



September 26, 2025 Friday Memo

Upcoming Events

September 29: Fiscal Stabilization Planning Meetings: Examining Budget Impact, 6:30 pm, Helms
September 29: Special Board of Education Closed Session Meeting, 7:30pm, Helms
September 30: District Budget Engagement Committee, 6:30pm, DeJean
October 1: Fiscal Stabilization Planning Meetings: Examining Budget Impact, 6:30 pm, ECHS
October 6: Superintendent Introduction to San Pablo City Council, 6:00pm,
October 8: Regular Board of Education Meeting, 6:30 Public Session, DeJean
October 9: College & Career Night, 5:00pm, DAHS
October 9: Community Advisory Committee for Special Education (CAC), 6:00pm, [Virtual](#)
October 9: Fiscal Stabilization Planning Meetings: Examining Budget Impact, 6:30 pm, HMHS

Superintendent Updates - Cheryl Cotton

New Legislation and Guidance: Immigration Enforcement Rapid Response Kit

The California Department of Education has posted a new toolkit of resources in response to increased activity of immigration enforcement on and around school sites and in alignment with the requirements of recently enacted legislation, Assembly Bill 49 (Muratsuchi) and Senate Bill 98 (Perez), on the CDE Resources for Immigrant Families web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/immigration-toolkit>. Tools will be made available on all school sites. Principals will have training during the next Principals Meeting in October.

AB 49 restricts immigration enforcement officers from entering non-public school areas without a judicial warrant or court order, designating schools as protected safe havens. SB 98, the SAFE Act, mandates immediate notification to students, staff, and families when immigration enforcement is on a school campus, ensuring transparency and preparedness. (Please see additional legislative updates below.)

Privacy Screen Installed at Harding Elementary School

Our students' safety is our top priority. We are pleased to announce that a privacy screen has been attached to the fencing around the playground at Harding Elementary School. This action will inhibit those at the nearby park from viewing the playground during the school day.



Educational Services/Teaching & Learning - Katherine Acosta-Verprauskus

Expansion of AP African American Studies Courses at Hercules and El Cerrito High Schools

This year, West Contra Costa Unified School District expanded Advanced Placement (AP) opportunities by introducing AP African American Studies at Hercules High School and El Cerrito High School. Both schools launched two sections of the course, creating new pathways for students to engage in rigorous, culturally relevant college-level learning.

At Hercules High School, two sections enrolled 53 students, with 66% identifying as African American. At El Cerrito High School, two sections enrolled 70 students, with 49% identifying as African American.

Nationally, Black, Hispanic, and Native American students remain underrepresented in AP enrollment relative to their overall share of the high school population. According to The Education Trust (2021–2022 data), Black students represent 15% of high schoolers but only 9% of AP participants. Latino students represent 25% of high schoolers but only 21% of AP participants. Asian students are often overrepresented in AP enrollment.

The strong participation of African American students in AP African American Studies at Hercules and El Cerrito reflects a meaningful step toward addressing national inequities in advanced coursework. These courses are not only expanding access to AP opportunities but also affirming the identities and histories of students who are often underrepresented in rigorous academic programs.

The Costs of Counting Minutes

As we continue to refine our district's approach to assessment, it is important to balance efficiency with meaningful instructional insight. In [*The Costs of Counting Minutes*](#), John Hattie highlights the trade-offs between shorter and longer assessments, reminding us that while shorter tests may save time, they often sacrifice the depth and precision teachers need to guide instruction effectively. His analysis underscores the importance of choosing fit-for-purpose assessments that provide reliable, actionable information to support student learning.

English Learner Multilingual Achievement - Katherine Acosta-Verprauskus (Esaul Orozco & Team)

The ELMA Department in partnership with CSU Expository Reading and Writing Curriculum (ERWC) Committee just completed the first half of the newly launched ELA/ELD modules for Long Term English Learners. Eighty percent of secondary school were represented in the training which included 16 ELD3, ELD 4, and ELA teachers.

The ERWC-ELD modules are a set of instructional materials within the Expository Reading and Writing Curriculum (ERWC), designed to support Long-Term English Learners (LTELs) in grades 6-12. They are specifically created to help these students develop the advanced academic English skills necessary for college and career readiness.



