



BOARD COMMUNICATIONS - APRIL 24, 2026

TO: Members of the Board of Education

FROM: Mao Misty Her, Superintendent

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Mao Misty Her, Superintendent

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Board Communications Approved by:

Mao Misty Her, Superintendent



Fresno Unified School District
Board Communication

From the Office of the Superintendent
To the Members of the Board of Education
Prepared by: Mao Misty Her, Superintendent

Date: April 24, 2026

Phone Number: (559) 457-3884

Regarding: Superintendent Calendar Highlights

The purpose of this communication is to inform the Board of notable calendar items:

- Spoke at the New Employee Orientation
- Team taught 1st grade at Mayfair Elementary School
- Gave interview with Anya Ellis, GV Wire, regarding first year as Superintendent
- Visited Duncan JROTC Mission Briefing with Executive Cabinet Team
- Visited the following sites/departments: African American Academic Acceleration, DeWolf, English Learner Services, Farber, Jackson, Sequoia, Thomas, Grounds Department, and Special Education
- Held Principal Interviews
- Attended Cobra Council at DeWolf
- Spoke at the Instructional Division Learning Session
- Spoke at the Heaton Centennial Ceremony
- Attended the 29th Annual Business-Education Shareholders Luncheon
- Attended the Foundation for Fresno Unified Students Board Retreat

If you have any questions pertaining to the information in this communication, or require additional information, please contact Misty Her at (559) 457-3884.

Cabinet Approval:



Name and Title: Mao Misty Her, Superintendent

Fresno Unified School District
Board Communication

From the Office of the Superintendent
To the Members of the Board of Education
Prepared by: Kim Kelstrom, Chief Executive

Date: April 24, 2026

Phone Number: (559) 457-3907

Regarding: School Services Weekly Update Reports for April 17, 2026

The purpose of this communication is to provide the Board a copy of School Services of California's (SSC) Weekly Updates. Each week SSC provides an update and commentary on different educational fiscal issues. In addition, they include different articles related to education issues. The SSC Weekly Updates for April 17, 2026, are attached and include the following articles:

- CalPERS Approves 2026-27 Employer Contribution Rate – April 15, 2026
- Over 60% of California Kids Can't Do Math at Their Grade Level. Here's How We Change That – April 12, 2026
- Ed. Dept. Moves to Shutter Its Office for English Learners – April 14, 2026

If you have any questions pertaining to the information in this communication, or require additional information, please contact Kim Kelstrom at (559) 457-3907.

Cabinet Approval:



Name and Title: Patrick Jensen, Chief Financial Officer



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DATE: April 16, 2026

TO: Misty Her
Superintendent

AT: Fresno Unified School District

FROM: Your SSC Governmental Relations Team

RE: ***SSC's Sacramento Weekly Update***

Assembly Budget Subcommittee Reviews Community Schools Proposal

The Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 3 on Education Finance, chaired by Assemblymember David Alvarez (D-San Diego), met on Tuesday, April 14, 2026, to vet Governor Gavin Newsom's proposal to provide \$1 billion in ongoing funding to expand the community schools model.

The Department of Finance testified that the state has invested about \$4.1 billion in one-time funding to establish community schools as a "whole child" model integrating academics, wellness, and community engagement, now reaching roughly 2,500 schools. Based on early indicators such as improved attendance, reduced suspensions, and academic gains, the Governor proposes expanding the model to up to 3,700 additional schools with the \$1 billion in ongoing funding.

The Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO), the Legislature's nonpartisan fiscal advisor, acknowledged these benefits but recommended continuing one-time grants rather than creating an ongoing categorical program. The LAO cited concerns about reduced local flexibility, increased administrative burden, and the challenge of scaling the model statewide, and suggested a more gradual rollout.

Several subcommittee members, including Chair Alvarez, emphasized accountability and implementation as the program expands. He highlighted the need for clear metrics to demonstrate outcomes, asked how the proposal aligns with the original model, and raised questions about scaling, planning requirements, and sustaining existing schools. He also underscored the importance of ensuring schools have adequate support and structure to implement the model effectively.

