



September 24, 2025

Peer Advocacy in El Dorado County

Elevating Student Voice to Drive Change



Today's Session: What to Expect

- Participants will remain muted with video off.
- Participants are invited to engage with us via chat.
- Please submit questions via Q&A.
- This session will be recorded and posted to the California Safe and Supportive Schools website.

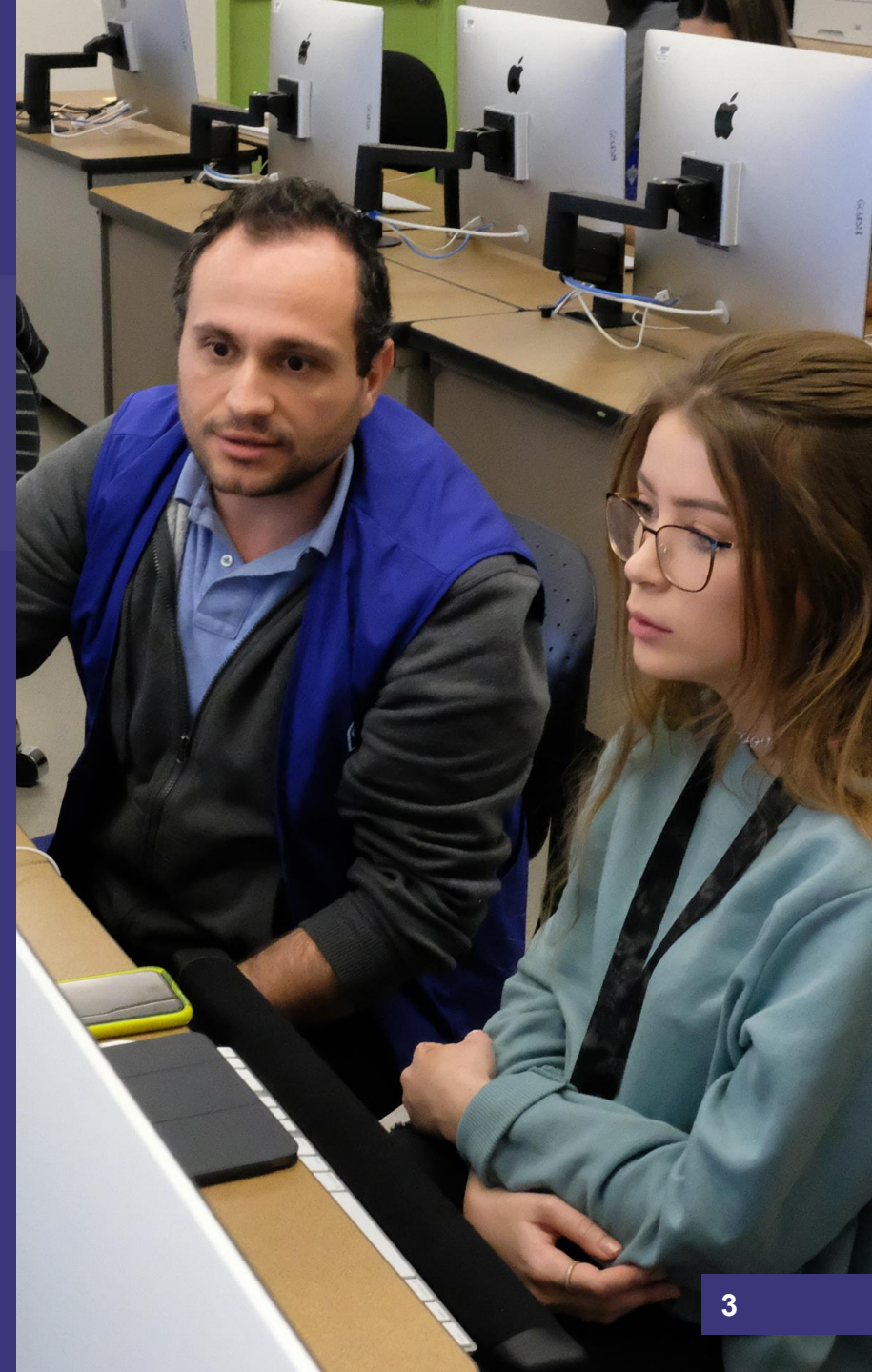


Welcome!

This webinar is hosted by the California Stronger Connections Technical Assistance Center.

We provide support to local education agencies in the following focus areas:

- cultivating safe and healthy learning environments;
- preventing and responding to acts of violence, bullying, and/or harassment;
- addressing unmet mental health needs;
- implementing safety assessments and corresponding plans; and
- promoting positive school climate and culture.