Information Technology Update- Laurie Wong Roberts

FORMS UPDATES

Educational Benefits Form (EBF) Update

Each year, all families are required to complete the EBF through the PowerSchool Portal. This form helps determine which families qualify for different programs and services, including bus passes, college exam fee waivers, and other resources. *By completing this form, families can directly impact the opportunities and financial support they may be eligible to receive.*

The following sites are either complete or almost complete! The district is at 70% completion (up 4% from last week)!

School	Percent Complete
Middle College High School	100%
Sylvester Greenwood Academy	99%
Pinole Middle School	98%
Shannon Elementary	97%
King Elementary	97%
LoVonya DeJean Middle School	96%
Ellerhorst Elementary	96%
Downer Elementary School	95%
Stege Elementary	94%
Helms Middle School	94%
Bayview Elementary	93%

Peres School	92%
Michelle Obama Elementary	91%
Riverside Elementary	90%

✓ Annual Forms Update

The EBF is only *one* of the annual forms we ask families to complete. The complete packet on the PowerSchool Portal includes student information and emergency contacts, medical information, and the [Student Technology Acceptable Use Policy](#).

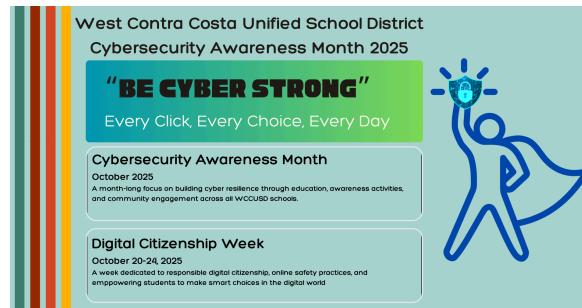
The following sites have done a great job so far. The district is at 31%.

School	% Complete
Middle College High School	100
Sylvester Greenwood Academy	99
Pinole Middle School	95

→ The due date for all forms is October 31, 2025. ←

🦋 October = CYBERSECURITY AWARENESS MONTH

Starting October 1st, we will be focusing on getting CYBER STRONG by flexing our cybersecurity muscles and growing our digital citizenship skills! Click on the picture below to see what's in store!



Educational Services/TK-12 Operations - Summer Sigler (C&C & FACE Collaboration - Jessica Petrilli, Martine Blake, & teams)



Y-PLAN Roadmap: Young people follow a rigorous 5-step methodology, modeled both on professional research methodologies and participatory planning techniques.

The K12 Operations team has continuously analyzed best practice around community schools implementation, and in the Spring of 2024 determined that our practice was the strongest in the implementation of wrap around services. While, our practices had the most room for growth in creating classroom based implementation. Our vision for the 25-26 school year is to continue to support existing work, and to strengthen students' access to relevant rigorous instruction and enriching opportunities. To that end, we have partnered with UC Berkeley's Center for Cities & Schools to support the training of both CTE teachers and Community Schools Directors in Leading Y Plan Projects.

Y Plan projects are student lead Action Impact Projects. They are client based; a client brings a group of students a real world project and they engage in the research and civic engagement to determine a solution. The projects end with presentations to local experts and decision makers who can use the student research to support their decision making!

This Spring **10 teachers** will support High School students in engaging in projects, and **5 Community Schools Directors** will support elementary students in engaging in projects. This foundational year will launch what we hope to be the integration of Action Impact Research across our system. It is also the foundational work that will support as we develop a criteria and apply as a district to be able to give the Seal of Civic Engagement.

College & Career (CTE & College Readiness/DE)- Summer Sigler (Jessica Petrilli & Team)

Early College Credit Expands at Kennedy High School through Four New Dual Enrollment Courses

Kennedy High School now offers 11 unique Early College Credit courses, between their seven AP classes, and four Dual Enrolled classes. The College & Career team has been working to expand Dual Enrollment with Contra Costa College (CCC). Dual enrolled courses give students free access to official college courses on their high school campus, during the student school day. Dual Enrollment is a preferred route for early credit college because students do not need to pay tuition, take a placement test, or petition for credit—successful completion of the course is automatically recorded on a CCC transcript as well as the student's high school transcript. Additionally, students receive the same GPA boost that they would receive from a traditional AP or honors course.