Moving forward, the committee will continue evaluating the proposal's structure, funding approach, and accountability measures as part of the budget process, including any updates when the Governor releases his May Revision next month.

Assembly and Senate Education Committees Approve Legislation

The Assembly and Senate Education Committees, chaired by Assemblymember Dr. Darshana Patel (D-San Diego) and Senator Sasha Renée Pérez (D-Pasadena), respectively, met to consider 22 measures. Some of the more noteworthy measures approved by the committees include:

- Assembly Bill (AB) 2325 (Alvarez) establishes the Pathways to Bilingual Teaching program, which would award competitive grants to consortia of local educational agencies (LEAs), community colleges, and four-year institutions of higher education for the purpose of establishing or expanding existing pathways to bilingual teaching.
- AB 2430 (Muratsuchi, D-Torrance) establishes a high school After School Education and Safety (ASES) program by redirecting existing ASES funding to better serve high school students; requires the California Department of Education to expand reporting and convene an interest holder workgroup; and requires LEAs opting out of the Expanded Learning Opportunities Program to notify families and be publicly listed.
- AB 2509 (Schultz, D-Burbank) authorizes calculation of average daily attendance to include the option of the average of the five most recent prior fiscal years.
- AB 2526 (Muratsuchi) originally would have added a special education grant to the Local Control Funding Formula for LEAs. However, the author took an amendment proposed by the committee to change the contents of the bill to instead reform the current low incidence disabilities fund (contingent upon additional funding for this program) to add eligibility for funding for students who take the California Alternate Assessments and rename it to reflect the new population of students it will serve.
- AB 2651 (Bonta, D-Oakland) requires the governing authority of public or private schools and childcare facilities to notify parents or guardians when immunization rates fall below safe levels, as established and communicated by the California Department of Public Health.
- Senate Bill (SB) 914 (Ashby, D-Sacramento) revises the timeline and procedures by which LEA governing boards must review annual audit reports by replacing the existing fixed deadline with a rolling timeline tied to the issuance of the audit and requires LEA governing boards to formally accept or reject the audit report at a public meeting.
- SB 998 (Gonzalez, D-Long Beach) establishes roles within the Office of Civil Rights for discrimination prevention coordinators (religious, race and ethnicity, gender, LGBTQ+, and disability) and deputy coordinators focused on anti-Black, Anti-Asian American and Pacific Islander, and anti-Latino discrimination, with deputies reporting to the Race and Ethnicity Coordinator.
- SB 1083 (Pérez) modifies state law governing the investigation, reporting, and disclosure of egregious misconduct by noncertificated and private school employees. Specifically, the bill clarifies hiring disclosure requirements, establishes procedures and due process protections for local investigations, and revises statewide data system reporting and notification requirements.

- SB 1381 (Cervantes, D-Riverside) requires LEAs to provide parents and guardians of a pupil who is deaf, hard of hearing, blind, visually impaired, or deaf-blind with information about state special schools, including the California Schools for the Deaf and the California School for the Blind, through annual parent notifications and during the Individualized Education Program process.

Both committees are scheduled to meet next Wednesday, April 22, 2026, in order for education bills with fiscal impacts to clear first house policy committee by the April 24 deadline.

Leilani Aguinaldo

CalPERS Approves 2026-27 Employer Contribution Rate

By Michelle McKay Underwood and Teddi Wentworth
School Services of California's *Fiscal Report*
April 15, 2026

Yesterday, April 14, 2026, the California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS) Board adopted the 2026-27 schools employer contribution rate at 26.40% and projects out-year rates as follows:

Fiscal Year	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32
Projected Rates	26.80%	25.90%	25.10%	24.00%	23.80%

The 2026-27 employer contribution rate is a decrease from the current-year rate of 26.81% while also coming in lower than previously projected in the June 30, 2024, annual valuation report.

