PRESS RELEASE

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Buena Park School District Administrator Awarded for Boosting Student Success

BUENA PARK, CA – As Buena Park School District's Student and Community Services Director, Dr. Elsie Briseño Simonovski is guided by the motto "There's always more to accomplish," and is seen regularly visiting various schools in the District, engaging with parents, and fostering relationships with community partners to enhance support for all students.

For these efforts, Simonovski was named Region 17 Administrator of the Year by the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA). She will receive the award on May 8 during the ACSA Region 17 Orange County Award Recognition at the Irvine Marriott.

"I'm incredibly honored and humbled to receive this award, it is a huge testament to our District in prioritizing the overall health, welfare and safety of our students and community," Simonovski said. "I feel blessed and incredibly thankful for the trust that the District has afforded our department over the last several years and I'm very excited to keep moving forward with our work and advocacy for all our students."

Simonovski joined Buena Park School District in January 2020, but her career in education spans 25 years in varying teacher and administrative roles, such as an elementary school teacher, reading specialist, elementary literacy coach, elementary and secondary teacher on special assignment, middle school assistant principal, K-8 coordinator for special education and English learners, K-12 curriculum and academic content design district administrator and continuation high school principal.

Under Simonovski's tenure, the District has increased its counseling staff to boost student social-emotional health, increased access to health services, elevated professional development in child welfare and attendance, enhanced McKinney-Vento programs and staff through new grants to add services and hire mentors for students and uses Panorama, a student survey data program, to boost student engagement, school connectedness and overall success.

She and her team also implemented early intervention and criteria to reduce chronic absenteeism in 2022 and were named a Model School Attendance Review Board by State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond.

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"I plan to continue being a thoughtful, student-centered, and data-driven reflective leader while understanding that education continues to change and evolve, particularly when the needs in today's classrooms and schools appear far greater than before the pandemic," Simonovski said. "I am proud of the work our team of office staff, counselors, health professionals, liaisons, connections mentors, crisis responders, school resource officers, administrators and so many others do to support our students, staff and families."

Simonovski holds a Bachelor of Arts in history and a minor in education from University of California San Diego, a master's degree in education from Argosy University, an administrative credential from National University and a doctoral degree of philosophy in urban leadership and education from Claremont Graduate University. She is also the president of ACSA's Educational Options State Council.

"Congratulations to Dr. Simonovski – she truly deserves all the praise and recognition because her work has improved the lives of so many of our students," Interim Superintendent Dr. Yvette Cantu said. "Dr. Simonovski is an amazing asset to our community and allows our students to find their passions so that they can become their best selves."

PHOTO CAPTION:

ACSA: Buena Park School District's Student and Community Services Director Dr. Elsie Briseño Simonovski was named Region 17 Administrator of the Year by the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA).

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