This year Kennedy High School launched four new options:

- **JRNAL 120** (Newsriting & Reporting) in the fall and **JRNAL 130** (Mass Media Communication) in the spring into a yearlong sequence with 23 students enrolled and up to 20 community college units available. This course is taught by Kennedy's own teacher, Mitzi Pérez-Caro, who has officially been appointed as a CCC professor, and is part of a new Journalism CTE Pathway
- **Math 118** (Algebra 1 CCC) in the fall and **Math 120** (Algebra 2 CCC) in the spring, with embedded tutoring support. 19 students are enrolled in this first of its kind math course which is designed to allow students to accelerate and complete Algebra 1 & Algebra 2 in one school year. This course offers 33 college credits, and be prepared for PreCalculus senior year, setting them up for CSU/UC eligibility and success in STEM or non-STEM pathways.

These programs reflect the hard work of Kennedy teachers, counselors, administrators, and the District's College & Career Office, who partnered with CCC to expand access. The result: more students than ever are on track to graduate high school with meaningful college credit and the confidence that they can succeed at the next level. In total, 44 students are enrolled in the four Dual Enrollment courses, and 119 students are enrolled in the seven AP courses offered.



Contra Costa College Sr. Program Manager of Early College Credit, Alex Stern, Supports Kennedy Students with Enrollment in the Math 118 course this fall.

Kennedy High School Career Technical Education (CTE) Programs

Kennedy High School proudly offers **five CTE pathways and academies** that provide students with hands-on training, college credit, and workforce preparation:

- **Information Technology Academy (California Partnership Academy)**
- **Welding Pathway**
- **Construction Pathway**
- **Health Pathway**

- **Journalism Dual Enrollment Pathway** (new — and only the second such program in WCCUSD where the dual enrollment teacher is a district employee).

These programs are funded through a **blend of grants, district LCAP resources, and site funds.**

Teacher Funding Structure (4.0 total additional FTE are granted to support these programs)

- *Construction Pathway*: 100% grant funded — **CTWI grant (.4 FTE) and CTEIG (.6 FTE).**
- *Welding Pathway*: **.6 FTE CTEIG and .4 FTE district LCAP**
- *Health Pathway*: **.8 FTE district LCAP.**
- *IT Academy (CPA)*: **.7 FTE district LCAP + .1 FTE CPA grant.** Additional **.2 FTE district LCAP** for academy purity
- *Journalism Dual Enrollment*: **.2 FTE district LCAP.**

Additional Investments

- IT Academy: **\$81,000** supplemental support.
- Welding: **\$10,000+ Perkins funds** plus CTWI support, includes **MC3 Registered Pre-Apprenticeship**, which carries **honors credit.**
- Construction: **\$10,000 Perkins funds** plus CTWI support, **paid internships** through district office support, includes **MC3 Registered Pre-Apprenticeship**, which carries **honors credit.** Health: **\$10,000 supplies + \$20,000 certifications** (CPR, Mental Health First Aid, Stop the Bleed, etc.) + **paid internships.**
- Construction Trades Workforce Initiative (CTWI) grant provides **\$370,000 over three years.** We are currently in year 2.

Together, these pathways prepare Kennedy students for **college, careers, and industry certifications** while creating direct pipelines to high-wage, high-growth opportunities.

Positive School Climate - Summer Sigler (LaShante Smith & Team)

This week marks the launch of our Positive School Climate wrap around meetings. Based on attendance and suspension data, we have identified 14 schools that would benefit from additional support to improve attendance and decrease attendance.

To that end, each school will participate in a reflective meeting with staff from:

- Positive School Climate, who will support in analyzing systems of attendance & attendance intervention.
- FACE, who will support in ensuring that CSD's are involved in conversations and CARE/COST teams are run effectively
- College & Career (secondary only), who will think through the role of our school counselors and how they support early intervention

The purpose of these conversations is to provide site administrators thought partners with whom they can reflect, and objectively analyze the systems and practices that support students on their campus. At the end of each meeting, they will have identified 1-2 areas that they can strengthen, and as needed, the support team will provide additional assistance.

Communications Updates - Raechelle Forrest

News of the Week:

❖ **[A Win and a Loss | Livable El Cerrito](#)**

El Cerrito High School students who worked for the city this summer as interns reported to the City Council Sept 16 on their experiences. They gave enthusiastic reviews to the partnership between the city and the West Contra Costa Unified School District (WCCUSD). It was the eighth year of the El Cerrito Students Training and Ready for Success (STARS) program and the first time it has been offered since 2020. WCCUSD Superintendent Cheryl Cotton thanked the City Council for the successful partnership, saying she'd like to see it continue and even expand next summer.

