



West Contra Costa Unified School District
Office of the Superintendent

September 19, 2025 Friday Memo

Upcoming Events

September 20: Richmond High School Groundbreaking Ceremony, 11:00 am, RHS
September 21: 30th Annual El Sobrante Stroll, 11:00 am to 4:00 pm
September 22: Betty Reid Soskins Birthday Celebration, 10:30am, BRS
September 23: Superintendent Participation in a Virtual Panel Discussion: Public Education at the Precipice: Lessons in Resilient Leadership, Virtual, 5:00pm, [The event registration page](#)
September 24: Regular Board of Education Meeting, 5:00 Closed Session, 6:30pm Open Session, DeJean Middle School
September 25: WCCUSD Stabilization Planning: Assessing the Budget with Community, 6:30pm, RHS-Library
September 25: Superintendent Presentation to the Retired Teachers Association, 12:15pm., Richmond Elks Lodge #1251

Superintendent's Update: Cheryl Cotton, Superintendent

Kennedy High School AP Spanish update

Per student request, Kennedy High School will be opening a section of AP Spanish Literature this year to expand access to advanced coursework and college credit. This addition reflects our district's ongoing commitment to providing a broad range of AP offerings that prepare students for college and career success.

Business Services Update: Kim Moses, Associate Superintendent, Business Services

The Road to Fiscal Stabilization - 90 Day Plan

At the September 10, 2025, Board of Education meeting, Superintendent Cotton presented the [WCCUSD 90 Day Fiscal Stabilization Plan](#). Last week, the business services team held Session 1 presentations as part of this plan. The objectives covered in Session 1 included: 1. Share information about district finances, 2. Build an understanding of how our schools are funded 3. Answer questions about the WCCUSD budget, and 4. Share ideas to support our road to fiscal stabilization. The presentation deck for this session is linked here: [Fiscal Stabilization Plan Session 1: Assessing Our Financial Outlook Presentation Deck](#)

Over the three sessions, we had 21 in-person participants and 39 participants on Zoom. We were able to engage all participants live for questions, feedback, and input. Feedback and input from Session 1 will be incorporated into the Session 2 presentation. The next session will focus on identifying root causes related to the budget deficit and discussing the impact of our fiscal position.

Upcoming Budget Meetings

(Note: There may be location changes for the Fiscal Stabilization Session 2 Meetings. Changes will be finalized by Monday, September 22, 2025.)



West Contra Costa
Unified School District



UPCOMING BUDGET MEETINGS

DISTRICT BUDGET ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

**ALL MEETINGS ARE 6:30 - 8:00 PM
DEJEAN MIDDLE SCHOOL LIBRARY**

September 30 - Committee Introductions, DBEC Bylaws, School Budgets 101: Unaudited Actuals - The Prior Year's Results

October 28 - Preparing for First Interim: What is SACS? How does SACS support effective accounting?

December 10 - First Interim Reporting Results: What do the numbers say?

December 30 - First Interim: What shifted and Why? What feedback do we have for the BOE

FISCAL STABILIZATION PLANNING MEETINGS 5 Session Series

**SESSION 1: ASSESSING OUR
FINANCIAL OUTLOOK**

6:30 - 8:00 PM
September 15, Hercules High Library
September 16, Richmond High Library
September 18, El Cerrito High Library

**SESSION 2: EXAMINING BUDGET
IMPACT**

6:30-8:00 PM
September 25, Richmond High Library
October 1, El Cerrito High Library
October 9, Hercules High Library

[LINK TO ALL BUDGET ENGAGEMENT MEETING DATES](#)

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Learn More

Email Kmoses@wccusd.net

Upcoming Board Presentation: 2024-25 Unaudited Actuals

The unaudited actuals for California school districts are annual financial reports detailing actual revenues and expenditures for the fiscal year (July 1-June 30) that have not yet been formally audited. These reports are prepared using the [Standardized Account Code Structure \(SACS\)](#) system and submitted to the California Department of Education (CDE) by county education offices (COEs) for review. They serve as a crucial step before the final, independent audit and provide a comprehensive overview of the district's financial performance for the year.

