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## Berkeley welcomes new Superintendent 350 of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson



Photos by Mark Coplan

More than 200 educators gathered at Hs Lordships to hear from State Superintendent Tom Torlakson (left).

On March 3, the Alameda County Office of Education hosted a networking dinner in Berkeley to welcome the new State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson.

More than 200 people from the Berkeley schools community and beyond gathered at Hs Lordships to meet and hear from Torlakson. In attendance were county superintendents from throughout the state, Berkeley School District directors, administrators and faculty as well as many members of the community. Alameda County

Superintendent Sheila Jordan welcomed the guests, who also heard a legislative update by Senator Loni Hancock.

In his keynote address, Torlakson was honest about the challenges facing public education and expressed the need to address existing state assessment systems that put students and schools through endless cycles of "drill and kill" testing. On this topic, he pledged to work with educators to establish new measurements that value learning in a broad range of subjects and skills, including Career Technical Education, arts

education, math, and science.

Torlakson also called on education leaders to help him build a case before the public for full funding of California's public schools. He asked that education leaders work closely with his transition team, the State Board of Education, the Governor, and the Legislature, to continue providing important information on the local outcomes of state and federal education policies.

After his presentation, local education leaders reciprocated by sharing their views about classroom and community realities.