



Fullerton School District's K-Pop Battle of the Bands was held April 8, marking the culmination of a nearly six-month program that began with more than 100 student auditions, resulting in five-member K-pop bands.

Students showcase talent, culture at K-Pop Battle of the Bands

Fullerton School District held its 2025-26 K-Pop Battle of the Bands on April 8, where five junior high school teams showcased months of preparation in a high-energy competition celebrating music, culture and student talent. The event marked the culmination of a nearly six-month program that began with more than 100 student auditions with participants advancing through multiple rounds, resulting in five-member

K-pop bands representing Beechwood and Fisler Schools and Ladera Vista, Nicolas and Parks junior high schools. During the finale, the Nicolas Junior High dance team took home the grand prize. Fisler School received best vocals and Parks Junior High School was recognized for best dance. "I'm excited that we were able to make these memories together as a team," said Alani, a seventh grader on the winning

Nicolas Junior High team. "I've loved learning more about Korean culture, dance and singing, and I've grown so much by working with my teachers and coaches. It's an amazing feeling to know our school is now part of K-Pop Battle of the Bands history." The event drew hundreds of families, staff and community members to The Source OC, a regional center for Korean

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CTC sets threshold for misassignment training

Commission also removes opposition to 60-day substitute bill

The April meeting of the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing was attended by ACSA CTC Liaison Doug Gephart, who filed the following report. The California Commission on Teacher Credentialing is moving forward with plans to require training for LEAs with a high proportion of teacher misassignments. The catalyst for exploring training was a recommendation from the State Auditor's office that requires the commission to consider sanctions for LEAs that consistently misassign educators. This

training plan would be required for those legally responsible for educator assignments, including the principal administrator and the district superintendent. According to CTC staff research, 75 percent of LEAs have less than 2 percent proportion of misassignments. Most California LEAs are striving for and achieving excellence in educator assignments, even during staffing shortages. The commission approved the following staff recommendations with the understanding modifications may be made at the June commission meeting:

- Trainings will be designed with a tailored and targeted approach to delivery.
- LEAs will be required to report sanction status to the governing board.
- Sanctioned LEAs will retain the

ability to apply for emergency permits and waivers.

- Only "uncorrected" misassignments will count toward sanctions.
- Sanctions will be based on the proportion of misassignments to assignments.
- The base threshold will be established at 25 percent misassignments.

AB 2490 Substitute Teacher Days of Service

The commission modified their opposition to AB 2490 from oppose to neutral, thereby removing objection to extending the length of time an emergency substitute can serve in the same classroom from 30 days to 60 days. Action on this bill is pending in the Legislature.

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Three must-haves for leaders choosing curriculum

The following article was written by Crystal Gonzales, executive director, English Learners Success Forum.

The materials that schools choose for their classrooms matter more than almost any other decision district leaders make every year.

Yet a recent Gallup poll reveals that while education leaders recognize the value of a strong curriculum, many struggle to identify or even define it. That struggle extends to the classroom, where only 30 percent of teachers feel fully prepared to teach multilingual learners.



Gonzales

Consider the landscape: California alone is home to more than one million multilingual learners, and they comprise about 19 percent of total enrollment in the state's public schools. In many districts, that number climbs to 30, 40, even 50 percent.

These students bring a wide variety of strengths to classrooms. Many are bilingual — or on their way — a cognitive advantage that enhances problem-solving, creativity, and academic achievement. So what's the best way to unlock their full potential while raising the bar for everyone?

The answer requires getting serious about curriculum. English Learners Success Forum (ELSF) is a national nonprofit I founded over nine years ago that works alongside school districts to support informed decisions about the materials they adopt and implement. From this work, ELSF has created "Materials Must-Haves" — three most essential, non-negotiable features that must be intentionally included for instructional materials to respond to the needs of multilingual learners and bolster success for all students.