What They Include

The reports provide a detailed financial picture, including:

- **Revenues and Expenditures:** Information on income and spending for the entire fiscal year.
- **General Fund:** Specific details on revenues by source and expenditures by activity (e.g., instruction, pupil services) and by program (e.g., K-12, special education).
- **Other Financing Sources/Uses:** Details on transfers, proceeds from leases, and other similar transactions.
- **Governmental, Proprietary, and Fiduciary Funds:** A breakdown of financial activities across these categories.

Why They Are Important

- **Financial Oversight:** Unaudited actuals are a required component of the district's annual financial reporting cycle and are used by oversight entities, including the CDE and COEs, to assess financial health.
- **Accountability:** They provide transparency into how school districts are managing their finances and ensure that financial data is reported uniformly across the state.
- **Budget Planning:** They serve as a critical step in the budgetary process, providing actual data that informs future budgeting and interim reports.

Submission Process

- **Preparation:** School districts prepare their financial data using the SACS Web Financial Reporting System.
- **Board Approval:** The district's governing board approves and certifies the data.
- **Submission to COE:** The approved unaudited actuals are submitted to the County Education Office.
- **Submission to CDE:** The COE then submits the data to the California Department of Education by a specific deadline, typically in the fall following the close of the fiscal year.

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

WCCUSD Students Shine at El Cerrito City Hall with EC STARS Internship Program

On Tuesday, September 16, 2025, WCCUSD students and staff presented at El Cerrito City Hall to showcase the EC STARS summer internship program. Five El Cerrito High School students delivered a dynamic presentation ([slides here](#)) on their experiences as City of El Cerrito interns. Superintendent Cotton and College & Career Director Jessica Petrilli, shared some closing words, expressing gratitude for the strong partnership and enthusiasm to continue the program.

This initiative provides El Cerrito High School students with meaningful, hands-on work experiences in local government. From 43 applications, 25 students participated in interviews, and 7 outstanding interns were selected for placements across multiple City departments, including Community Development, IT, Recreation, City Clerk's Office, City Manager's Office, and the Fire Department.

Interns worked up to 20 hours per week, gaining mentorship, training, and exposure to public service while contributing to vital city functions—from digitizing records to supporting wildfire prevention. Every student also benefited from practicing professional interview skills, while the selected interns shared that the program opened their eyes to career pathways they had never considered before.

This partnership between WCCUSD and the City of El Cerrito exemplifies how schools and local governments can collaborate to prepare students for success while strengthening community ties.



ECHS students, El Cerrito City Council members, and Superintendent Cotton after the presentation



ECHS Students Listening to a fellow Intern Deliver their Presentation

WCCUSD Launches First Global Welding Class

On Tuesday, WCCUSD launched the first global welding class at Kennedy High School, marking an exciting milestone for the College & Career programming. Ben Carpenter welcomed 24 students from across our high schools to participate in a “9th period” Welding class. Notably, 11 of the students are young women pursuing skills in this high-demand trade.

We were honored to have Trustee Smith-Folds, Clerk Enllana, Superintendent Cotton, Associate Superintendent Sigler, community member Mike Peritz, and College & Career staff in attendance to celebrate the first day of class. This initiative expands access to high-wage, high-growth career pathways

and reflects our district's commitment to preparing students for future success in the trades and beyond. It is also an important step in continuing our partnership with the "Working Waterfront" and ensuring our students have access to pre apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs.



Mr. Carpenter calling on a student



Students taking a tour of the welding shop side of the classroom

Human Resources - Dr. Sylvia Greenwood

Labor Update

Representatives from the Teamsters and the West Contra Costa Unified School District (WCCUSD) will meet for an additional mediation session on Monday, September 22 at Alvarado Adult School.

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

Staffing Update

The Human Resources Department continues to monitor staffing levels across all schools. Elementary schools completed class balancing on September 9 (the 15th day of school), in accordance with contract timelines. Secondary schools are in the final stages of class balancing and will complete any required adjustments, including section consolidations, by September 19 (the 23rd day of school).

Human Resources has prioritized filling critical vacancies to ensure positions are accurately reflected in EdJoin.

Save the Date—Saturday, October 25 District Job Fair at DeJean Middle School—More information to come.