❖ **[Middle School Students Celebrate Betty Reid Soskin, the Nation's Oldest Park Ranger, at 104 | KOED](#)**

At 104 years old, Betty Reid Soskin still commands a room. As is now an annual tradition, Betty Reid Soskin and her family stopped by the school for her birthday, where students and staff celebrated her. As she made her rounds, she and the students — generations apart — seemed to be awestruck in each other's presence....West Contra Costa Unified School District Superintendent Cheryl Cotton said she had the opportunity to see Reid Soskin at work as a park ranger when she and her son visited the Rosie the Riveter park as part of a school group.

❖ **[Betty Reid Soskin celebrates 104th birthday at namesake school | Richmond Standard](#)**

The community's most famous 104-year-old celebrated her birthday Monday at her namesake elementary school in El Sobrante. Betty Reid Soskin isn't even her family's oldest relative, according to daughter Diara Reid. A 107-year-old great aunt bore that honor. "So be prepared, we will be coming back here," she told a crowd at Betty Reid Soskin Elementary School to great applause. Monday's birthday celebration gathered in the school's library amid the centenarian being framed by a balloon garland and tall birthday cake. WCCUSD personnel and others addressed her, while her family members looked on.

❖ **[Ground breaks on Richmond High modernization project | Richmond Standard](#)**

On Saturday, West Contra Costa Unified School District (WCCUSD) marked a turning point in Richmond High School's future by holding a groundbreaking ceremony for its much-anticipated modernization project. With the Richmond High School band and cheerleaders bringing the energy, local leaders, students, and community members gathered to celebrate the kick off of a project to renew the campus into a modern facility. Phase 1 will see construction of a two-story, 60,000-square-foot classroom building along 23rd Street. The building will house 23 classrooms, six specialized learning spaces (including a music wing and dedicated Health and Law academy spaces), collaboration areas for staff and students, all-access gender-neutral restrooms, an outdoor quad, and an atrium with a main stairway that doubles as a gathering space. The contractor for the phase is BHM Construction, with architectural design by DLR Architects.

❖ [Richmond High breaks ground on \\$280 million modernization project | Grandview Independent](#)

Richmond High School celebrated a historic milestone Saturday morning as community leaders, alumni, students, and educators gathered to break ground on a long-awaited modernization project that will transform the century-old campus. The \$280 million project will unfold in several phases, beginning with the construction of a new two-story, 60,000-square-foot building along 23rd Street. The first phase will include 23 modern classrooms, a new music wing, and specialized spaces for the school's health and law academies. Other campus buildings, including the large gym and the 600 building, will later receive upgrades and refurbishments.

Legislative Updates:

These legislative updates are only meant to be informative to our Board and community so they are aware of legislation that may affect them and our community. **Note: Status Update means this legislation has been shared in prior Friday board memos and there has been update since it was last shared.*

❖ **California Assembly Bill 461**

This law amends California's Education Code to prohibit school officials from allowing immigration-enforcement agents into nonpublic areas of school campuses unless presented with a valid judicial warrant, subpoena, or court order; it also bars disclosing students' or families' education records or personal information to such agents without written consent or proper legal process. The Attorney General must update statewide model policies by December 2025, and local agencies must adopt matching policies by March 2026. AB 49 takes effect immediately as an urgency statute.

Sponsor(s): California Assemblymember Al Muratsuchi [D-66], Assemblymember Liz Ortega [D-20], Assemblymember Celeste Rodriguez [D-43], California Senator Lena Gonzalez [D-33]

Co-sponsor(s): California Assemblymember Juan Carrillo [D-39], Assemblymember Mike Fong [D-49]

Status: Approved by Governor Newsom (September 20)

[Bill Text](#)

❖ **Service Starts at Home Act | HR 5308**

This bill would direct the Secretary of Education to establish competitive grants to enable paid internships in local governments for high school and undergraduate students, and to fund scholarships for students who complete volunteer service work.

Sponsor(s): US Representative Herbert C. Conaway [D-NJ-3]

Status Update: Introduced to the US House and referred to the Committee on Education & Workforce

[Bill Text](#)

❖ **Learn and Serve America Reinvestment Act | HR 5307**

This bill would provide a direct appropriation of funds for the Learn and Serve America program of the Corporation for National Community Service and to expand the eligibility of such program to additional entities.

Sponsor (s): US Representative Herbert C. Conaway [D-NJ-3]

Status: Introduced to the US House of Representatives and referred to the Committee on Appropriations and the Committee on Education and Workforce.