Session Goals

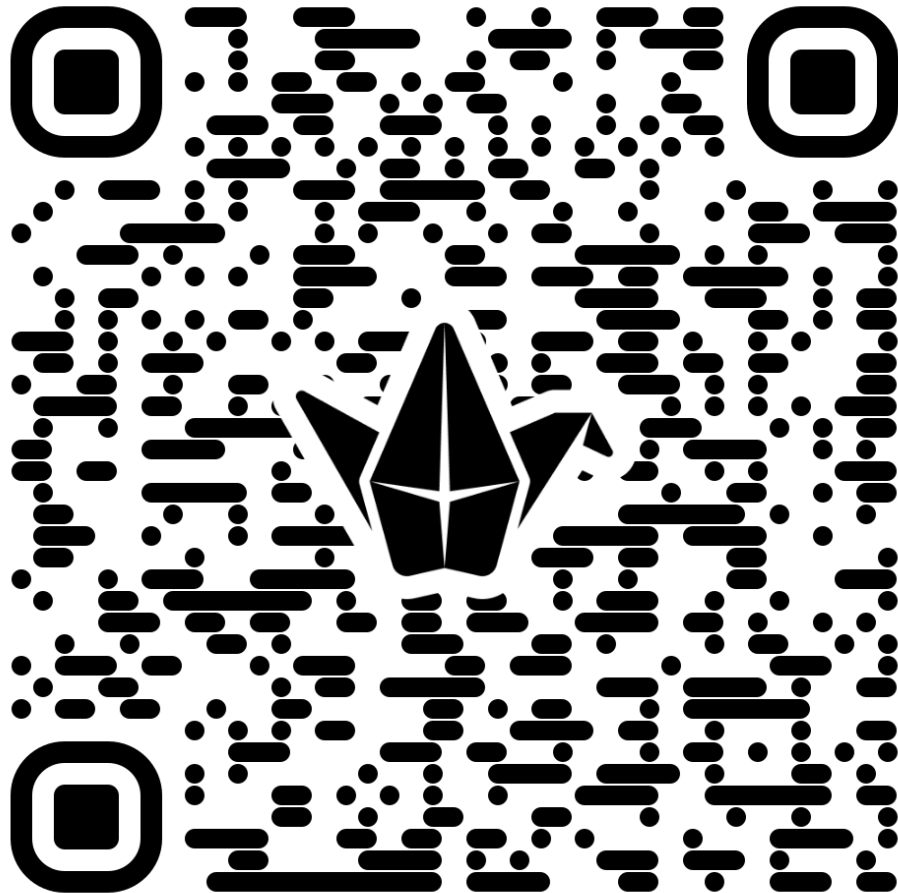
- Learn about Peer Advocacy efforts in El Dorado County
- Hear from student participants in Golden Sierra Junior Senior High School's Peer Advocates Program about their experiences and insights

You're Invited: Zoom Office Hour

Friday, October 3, from 11 a.m. to noon
Pacific Time

All participants of today's session will
receive an invitation.





Access resources
from today's webinar
on Padlet.

Presenters



Tim Hooey

Mental Health and Wellness Coordinator,
El Dorado County Office of Education



Larry Bryant

Peer Advocacy Teacher,
Golden Sierra High School

Stronger Connections

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**Peer Advocacy in El Dorado County:
Elevating Student Voice to Drive Change**

Peer Advocacy in El Dorado County: Elevating Student Voice to Drive Change

Tim Hooey, LMFT, LPCC
Mental Health and
Wellness Coordinator,
El Dorado County
Office of Education

Larry Bryant
Peer Advocacy Teacher,
Golden Sierra High
School

A little about El Dorado County:

- **Around 30,000 students countywide**
- **6 comprehensive high schools, 5 alternative high schools**
- **This year we have 5 comprehensive high schools and one alternative high school with a Peer Advocacy class on campus**

Why Peer Advocacy?



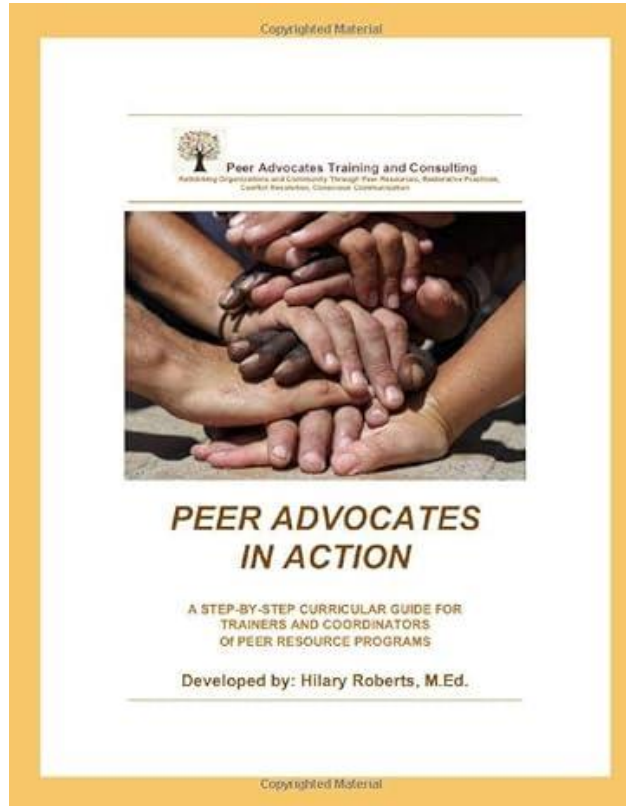
- **The perfect storm of...**
 - **Youth Commission's voice**
 - **SBHIP Needs Assessment**
 - **Funding**
- **Addressing the need...**
 - **Impact on chronic absenteeism**
 - **Alternatives to discipline**
 - **School climate and culture**