Current Vacancies

Certificated		Classified	
Classification	#Vacancies	Classification	#Vacancies
Elementary	20	Paraprofessionals	260
Secondary	13.2	Clericals	17
Special Education	12	Custodians	9
Total	51.3	Food Services	24
		Yard Supervisors	0
		M&O	4
As of 9/18/25		Total	314

Educational Services/Teaching & Learning - Katherine Acosta-Verprauskus

AP Spanish Enrollment at Kennedy High School

Kennedy High School builds its master schedule based on student interest. For the 2025–2026 school year, only 12 students expressed interest in AP Spanish Literature, compared to more than 90 students requesting Spanish 1 [P] and 32 students requesting AP Spanish Language. This led the school to prioritize three sections of Spanish 1 [P] and one section of AP Spanish Language. To support equity, counselors are working individually with the students interested in AP Spanish Literature to pursue dual enrollment with Contra Costa College for early college credit. Next steps include a deeper review of course progressions, district-level alignment on AP and dual enrollment policies, and stronger districtwide support to expand equitable access. In addition, the district A-G Alignment Team will continue work to standardize offerings and consider the role of honors and dual enrollment courses in supporting rigorous academic pathways for students.

Professional Learning - Katherine Acosta-Verprauskus (Alison Makela)

Site Leader Collaboration and Professional Learning

Each month we host key meetings in support of our school site administrators. The New Principals Meeting, the Principals Professional Learning and Collaboration (PPLC) Day and the Assistant Principal and Vice Principal AP/VP Meeting, all offer technical training, focused time to discuss important information and opportunities to develop the leadership skills necessary to lead.

New Principals kicked off their community of practice virtually on 9/4. Time was allocated to discuss safety and communication protocols, to clarify processes for SSC development, and to address pressing issues with Executive Directors of Schools, Jose De Leon and Jawan Eldridge.

The **Principal Professional Learning & Collaboration (PPLC)**, an all day meeting for principals, is a forum for communication, learning and collaboration. The September meeting was opened by Superintendent Cotton, framing the work ahead and summarizing her growing understanding of what it will take for us to move forward strongly, together, as One WCCUSD. The day was full, with presentations from Human Resources about evaluations, Business Services about budget stabilization; time to revisit priorities and celebrate wins, particularly around attendance; and foundational sessions for implementation of new programs and tools.

Assistant Principals, Vice Principals and Instructional Specialists, launched their work together this week on 9/17, at Pinole Middle School. Their agenda included some of the same topics from the PPLC and good conversations identifying the learning they want and need to do in these meetings to do their work well and, professionally, to grow as a leader.

These kinds of meetings bring us together, reminding us that while we are many individual schools, we are a part of something bigger, with colleagues to lean upon, learn from and grow with.

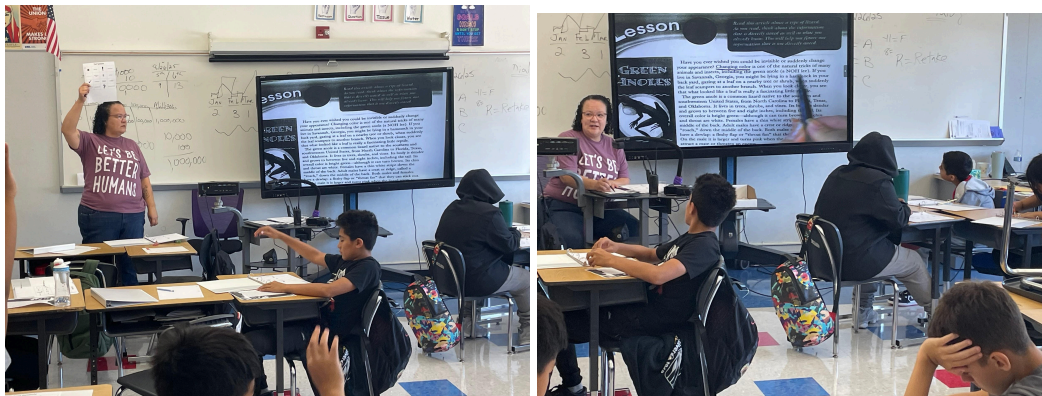


TK-12 Schools - Katherine Acosta-Verprauskus (Jawan Eldridge)

Sheldon Elementary School - English Language Arts

Sheldon Elementary School Principal Stephanie Sanchez modeled an English Language Arts (ELA) lesson utilizing close reading strategies in a 5th grade classroom. The lesson served as a demonstration of best practices in literacy instruction.

