español](#)

Dear Members and Partners:

I am writing to share that I will be stepping down as Executive Director of the Parent Organization Network (PON) by the end of June. This decision comes at a meaningful time, as PON celebrates its 20th anniversary this July- a milestone that invites reflection on all we have accomplished together.

The steady commitment and leadership of core parent leaders, staff, founders, advisory board members, member organizations, partners, consultants, and funders allowed PON to evolve into a strong and important voice for parents. Together, we've informed policy makers of barriers in the system that restrict the full implementation of promising education policies which often stymie effective family-school partnerships that support student success. We also engaged in various projects to advocate for or co-develop tools and resources to strengthen family engagement. The PON **milestones** serve as an impressive record of what we have achieved because we've shared a common vision and goal.

Over the last two decades, I have witnessed greater recognition of family engagement as an essential field within education and an increase in the number of family engagement staff in schools and nonprofits. Thanks to a dedicated collective of advocates, families, educators, and policy makers, we now have a constellation of education policies, frameworks, and initiatives requiring family and community engagement across the landscape. As a result, the number of family and community engagement champions and bright spots within the system continues to grow, and the capacity of school district administrators to engage with families continues to improve.

Despite this progress, we know the work is far from finished. These investments are not yet directly impacting all schools, practices are not being instituted systematically, nor are they penetrating schools and classrooms to fundamentally change core teaching and learning practices or improve experiences, and outcomes for students, educators, and families. Yet, promising developments like the latest victory, the adoption of the 2024 California Standards for the Teaching Profession (CSTPs) renew our momentum and give us a lever to increase capacity of all teachers to partner with families to support students.

Like PON, I am evolving with the field and so, for now, I will transition to lead the California Family Engagement Network (CA-FEN). CA-FEN is a statewide network co-founded by PON and focused on systems change. The next frontier for this movement is to build capacity for professors, county offices of education staff, administrators, and teachers to implement and sustain high-impact, culturally responsive family engagement practices over time. Maintaining a parallel on-the-ground strategy with parent groups like PON will continue to be imperative to advance family engagement.

*Mil gracias* to PON parent leaders, staff, founders, advisory board members, strategic partners, consultants and funders for your trust and partnership through the years. I look forward to continue collaborating with



many of you in my new role with CA-FEN, and I am confident that with your continued support, PON's next chapter will be even stronger.

In solidarity,  
Araceli Simeón

## Message from PON's Advisory Board

Dear Community Members, Participants, Staff, and Valued Stakeholders:

We hope this message finds you well. We are writing to share an important update regarding a leadership transition at Parent Organization Network (PON).

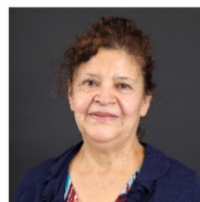
After years of dedicated service, our Executive Director Araceli Simeón, will be stepping down from her role. We are deeply grateful for the impactful leadership, vision, and compassion she brought to our organization and the many lives she touched during her tenure. Her contributions have laid a strong foundation that will continue to guide us in the work we do every day.

While transitions can bring change, please know that our mission, values, and commitment to the children, families, and communities we serve remain steadfast and unwavering. We are excited to share that Nancy Villarreal, PON Board Member, is taking more of a leadership role as part-time Associate Director to support the transition.

Our board chairs and members, leadership team, and staff are working collaboratively to ensure a smooth and thoughtful transition. We are focused on maintaining stability, fostering open communication, and continuing the quality services and partnerships that you trust and value. In the coming weeks, we will also be engaging in a comprehensive process to identify our organizational priorities and next permanent Executive Director—one who will carry forward the legacy of care, innovation, and impact that defines our organization.

We understand that change can bring questions, and we welcome your thoughts, ideas, and continued partnership as we move through this transition together. Thank you for being an essential part of our community. With your support, we are confident that our organization will continue to thrive and grow—stronger and more connected than ever.

With appreciation and care,  
Advisory Board





## Upcoming Dates

**April** - Present CA-FEN's strategic plan

**May** - Interim Executive Director is announced

**June** - Celebration with outgoing and incoming leaders

**July 2025 - June 2026:** Advisory Board and Interim Executive Director:

- 1) Engage staff, members, and partners in identifying priorities for the organization and characteristics for the new leader; and
- 2) Set a process and begin the search to select a permanent Executive Director.

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*PON is a project of **Community Partners***

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