Peer Advocacy in El Dorado County:

- **Representative of the student body**
- **Common language through training**
- **Context-specific in practice**

Ongoing Training Led by Hilary Roberts, MEd

- Founder and CEO of Peer Advocates Training and Consulting
- Author of “Peer Advocates in Action,” a curriculum that will be provided at the training
- Peer Advocates Training and Consulting works with over 20 school districts in California



Service Options

1. Orientation/Transition Assistance
2. Peer Education
3. Conflict Mediation/Restorative Practices Facilitator
4. Violence Prevention
5. ELL Discussion Groups
6. Peer Connection
7. Support Groups
8. Peer Counseling
9. Tutoring
10. Brief Intervention Facilitator

Golden Sierra HS

Our Peer Advocates program works with students and staff to create a safe school environment and culture, helping students be successful at Golden Sierra.

Peer Advocates are a group of upperclassmen that act as mentors to underclassmen students. They are there to listen to their mentees, provide support, and help connect them to community resources. In addition to their mentoring role, they also act as Teen Health Educators and facilitate communication between students, staff, and administration.

Golden Sierra HS

Our “Big 3” jobs:

- **Peer-to-Peer Support**
 - Available to talk to while students wait for Wellness Center support
 - Available when students need to vent or be heard
 - Advocating for students with teachers and administration
- **Connecting Students to Resources and Supports**
 - Wellness Center
 - Golden Sierra Community Resource Center for all resources
- **Peer Education**
 - Social Emotional Learning
 - Teen Health Issues

Golden Sierra HS

Student Stories

- **Why did you join Peer Advocacy?**
- **What have you done as a Peer Advocate?**
- **How have you grown?**

Golden Sierra HS

Recruitment and Training

- **Sign up for the class or are nominated**
- **Complete an application**
- **Have a written recommendation from staff or current Peer Advocate**
- **Interview with current Peer Advocates**

Golden Sierra HS

Recruitment and Training

- Confidentiality
- Communication
- Active Listening and listening non-judgmentally
- Problem-solving: brainstorming solutions
- Mental Health: anxiety, depression, substance abuse, eating disorders, stereotyping, and teen issues
- Suicide prevention
- ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences) and toxic stress
- Mindfulness & 123 Wellness
- Community Circles
- Restorative Justice
- Team building activities
- Improv skills for working with groups
- Building resilience and healthy life skills