The classroom teacher is a first-year educator, and this modeling provided direct, job-embedded professional development to support instructional growth and student engagement. This initiative reflects Sheldon Elementary School's commitment to ongoing teacher support and high-quality instruction for all students.



Special Education - Guthrie Fleischman

Special Education Department Professional Development Updates:

The Special Education Department's Professional Development Team led by School Psych, Scott Booth and Program Specialist, Alcid Dela Cruz is continuing its comprehensive training series with SPED 301, 302, and 303, designed to equip special education teachers, school psychologists, speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists, and administrators with essential knowledge across four domains: special education law, evidence-based best practices, compliance, and IEP implementation.

This school year introduces two exciting new training initiatives, beginning with a year-long 16-part professional development series specifically created for paraprofessionals that will cover classroom instructional support strategies, positive behavior support techniques, and foundational special education principles. The paraprofessional training series represents a significant investment in building capacity among support staff who play vital roles in student success.

Additionally, the Professional Development Team will extend its reach beyond school personnel by presenting to the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) for Special Education, ensuring that parents and community members are well-informed about their rights and the special education process. These comprehensive training efforts demonstrate the Special Education Department's commitment to building system-wide expertise and fostering collaborative partnerships that ultimately benefit students with disabilities and their families.

Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Updates:

Our two AAC coaches, Tina Peralta and Dianne Abaya, continue to share resources and strategies with other SLPs, teachers, paraprofessionals, and anyone working with students using AAC devices. Below is a message shared yesterday with teachers and SLPs:

I am sharing these three (3) resources with you to support your implementation of Core words in your therapy sessions or your classrooms. It may also be helpful to send a core word of the week to families to help them model AAC at home.

[CORE WORD OF THE WEEK FROM ABLENET](#)

[CORE WORD OF THE WEEK FROM THE CENTER OF AAC AND AUTISM](#)

[SCHOOL YEAR OF CORE VOCABULARY WORDS](#)

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have questions regarding these resources and how to implement them.

Information Technology Updates- Laurie Wong Roberts, CTO

Update on Cybersecurity Awareness Month (October) and Digital Citizenship Week (October 20-24)

We are finalizing plans for activities during October that will include:

- An all-staff Tic-Tac-Toe board focusing on improving our cybersecurity stances individually
- New lessons on for Digital Citizenship Week from Common Sense Media
- A focus for all on data privacy and artificial intelligence

Email groups refresh

Currently, email groups must be manually updated. IT is currently renewing all email lists so that they are auto-updating. This should be complete by the end of this month. We appreciate your patience as we work through this large project.

Educational Benefits Form Update

The following sites are doing a great job with the Educational Benefits Form (EBF)! The district is currently at 66% and the push is on! The due date is October 31, but the earlier, the better!

Michelle Obama Elementary	90%
Stege Elementary	94%
King Elementary	95%
LoVonya DeJean Middle School	95%
Pinole Middle School	98%

**Sylvester Greenwood
Academy**

99%

Middle College High School

100%

Every year we ask all families to complete the EBF through the PowerSchool Portal. This form is used to determine eligibility for various programs and resources, such as the bus pass program, college exam waivers, and more. Simply completing the form directly impacts the opportunities and funding families can receive. See the flyer, below, for more information.

4 REASONS WHY
You Should Complete the Educational Benefits Form!

1 ANY FAMILY CAN COMPLETE THE FORM!
If your child attends a WCCUSD school, you're eligible to complete the Educational Benefits Form. EVERY COMPLETE FORM COUNTS!

2 ADDITIONAL PROGRAM SUPPORT
This form is used to determine eligibility for various programs and resources, such as the BUS PASS PROGRAM, COLLEGE EXAM WAIVERS, and MORE.

3 FUNDING FOR FAMILIES AND SCHOOL COMMUNITIES
Completing this form will directly impact the opportunities and funding your family can receive, such as AFTER SCHOOL FUNDING, EBT CARDS, and MORE.