The out-year projections will fluctuate based on actual future investment returns and other demographic changes. The 2026-27 rate will not change from here, and the next anticipated update to out-year estimates is expected fall 2026, after the release of the 2025-26 valuation report this summer. As such, school employers (including community colleges) should utilize these rates as they update their multiyear projections.

The CalPERS contribution rate for members subject to the Public Employees' Pension Reform Act (PEPRA) will remain at 8% for 2026-27, and the contribution rate for CalPERS members not subject to PEPRA (i.e., classic members) is set by statute and is currently 7% of salary. As of June 30, 2025, PEPRA members represented 70% of the total active population of the Schools Pool.

These new projected rates will be included in the [May Revision](#) edition of the School Services of California Inc. Financial Projection Dartboard.

Note: This is an opinion article written by EdVoice Chief Executive Officer Marshall Tuck whose organization is sponsoring SB 1067 (Weber Pierson, D-San Diego), which would establish a statewide framework for early mathematics screening for students in grades K-2.

Over 60% of California Kids Can't Do Math at Their Grade Level. Here's How We Change That

Every child deserves the chance to build confidence with numbers before they start believing they're "not a math person." That's not happening in California

By Marshall Tuck, Contributor
San Francisco Chronicle
April 12, 2026

For generations, we have let ourselves believe a damaging myth: that some people are simply "math people," and some are not. But math ability isn't a personality trait. It is a skill, and like other essential skills, it can be taught, practiced and strengthened — especially when children get the right foundation early.

For California, that matters not only for the success of our kids in school, but for the state's economic future.

In a rapidly changing economy shaped by data, automation and artificial intelligence, everyone needs to be a "math person" — not just scientists, engineers or financiers. This does not mean everyone needs Advanced Placement calculus-level skills. But everyone does need a strong foundation in quantitative reasoning, problem-solving, pattern recognition and estimation. In the workplace, those skills help electricians read schematics, nurses verify dosages, mechanics interpret diagnostic data, construction workers measure angles and restaurant managers track sales and costs.

The rise of AI does not make math less important. It makes early math proficiency more important than ever.

AI can generate answers, but it cannot fully replace the human judgment needed to interpret and apply them. Across sectors, employees will increasingly be expected to interpret probabilities, spot errors, weigh trade-offs and adjust for real-world conditions.

Yet, California is falling short in building a solid math foundation for far too many children.

Despite leading the world in innovation, California ranks 43rd in the nation in fourth-grade math test scores. Just 37% of our students are meeting grade-level standards in math. For low-income students, that figure drops to 26%. For Black students, it is just 20%. These numbers are more than disappointing; they are a warning sign that too many young Californians are being denied future opportunities before they even graduate from high school.

Educational inequities begin early. Children do not all arrive at school with the same exposure to early math concepts such as counting, recognizing quantities, comparing amounts or talking about time and money. Some have had many opportunities to start building these skills through everyday experiences at home and in preschool. Others have not. That doesn't mean some children are less capable of grasping early math skills. It means they are starting from different places.

And because math learning is cumulative, early gaps can compound. A child who struggles to understand counting in kindergarten will have a harder time with simple addition in first grade, three-digit numbers in second grade and more complex problem-solving after that. By the time statewide testing begins in third grade, many students are already far behind, and many have already internalized the message that they are "not a math person."

That is why California needs Senate Bill 1067.

Introduced by state Sen. Akilah Weber Pierson, D-La Mesa (San Diego County), SB1067 would require schools to screen kindergarten through second-grade students for math difficulties to identify challenges early and respond sooner. Supports may include small-group support, targeted interventions, additional time dedicated to math instruction and other evidence-based approaches.

This is not about labeling children. It is not about high-stakes testing. And it is not about burdening young students with hours of additional assessment. A screening tool is a brief, practical way for schools to identify students who may need extra support before problems become more serious and costly to address.

The logic is simple: Schools cannot intervene early if they do not know which students need help.

