

School Leaders Stay Focused While Change Abounds

Published on **29 Mar 2013**

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Posted in [Center for Green Schools](#)



Conference attendees were all ears during presentations at AASA's 2013 national event in Los Angeles. Photo by Lifetouch.

The 2013 [National Conference on Education](#) took place in Los Angeles last month and saw thousands of superintendents gather from across the country to learn, network and share, but most importantly prepare for the changing landscape of public education. The conference host [AASA](#) kicked things off by unveiling their refreshed logo and moniker – The School Superintendents Association – shaking things up in this 148-year-old organization, which has been an active participant in the [Coalition for Green Schools](#) for years.

Education sessions buzzed with school leaders looking for the latest resources, tips and information about Common Core State Standards Initiative and the two new state assessments coming online as a result. Schools in the process of implementing Common Core have a heavy lift ahead of them as far as restructuring lesson plans, providing training and professional development and communicating the process to stakeholders, but genuinely seemed excited. The Common Core mantra heard throughout the conference was “Fewer. Higher. Deeper.” Though superintendents anticipate a near-term drop in achievement due to the change in standards, one could feel the excitement and hope from attendees about the long-term future under this new system.

Other topics at the forefront of conference programming were teacher evaluations, technology and school safety. Considering the warp speed at which each of those subjects is evolving, it's amazing that superintendents can adapt while maintaining their laser focus on delivering quality education to students from all walks of life.

The conference was an opportunity to highlight the fantastic work in Sacramento, spearheaded by their superintendent [Jonathan Raymond](#). [Center for Green Schools UTC Fellow](#) Farah McDill and Sacramento City Unified School District Chief Accountability Officer Teresa Cummings were on-hand to share with attendees the story of Project Green, a program that empowers and entrusts students to research and make recommendations about capitol improvements to their schools, several of which will be implemented using \$5M in reallocated bond funds. Farah and Teresa explained how this program can meet superintendent goals by simultaneously strengthening STEM education offerings, cross-departmental district collaboration, and community investment in schools.

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