4 ADDITIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FOR FAMILIES
If you receive food stamps, CalWORKs, KinGAP, or FDIIR benefits and your info has not changed, your child automatically qualifies.

We need YOUR help to prevent a loss in millions of dollars of funding!
The information provided on the form is confidential and is only for internal District office use. No outside organizations or agencies receive this.
Forms are due on October 31, 2025 and can be completed via PowerSchool. Enter information in the form once and it auto-populates for your entire family.
You can access our How To videos on YouTube in English and Spanish, for instructions on how to navigate to the form in PowerSchool.

Scan the QR Code above or go to <https://wccusd.powerschool.com/public/> to access the form.
For more information, please reach out to your school site or input a ticket at pshelpdesk@wccusd.net

Communications Updates - Raechelle Forrest

News of the Week:

❖ [Groundbreaking ceremony set for Richmond High modernization project | Richmond Standard](#)

The West Contra Costa Unified School District (WCCUSD) will officially break ground on the Richmond High School Modernization Project this Saturday, Sept 20. The event will take place from 11 a.m. to noon at the school at 1250 23rd St. District leaders, students, families, and project partners will gather to formally “turn the soil” on what Superintendent Cheryl Cotton described as “a bold transformation” rooted in equity, access and opportunity. “We are thrilled to begin this new chapter for Richmond High School,” Cotton said, noting the project affirms the district’s long-term commitment to student-centered learning environments.

❖ [Here’s your chance to help solve WCCUSD’s money problems | Richmondside](#)

Faced with a persistent multi-million dollar budget deficit, the West Contra Costa Unified School District is involving the community in its effort to fix its financial problems. Superintendent Cheryl Cotton's newly launched 90-day fiscal stabilization plan aims to demystify the district's financial problems and involve the public through a series of more than a dozen in-person and virtual meetings. "The fiscal stabilization plan is really about educating the community about where we stand, what are some of the challenges are, and what is the decision-making process," Cotton told the school board at its Wednesday meeting. "That's the intent of this." The 90-day plan is divided into five phases, each designed to build transparency and foster collaboration around the district's fiscal recovery.

❖ [Richmond Community Advocates to be honored with Good Scout Award | Richmond Standard](#)

Scouting America's West Contra Costa County programs will honor longtime civic leaders Margi Cellucci-McNair and Martin McNair with the Good Scout Award at a dinner on Saturday, Nov. 15, at the Richmond Yacht Club. The Good Scout Award Dinner both celebrates the McNairs' decades of civic engagement and serves as a critical fundraiser for Scouting in West Contra Costa County. Proceeds from the event will support youth programs, leadership training, outdoor adventures and community service projects. Margi is being recognized for her deep commitment to education, the arts and the local nonprofit community. She founded the *Music and the Mind* program at Washington Elementary, served 15 years on the Gateway Foundation board, launched the Point Richmond Farmers Market and created the *Taste of Richmond* fundraiser at the Richmond Yacht Club to bolster local nonprofit efforts.

❖ [West Contra Costa Unified School District presents 90-day fiscal stabilization plan | Grandview Independent](#)

The West Contra Costa Unified School District launched a 90-day fiscal stabilization plan on Wednesday to address a multi-million dollar deficit and prevent the district from again falling under state control, as labor leaders warned that unresolved disputes could undermine student success. Superintendent Cheryl Cotton presented the plan during a school board meeting, describing it as a roadmap to engage families, staff, and labor groups in shaping long-term financial strategy. "This is our roadmap to achieve fiscal solvency together," Cotton said. "This is not a numbers discussion tonight. We're not talking about numbers. The purpose of this presentation is to share the plan and process to engage in future numbers discussions that will occur over the next 90 days."

❖ [Stabilizing West Contra Costa Unified budget will require 'shared accountability,' school leadership says](#)

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 715: Education equity: discrimination**

The bill would state the intent of the Legislature to enact subsequent legislation to, among other things, strengthen protections against discrimination, including antisemitism, in K–12 education, including protections against instruction and activity that promotes discrimination. This bill would define “nationality” to also include a person’s actual or perceived shared ancestry or ethnic characteristics, or residency in a country with a dominant religion or distinct religious identity, as provided. The bill would define “discrimination on the basis of religion” to include, but not be limited to, antisemitism and Islamophobia.

