

## **Sandra Thorstenson, Partner**

### Biographical Information

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- Sandra Sanchez Thorstenson retired in June 2016 after fourteen years as Superintendent of the Whittier Union High School District having spent her entire 39-year career in Whittier Union. Prior to becoming Superintendent, Mrs. Thorstenson served as Assistant Superintendent, Educational Services, High School Principal, Assistant Principal and Teacher. She graduated from Whittier High School and her daughter graduated from the school district as well.
- The Whittier Union High School District, a minority-majority high school district with a student enrollment comprised of eighty percent socio-economically disadvantaged students, has demonstrated remarkable gains in student achievement at every school, in multiple indicators and over time. The District's commitment to do "Whatever It Takes" to ensure student achievement for all students has resulted in state and national recognition. Most importantly, Whittier Union has narrowed the achievement gap from 35% to 9% and has proven on behalf of their students that demographics do not determine destiny.
- The Association of California School Administrators (ACSA) selected Mrs. Thorstenson as California's 2016 recipient of the Marcus Foster Administrator Excellence Award and its 2012 State Superintendent of the Year for AASA. She was selected as ACSA's Region XV Superintendent of the Year for 2007. Sandra Thorstenson served as president of ACSA's State Superintendency Council and president of California City School Superintendents Association. She also served on the board for Pivot Learning Partners and the board of directors for the Whittier Chamber of Commerce. Mrs. Thorstenson was appointed by Governor Brown as the superintendent representative of the five-member board of the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence and served as chair helping to launch the new state agency focused on providing support and assistance to school districts throughout California. She currently serves on the board of directors of the Soroptimist International of Whittier, is a member of the Southern California Superintendents' Association, Urban Education Dialogue and the California Collaborative for District Reform. Sandy Thorstenson is a partner with Leadership Associates, an executive search and leadership development firm.