California rightly rejected the idea that some students simply aren't "reading people." In 2023, the state adopted universal screening for reading difficulties in K-2 along with a requirement for evidence-based reading intervention. This year, roughly 1.2 million students in those grades are being screened so schools can identify needs earlier rather than waiting for failure to compound.

Math deserves the same urgency and the same commitment to early identification.

At least 20 states have already incorporated early math screening into broader math improvement strategies, and many are beginning to see meaningful results. The universal early screening and targeted intervention policies included in the landmark Alabama Numeracy Act, for example, helped it become the only state in the country to surpass its pre-pandemic fourth-grade math scores on the 2024 National Assessment of Educational Progress.

Meanwhile, California was among the last states to adopt comprehensive reading reforms. Our students cannot afford a similar delay in math. SB1067 is not a silver bullet. California also needs strong instruction, well-prepared teachers, high-quality instructional materials and effective intervention. But early screening is a necessary first step grounded in research.

This is ultimately about both equity and economic competitiveness. Every child deserves the chance to build confidence with numbers before they start believing they're "not a math person." Every parent deserves a school system that catches challenges when a student's academic trajectory can still be changed. And every employer in California has a stake in a generation of young people prepared to reason quantitatively in a world that increasingly demands it.

About Opinion

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California's math outcomes are not a reflection of our students' potential or our teachers' commitment. They reflect a system that too often identifies struggles too late. A strong foundation in math is critical for success in school, career and life. SB1067 lays the groundwork for the solid start every student needs.

California should pass it.

Marshall Tuck is CEO of EdVoice, a nonprofit education advocacy organization based in California.

Note: The U.S. Department of Education has given Congress official notice that it plans to dissolve its office that oversees federal programs for the nation's more than five million English learners, according to a letter obtained by Education Week.

Ed. Dept. Moves to Shutter Its Office for English Learners

The agency sent a letter to Congress saying it will move federal programs for English learners elsewhere

By Ileana Najarro
Education Week
April 14, 2026

The U.S. Department of Education has given Congress official notice that it plans to dissolve its office that oversees federal programs for the nation's more than 5 million English learners, according to a letter obtained by Education Week.

The shuttering of the office of English language acquisition, or OELA, follows a year in which the Trump administration has contracted the Education Department, dismissed virtually all of OELA's staff, and tried to scale back federally funded services for English learners.

OELA has overseen the \$890 million Title III grant program that helps schools pay for services for English learners, professional development grants to improve instruction for English learners, and the development of resources to help educators serve the growing student population.

In a letter dated Feb. 13, the Education Department informed key members of Congress that it planned to dissolve the office and "redelegate OELA's programs and duties to other offices, thereby dissolving the need for a standalone OELA."

The letter has not been previously reported.

In a statement to Education Week, Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education Kirsten Baesler said the effort is part of the Trump administration's larger project of "returning education to the states."

"English learners should never be treated as a siloed program, set aside as an afterthought," she said.

OELA is one of the offices established under the Department of Education Organization Act, the 1979 law that created the Education Department (OELA was initially called the office of bilingual education and minority languages affairs.) It was established in its current form in 2002 by the No Child Left Behind Act.

However, Secretary of Education Linda McMahon is using a mechanism in the Department of Education Organization Act that allows her to "establish, consolidate, alter, or discontinue" a handful of department offices, including OELA, by providing Congress 90 days' notice stating the proposed action and rationale. Based on the Feb. 13 date of the letter to lawmakers, that 90-day window will expire next month.

"It is critical that we streamline operations to better support ELs," Assistant Secretary for Legislation and Congressional Affairs Mary Christina Riley wrote in that letter.

English-learner experts and advocates remind educators that schools' federal responsibilities to educate English learners and immigrant students remain with or without OELA, as do the programs that serve them, along with those students' rights.

Still, the loss of a central federal office for these students would complicate states' and schools' ability to best serve them, they said.