Sponsor (s): California Assemblymember David Alvarez (D-San Diego)

Status Update: On the desk of the Office of Governor Newsom

[Bill Text](#)

❖ **California Assembly Bill 84 | Senate Bill 414**

This bill introduces significant reforms to improve oversight and accountability in the state’s K–12 public education system, with a strong focus on charter schools. The bill establishes an independent Office of the Education Inspector General to investigate fraud, conduct audits, and recommend policy improvements. It expands financial and performance audit requirements for all schools, introduces stricter standards for auditors, and phases in district-style financial reporting for charter schools. AB 84 also strengthens charter school oversight by creating a state-level support team for authorizers, increasing local monitoring responsibilities, and requiring approval for large contracts. Additionally, it mandates annual identification of nonclassroom-based charter school networks and enforces consistent operational standards. The bill enhances transparency by improving public access to educator assignment and staffing data and holds agencies accountable for ongoing misassignments. Finally, it broadens background check requirements to include all contractor employees who interact with students, even if supervised. Overall, AB 84 seeks to close oversight gaps and ensure greater financial, operational, and educational accountability across California’s public school system.

Sponsor (s): Assemblymember Al Muratsuchi [D-Torrance], Assemblymember Eduardo Garcia [D-Coachella], Assemblymember Miguel Santiago [D-Los Angeles], Senator Angelique Ashby [D-Sacramento]

Status Update: On the desk of the Office of Governor Newsom

[Bill Text](#)

❖ **California Assembly Bill 49: Schoolsites Immigration Enforcement**

Assembly Bill 49 (AB 49) fortifies California schools and child care sites as safe havens by strictly limiting immigration enforcement access. The legislation prohibits unauthorized entry by immigration authorities—requiring valid ID and a judicial warrant—only allowing access to areas without students. It also mandates the Attorney General to update statewide policies on school enforcement access, and compels LEAs to adopt aligned local policies by March 2026. Backed by local education agencies and positioned amid increasing threats of raids, AB 49 responds to growing fear in immigrant communities and builds upon California's existing protective legal framework to ensure schools remain safe and welcoming for all children.

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

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

Status Update: On the desk of the Office of Governor Newsom
[Bill Text](#)

❖ **California Senate Bill 98**

This bill requires public K–12 schools and colleges to notify their communities when immigration enforcement is confirmed on campus. The bill mandates timely alerts to students, parents, staff, and faculty—including the date, time, and location of the enforcement—while protecting individuals’ identities. Postsecondary institutions must also support affected students by notifying emergency contacts, providing legal resources, and ensuring continued access to education. As an urgency measure, SB-98 is designed to take effect immediately upon enactment to protect immigrant communities and promote transparency in educational settings.

Sponsor (s): California Senator Sasha Renee Perez [D-25]

Co-sponsor(s): Assemblymember Dr. LaShae Sharp-Collins [D-79]

Status Update: On the desk of the Office of Governor Newsom
[Bill Text](#)

❖ **California Senate Bill 323**

This bill directs the California Student Aid Commission to revise the California Dream Act Application (CADAA) by the start of the 2026-27 financial aid cycle. The goal is to clearly affirm its accessibility to any student eligible for state financial aid, regardless of whether they qualify for federal aid, and to ensure the application system reflects this inclusivity. The bill also mandates consultation with California’s public and private postsecondary institutions to promote the Dream Act application effectively—helping students maximize their federal aid potential while understanding all available application options

Sponsor(s): California Senator Anna Caballero [D-14], California Senator Sabrina Cervantes [D-31]

Co-sponsor(s): Assemblymember Robert Garcia [D-50], Assemblymember Jose Luis Solache [D-62]

Status Update: Not enough votes in CA Assembly to move forward
[Bill Text](#)

❖ **California Assembly Bill 1454**

AB-1454 (2025–2026) aims to improve early literacy in California by strengthening teacher training, instructional materials, and administrator preparation. The bill requires the California Department of Education to identify and fund evidence-based professional development programs for literacy instruction for K–5 teachers. It mandates the State Board of Education to adopt new English Language Arts/English Language Development instructional materials aligned with best practices by 2027, which local schools must use or certify as equivalent. Additionally, the Commission on Teacher Credentialing must update administrator credential standards to include training on supporting effective literacy instruction by 2029. Overall, AB-1454 ensures educators and school leaders are better equipped to promote strong literacy outcomes for students.