At the center is a core premise: effective instructional materials must intentionally integrate language and content learning. The Must-Haves help make that integration visible within materials. Yet, these Must-Haves are not the full picture of quality, nor do they include all the features that make materials inclusive of multilingual learners. Instead, they identify what is most often missing, inconsistent, or under-

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AB 1119 implementation plan: Dual credentialing

Assembly Bill 1119 reflects the Legislature and commission’s shared interest in improving access to dual credentialing as part of broader efforts to support inclusive practice and better prepare educators to serve students with and without disabilities. Staff will return to the commission in June with an information item focused on the emerging problem and key questions that will guide subsequent phases.

Candidate support in Subject Matter Competence

In October 2025, commission staff presented a five-point plan to improve options for meeting the Subject Matter Requirements for Teaching Credentials.

1. Expand the degree options for meeting subject matter requirements.
2. Condense and standardize the existing subject matter domains for transcript review.
3. Revise the subject matter domain structures for the development of future exams and transcript review.
4. Explore the feasibility of a transcript analysis tool.
5. Explore the possible use of micro-certification as another way of recognizing subject matter competence.

Proposed trailer bill language provides further guidance in how candidates may demonstrate meeting the subject matter requirements by proposing changes to Education Code section 44281, which specifically addresses the CSET. The proposed language calls on the commission to:

1. Support teacher candidates to establish subject matter competence through degree major or coursework.
2. Update the degree majors that establish subject matter competence and ensure the subject matter requirements support streamlined transcript review.
3. Make subject matter exams available for candidates not able to meet the SMR through coursework or a degree.

The proposed language sends a clear message that multiple options should be available to candidates to demonstrate their appropriate subject matter knowledge.

The commission voted to direct staff to circulate the draft condensed subject matter domain descriptions with educator preparation programs for feedback and bring the final set of condensed domain descriptions to the commission for potential approval in June.



The K-Pop Battle of the Bands finale featured a surprise performance by Fullerton School District principals, who danced to “Soda Pop.” Clockwise from left are Stephanie Guppy (principal at Laguna Road Elementary), Tracy Gyurina (principal at Sunset Lane Elementary), Hannah Lim (principal at Beechwood Elementary), Connie Park (assistant principal at Beechwood Elementary), Jenna Breite (principal at Parks Junior High), Melanie Carmona (principal at Valencia Park Elementary), Julianne Ettinger (principal at Hermosa Drive Elementary).

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culture, where students were evaluated by industry professionals on vocal and dance performance, stage presence, vocal and dance integration, performance aesthetics and choreography synchronization.

The finale also included a surprise performance by Fullerton School District principals, along with performances by fiveALIVE and Chodingz, adding to the event’s energy and community spirit.

“This program has empowered our students to engage with one of the world’s most influential music movements while building confidence and collaborating creatively,” said Phil Ling, director of

Educational Services, who oversees the district’s arts program. “K-pop gives our students the chance to connect with and celebrate the rich cultural traditions of our growing Korean community in Fullerton, and we’ve seen tremendous growth in them as both performers and learners.”

Since January, finalist teams have rehearsed weekly to prepare for the finale. Students also participated in K-pop vocal and dance master classes, along with immersive cultural enrichment experiences that included Korean dance, traditional instruments and a culinary learning session where students learned to make gimhap, a traditional Korean roll made up of vegetables and meats wrapped in seaweed and rice.

FSD’s K-pop program has attracted

attention from major industry sponsors, including Source Music, home to the global girl group LE SSERAFIM and a subsidiary of HYBE, the company behind BTS. Additional sponsors include FNC Entertainment and BBeat Afterschool, which provided training, mentorship and materials for students.

“The K-Pop Battle of the Bands reflects the innovative, student-centered opportunities we strive to provide in the Fullerton School District,” said Interim Superintendent Dr. Chad Hammitt. “This program not only celebrates artistic talent but also fosters cultural experiences, teamwork, and perseverance — skills that extend far beyond the stage.”

Have something to share with the rest of the class?

Have good news to share from your district or school? Send photos and articles to EdCal Editor Michelle Carl at mcarl@acsa.org.

association of california school administrators