[Bill Text](#)

❖ **Prevent Youth Suicide Act | HR 5482**

As of 09/26/2025, text has not been received for H.R.5482. This bill would require the Secretary of Education to issue a rule requiring schools to implement protocols for suicide prevention, postvention, and trauma-informed care.

Sponsor (s): US Representative Zachary Nunn [R-IA-3]

Status: Introduced to the US House of Representatives and referred to the Committee on Education and Workforce.

[Bill Text](#)

❖ **California Assembly Bill 1224**

This bill (until January 1, 2029) reinstates a 60-day cumulative service limit per substitute teacher assignment in school districts, county offices, and charter schools under certain conditions. If a substitute teacher serves more than 20 cumulative days in special education or more than 30 days in a single assignment, the local educational agency must either seek prior board approval (when foreseeable) or provide a report to the board afterward. For substitutes without full credentials, the school must provide professional development within 30 days. County superintendents must report quarterly on extended substitute assignments, and the state must collect data annually for future oversight by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing.

Sponsor (s): California Assemblymember Avelino Valencia [D-Anaheim]

Co-sponsor(s): Robert Garcia [R-Rancho Cucamonga], Anamarie Avila Farias [D-Concord]

Status: On the desk of the Office of Governor Newsom

[Bill Text](#)

❖ **Constitution Education Is Valuable in Community Schools Act US Senate Bill 2841**

This bill would amend the American History and Civics Education program (under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965) to require the incorporation of hands-on civic engagement activities for teachers and students, and to mandate education on the history and principles of the U.S. Constitution, including the Bill of Rights.

Sponsor (s): US Senator Angus King Jr. [I-ME]

Status: Introduced to the US Senate and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions

[Bill Text](#)

Human Resources - Dr. Sylvia Greenwood

Labor Updates

Representatives from the United Teachers of Richmond (UTR) (morning session) and Teamsters (afternoon session) and the West Contra Costa Unified School District (WCCUSD) will meet for an additional mediation session on Tuesday, September 30 at Helms Middle School.

Classified Training Day

Save the Date

CLASSIFIED TRAINING DAY

OCTOBER 13, 2025
8:00 AM - 3:00 PM
DEJEAN MIDDLE SCHOOL

October 13 is a non-school day for students and teachers but it is a working day for ALL classified employees. Departments will provide specific training relevant to the service you provide and more information will be forthcoming with topic and sign ups for the sessions.

Please look for specific training information coming from:

- Food Service

If you have any questions, you can reach out to hr@wccusd.net



District Job Fair

JOIN US FOR THE WCCUSD COMMUNITY

FALL JOB FAIR

Saturday, October 25, 2025
9AM to 12PM
DeJean Middle School
3400 Macdonald Ave. Richmond, CA 94805

Scan QR code to register!
For more information visit:
www.wccusd.net/hr

APPLY TODAY!

We will be holding on-site interviews! Drop in, bring your resume and speak with someone to get qualified!

We have open positions for:

- Classroom Teachers
- Teacher Substitutes
- Classified Substitutes*
- Classified Vacancies*
- And many more...

You have the opportunity to:

- Meet WCCUSD Staff
- Have your resume reviewed
- Get qualified
- Interview for open jobs

WE'RE HIRING!

*Classified means non-certificated jobs (i.e. support aids, campus security, custodians, food services)

ÚNASE A LA COMUNIDAD DEL DISTRITO (WCCUSD) Y PARTICIPE EN LA

FERIA DE EMPLEO DE OTOÑO

Sábado 25 de octubre de 2025
9AM a 12PM
Escuela Intermedia DeJean
3400 Macdonald Ave. Richmond, CA 94805

escanea el código QR para registrarte
Para más información visita
www.wccusd.net/hr

¡El Distrito está contratando personal!

Realizaremos entrevistas durante el evento. Visitenos, traiga su curriculum y hable con alguien para obtener cualificación.

Tenemos posiciones abiertas para:

- Maestros de aula
- Maestros substitutos
- Substitutos clasificadas*
- Vacantes clasificadas*
- Y muchos más...

En la Feria de Empleo tendrá la oportunidad de:

- Conocer al personal del distrito (WCCUSD)
- Revisar su curriculum
- Ser entrevistado
- Obtener cualificación

¡ESTAMOS CONTRATANDO!

*Classified means non-certificated jobs (i.e. support aids, campus security, custodians, food services)