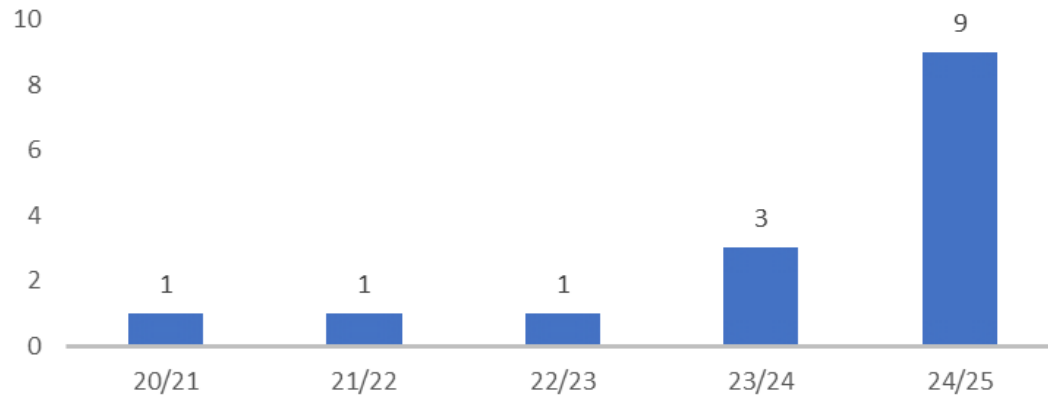
Peer Advocacy Sustainability and Growth

Peer Advocacy Funding Possibilities

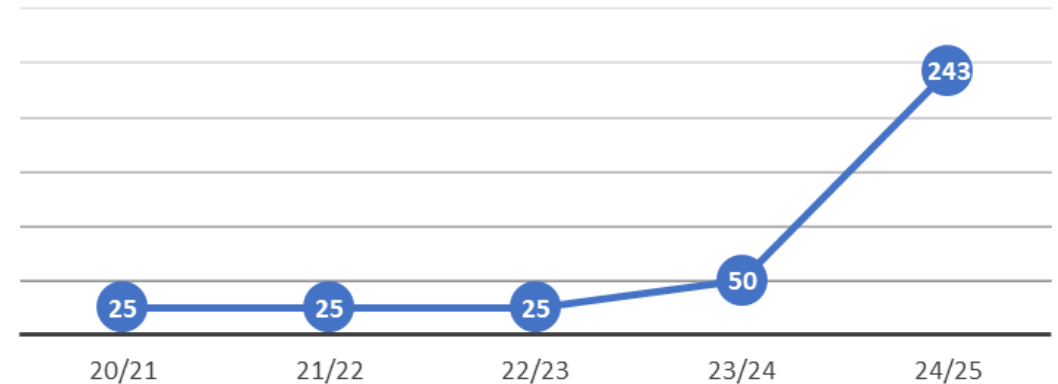
- SBHIP Grant
- MHSA/MHSSA
- TUPE Funding
- FNL/Club Live
- Community Schools Grant
- Wellness Coaches
 - Dual Enrollment/Career Pathway
- Managed Care Partners in your county
- Link Crew
- CTE Pathway grants, College and Career Access Pathways Grant

Growth in El Dorado County

EDC MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL'S WITH A PEER ADVOCACY CLASS/PROGRAM



Number of EDC Middle and High School Students in a Peer Advocacy Class/Program

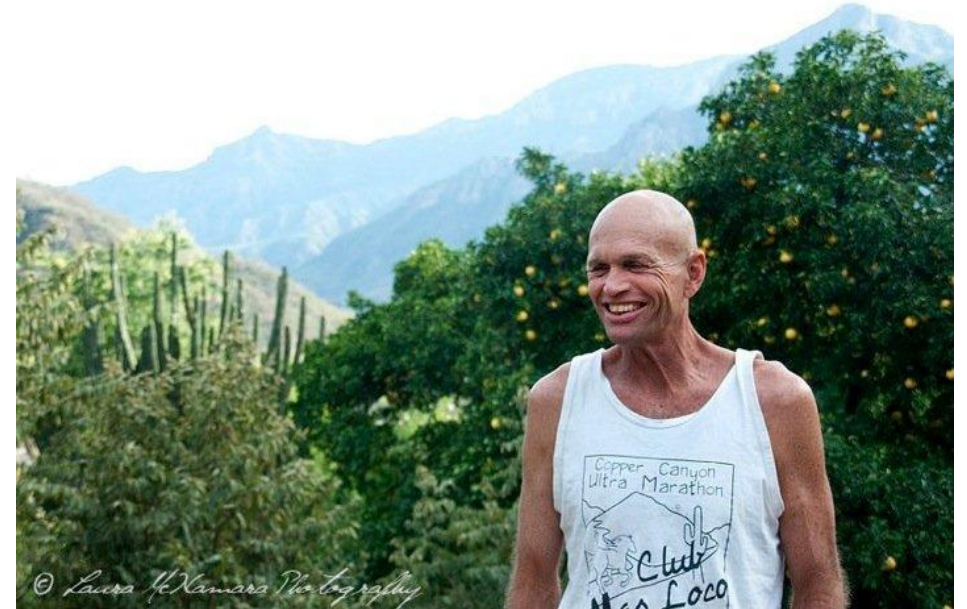


Mental Health Career Pathway

- Starting this school year, we have developed a Mental Health Career Pathway with Folsom Lake College
- Students in Peer Advocacy are offered the opportunity to take two dual enrollment classes—Intro to Social Work and a Social Work Practicum class—that will allow students to count their Peer Advocacy hours toward a Social Work AA
- Provide opportunities for Wellness Coaches within the county

**Easy, light, smooth ...
and fast.**

—Caballo Blanco (Micah True)



Thank you!

Pause and Reflect

What insights or “aha” moments stood out to you from the presentation?



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We appreciate your feedback!

Upcoming Events

October 8: Wellness Mini-Session

November 12: Wellness Mini-Session



Registration Now Open: Peer Network for LEAs

Join a cohort of peers working to improve school climate through participatory data use practices.

Applications due October 15; sessions will begin January 2026.



[Learn More and Apply](#)



More Opportunities for Learning and Connection

- School Safety Collaborative for County Offices of Education
- Proposal Support Series



Learn more at strongerconnections.wested.org



WestEd 

Thank you!

Contact Us:
strongerconnections@wested.org