"OELA mattered because it gave multilingual learners a clear and consistent voice at the federal level," said Jose Viana, who led OELA during President Donald Trump's first term. It "brought together expertise, research, and support focused specifically on language development and ensured that these students were visible in national policy conversations."

The letter explaining OELA's dissolution outlines where the programs OELA oversees will move within the Education Department:

- Title III formula grants will go to the office of elementary and secondary education's division of state support and accountability that oversees other major formula grants such as Title I.
- OELA's National Professional Development grants will move to the office of effective educator development programs.
- The Native American and Alaska Native Children in School Program will move to the department's office of Indian education "to better align with other programs that support Native American children and youth."

The Education Department, meanwhile, is in the middle of shifting day-to-day management of dozens of its programs to other Cabinet agencies. It's previously said the Department of Labor will handle Title III grants, and that the Department of the Interior will take over the Native American and Alaska Native Children in School Program.

"Aligning this work across teams within the office of elementary and secondary education reduces administrative burden and empowers states to design integrated supports that reflect the needs of their English learner students and families," Baesler said in her statement.

Multiple federal policy shifts are affecting English learners

This isn't the first time OELA has faced consolidation or major restructuring.

In 2017, during his first term, Trump signed an executive order requiring all federal agency heads, including then-Education Secretary Betsy DeVos, to submit reorganization plans with an eye toward efficiency.

As a result, DeVos in 2018 considered folding OELA into the office of elementary and secondary education, which handles most K-12 grant programs and school accountability.

However, Viana, then OELA's head, and English-learner advocates successfully pushed back against the idea, allowing OELA to remain a standalone office, he said.

Title III grants, which supplement states' and schools' spending on English learners, were under the elementary and secondary education office at that time and remained there until late 2023, when the Biden administration shifted them to OELA.

But OELA's ability to offer guidance to states and schools hit a roadblock last year when all but one staff member was laid off as part of Education Department reductions that shrank the agency's staff by nearly half.

Since last January, the Trump administration also has:

- Revoked a policy memo declaring schools a "protected area" from immigration enforcement, leaving school districts serving large populations of immigrant students and English learners to address safety concerns of students and their families;
- Initially withheld and later, following pushback from lawmakers of both parties and litigation, disbursed federal dollars intended for English learners, the Title III formula grants;
- Quietly rescinded a 2015 Dear Colleague Letter advising states and schools on how to protect English learners' and immigrant students' rights;
- Twice proposed eliminating Title III grants;
- Issued an executive order declaring English the country's official language, with the U.S. Department of Justice publishing guidance last July aimed at minimizing "non-essential multilingual services."

"What's important right now is to make sure that schools, districts, and states know that their legal obligations to these students have not changed," said Leslie Villegas, a senior policy analyst at the think tank New America. "What has changed is their ability to ask the federal government for help and how they could meet those obligations."

OELA's program remain even as the office dissolves

The various programs OELA oversees will continue under the proposed Education Department plan, Viana noted.

While it remains unclear precisely when members of Congress received the letter, lawmakers are likely limited in what they can do to prevent OELA's dissolution, said Julia Martin, the director of policy and government affairs at the Bruman Group, an education-focused law firm.

They could pass legislation that puts OELA into the category of offices that the Education Department must maintain, or they could amend the appropriations bill passed in February—or add a provision to the next budget bill—to specify that OELA must still exist at least for this year, Martin said.

But either scenario remains unlikely at the moment, she said, as those provisions would have to pass a Republican-controlled Congress and be signed into law by Trump.

Moving forward, experts on English learner education and advocates worry that OELA's dissolution will diminish the quality of technical assistance and resources available to states and schools responsible for English-learner services.

“When I was with OELA, we didn’t have enough people to serve the 50 states with Title III resources,” said Montserrat Garibay, who led OELA during the last two years of the Biden administration. “And so to now see that it’s been dismantled to different agencies, these agencies don’t have the background or the necessary skills to provide effective technical assistance to states.”