



Dignity in School Campaign California

Membership Policy

Approved by DSC CA Membership on November 19, 2020

Background

Since we stand in the gap of movement building, Dignity in Schools Campaign California (DSC CA) membership is forged in the work of relationship building among organizations and marginalized communities. We unapologetically assert that this work requires study, critical reflection, self-critique, humility, and above all accountability to the most marginalized so that our strategies do not repeat past harms and mistakes caused by well-intentioned yet elitist change-making designed far away from the communities most impacted.

DSC CA is not a campaign coalition or a tactical alliance of immediate actions or services; we are an alliance of strategic transformational impact guided by a vision of change to end the school to prison pipeline. We understand that communities are assessing our work and are holding leadership accountable, our membership process is a reflection of who we are and how we work collectively.

Brief History of DSC CA Chapter Formation

In 2012 Dignity in Schools Campaign Bay Area and Los Angeles chapters came together to develop a movement building strategy to reform school discipline and dismantle the school to prison pipeline for the state of California. At that time, school discipline coalitions were clustered in Los Angeles and the Bay Area. Base building groups were far fewer in counties and districts with the highest and most disproportionate rates of out of school suspensions and expulsions. Grounded by a strong vision of creating a powerful movement that is connected to and driven by its base, DSC CA developed a process for strengthening ties to grassroots groups throughout California-particularly in isolated and under-resourced regions.

From 2014 -2017 the leadership team from Bay and Los Angeles chapters began to develop relationships with key organizations in the following regions with the goal of developing strong regional anchors for the state of California: 1) Central Coast 2) Central Valley 3) Inland Valley. In 2017 the DSC CA chapter was formed and we have spent the last three years developing a strong movement building practice that is centered around developing political solidarity and understanding the root causes of the school to prison pipeline, as well as developing trust and co-creating practices that uplift local practices and inform a statewide strategy.



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DSC CA is organized into five (5) movement building regions: Los Angeles, Bay Area, Central Coast, Central Valley and Inland Valley.

DSC CA Membership

Membership is guided by DSC CA's Movement Building Blueprint, North Star, Principles of Critical Engagement and regional autonomy to determine membership. DSC CA membership is composed of core organizations, primarily base-building community organizing groups, that have demonstrated they are in alignment with regional collectives and have made a commitment to a movement building strategy. Membership is for organizations who have made a long term commitment to ending the school to prison pipeline.

As outlined in our Principles of Critical Engagement, regional collectives will prioritize working with grassroots organizations that work with those that are the most impacted by the school to prison pipeline and other organizations and allies that are committed to taking the guidance of grassroots organizing efforts and have made a commitment to movement building strategies. We understand the importance of working with groups that engage with students, parents and community members through service, advocacy, cultural work and healing; however, those groups have to be willing to challenge the systems and structures that are accountable for the practices that have contributed to the school to prison timeline.

North Star/Social Justice Purpose Statement

The purpose of DSC CA is to deepen grassroots community-based understanding of the historical role and future implications of **school discipline, the relationship between schools & law enforcement, and the dehumanizing impact of the public education system** and expand our movement's political opportunities to dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline, repair the intergenerational harm it has caused, and craft systemic alternatives for multiple generations.

Principles of Engagement

1. Prioritize working with base building groups that are organizing those most impacted and marginalized by school pushout and criminalization.
2. Groups must be willing to challenge the systems and structures that are accountable for the practices that have contributed to the school to prison pipeline.



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3. Our capacity building work is centered on supporting local work around school discipline with a vision towards the following larger goals:
 - a. Ending racial and structural disparities;
 - b. Redefining public safety;
 - c. Ending mass incarceration and criminalization; and
 - d. Breaking the intergenerational cycle of poverty.
4. There has to be mutual interest in working together. There is no hidden agenda but a strong belief that in order to make real impact in California we need strong local organizing and a statewide vision that is rooted in real relationships across regions and districts.
5. We are committed to working together in a way that does not create dependence on expertise outside the region but helps build connections to people, information and resources that will build the capacity of leadership within the region.

Movement Building Regional Chapter Autonomy

DSC CA membership is made up of organizations that our movement building regional collectives have identified as core leaders. Regions have the autonomy to make decisions about which organizations will become members of DSC CA and have final say about membership. Local chapters determine which type of organizations they need to partner with to advance local regional organizing efforts.

For organizations that are interested in becoming DSC CA members, the first step is to approach local regional leadership and learn about local regional processes for engagement.

Levels of Engagement

DSC CA membership is based on the consensus of the core leadership in each regional collective, which recommends a new member's levels of engagement in the regional space. The levels of engagement consist of the following:

Core Level Engagement: Membership

This level of engagement is for groups that have built a close relationship with an existing DSC CA movement building region. Potential groups are invited to agree with and sign onto DSC CA's



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Principles of Engagement and to participate in the local strategic planning and coordination of an annual regional work plan, which includes ongoing planning meetings, trainings, convenings, regional participation in statewide actions and the DSC National Week of Action. Groups at the core level are committed to prioritizing building the capacity of other youth, parent and community organizing groups and their members over policy shops and service organizations.

Secondary Level Engagement: Active Engagement

At the secondary level potential groups/individuals have made a commitment to actively engage with a DSC CA regional partner during a DSC National Week of Action. Most importantly groups/individuals are willing to engage in study, critical reflections, self-critique, and accountability to work on behalf of critically marginalized students and families.

Peripheral Level Engagement: Limited Engagement

A group's first contact is typically through building a mutual relationship with a DSC CA regional partner, local campaign, and/or local actions. Local Movement Building Regions assess if a potential group wants to build a relationship to engage in on-going work to end the school to prison pipeline. Although a group may engage in such activities as improving school climate, participating in direct services, legal work, case management, mentoring, restorative justice training, the group may not be involved with grassroots base-building -- the core strategy of DSC CA work. At the peripheral level, potential partners are invited to support the campaign actions of regional/local partners - for example, advocacy at school board and community meetings, and submitting letters of support.