Sponsor(s): Assemblymember & Speaker Robert Rivas [D-29], California Assemblymember Al Muratsuchi [D-66], Assemblymember Blanca E. Rubio [D-48]

Status Update: On the desk of the Office of Governor Newsom

[Bill Text](#)

❖ **California Assembly Bill 477**

The *Fair Pay for Educators Act* proposes to substantially revise California’s Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) by raising the grade span–adjusted base grant funding targets—intended to bolster educator pay. Under the bill, full implementation of these enhanced base grants would occur by the **2036–37 fiscal year**, aiming to close the wage gap for school-site staff. This includes dramatically increased funding per student across all grade spans (for example, K–3 and 9–12), scaled-up alternative education grants, and higher operational allocations for county offices—each to continue receiving annual inflation adjustments. The reform is driven by the intent to improve recruitment and retention of educators and strengthen educational outcomes statewide.

Sponsor(s): California Assemblymember Al Muratsuchi [D-66]

Co-sponsor(s): Assemblymember Dawn Addis [D-30]

Status Update: On the desk of the Office of Governor Newsom

[Bill Text](#)

❖ **Family Preparedness Plan Act of 2025 | Assembly Bill 495**

AB 495 expands legal tools for immigrant families facing risks of separation (such as due to immigration enforcement) by broadening who can execute a caregiver’s authorization affidavit—this includes “nonrelative extended family members”—to allow them to authorize school-related medical care for minors under the same powers guardians have. It also allows courts to appoint joint guardians when a custodial parent is temporarily unavailable (such as during immigration proceedings) and strengthens confidentiality around those proceedings. The bill requires schools, child care and preschool facilities to adopt updated policies and provide information to parents about family safety plans, emergency contact info, and the rights and protections available under this law.

Sponsor(s): California Assemblymember Celeste Rodriguez

Co-sponsor(s): California Senator Wahab

Status Update: On the desk of the Office of Governor Newsom

[Bill Text](#)

❖ **California Senate Bill 640**

This bill establishes the **CSU Direct Admission Program**, which automatically admits qualifying California high school graduates—based on completion of specified A-G coursework by the end of 11th grade—to designated California State University campuses with available capacity, using transcript data from the CaliforniaColleges.edu platform; eligible students receive direct admission letters signed by the CSU Chancellor each September, streamlining access to higher education for students and reducing the burden of application processes. Additionally, SB 640 extends the duration of the existing **dual admissions program** through the 2035–36 academic year and lengthens the completion window for transfer requirements from two to three years; it also requires community colleges to promote the program actively

Sponsor(s): California Senator Christopher Cabaldon [D-03]

Co-sponsor(s): California Senator Sasha Renee Perez [D-25]

Status Update: On the desk of the Office of Governor Newsom

[Bill Text](#)

❖ **California Assembly Bill 1264**

This bill introduces the first-ever legal definition of "particularly harmful" ultra-processed foods (UPFs) for California schools. The bill directs the state's Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment—working with University of California experts—to establish criteria by July 1, 2026, considering factors like links to cancer, obesity, metabolic or neurological issues, food addiction, and the presence of harmful additives. Schools must begin phasing out these identified products by January 1, 2028, with a complete ban on vendors offering them by January 1, 2032.

Sponsor(s): Assemblymember Jesse Gabriel [D-46]

Status Update: On the desk of the Office of Governor Newsom

[Bill Text](#)

❖ **California Assembly Bill 1348**

This bill seeks to safeguard school funding when student attendance dips as a result of immigration enforcement actions. Under the bill—effective immediately and in force until July 1, 2029—if a district's average daily attendance is significantly reduced because of such enforcement, the Superintendent of Public Instruction would calculate state funding based on what attendance *would have been*, rather than the decline. To qualify, schools must submit documentation affirming they offered independent study options with proper notifications and instruction equivalent to in-person learning; this information would be exempt from public record disclosure.

Sponsor(s): Assemblymember Dr. Jasmeet Bains [D-35]

Status Update: On the desk of the Office of Governor Newsom

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