



BOARD COMMUNICATIONS - MAY 08, 2026

TO: Members of the Board of Education

FROM: 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: May 08, 2026

Phone Number: (559) 457-3884

Regarding: Superintendent Calendar Highlights

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

- Attended the Hmong Educator Gala
- Attended the Wallace Convening as required component of the district's grant
- Attended the St. Jude's Home Giveaway and gave interview with FOX26 regarding the event
- Site visit to Burroughs Elementary School in celebration of Teacher Appreciation Week
- Attended the Women's Superintendent Network
- Met with the Student Advisory Board to discuss the district budget
- Attended the Foundation for Fresno Unified Students Board Meeting
- Participated in the Harvard Ed. L.D. Residency Launch Event

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: May 08, 2026

Phone Number: (559) 457-3907

Regarding: School Services Weekly Update Reports for May 01, 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 May 01, 2026, are attached and include the following articles:

- Statutory COLA for 2026-27 is 2.87% – April 30, 2026
- California Gubernatorial Candidates Divided Over Education Funding and Social Issues – April 30, 2026
- California's Math Scores are Abysmal. Is it Time to Screen Kindergartners for Basic Math Skills? – April 28, 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: May 1, 2026

TO: Misty Her
Superintendent

AT: Fresno Unified School District

FROM: Your SSC Governmental Relations Team

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

Legislative Update

Neither the Assembly nor Senate Education Committees met this week, as both houses wrapped up first-house policy committee hearings last week. The next major legislative deadline is May 15, 2026, for bills to pass their respective first-house Appropriations Committees.

Over the next two weeks, lawmakers and bill sponsors will work closely with Appropriations Committee staff and members to advance their bills ahead of this critical deadline and move them to the floor for consideration.

Assembly Budget Subcommittee on Education Finance

On Wednesday, April 29, 2026, the Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 3 on Education Finance, chaired by Assemblymember David Alvarez (D-San Diego), met to discuss Governor Gavin Newsom's 2026-27 State Budget proposals on the Expanded Learning Opportunities Program (ELO-P), differentiated assistance, and kitchen infrastructure and training (KIT) grants. Below we provide a summary of those discussions.

ELO-P

The Governor proposes \$62.4 million ongoing Proposition 98 funding to establish a minimum \$1,800 per-pupil Tier 2 rate in ELO-P to provide greater funding stability, while maintaining the existing structure that allows the rate to fluctuate based on available funds.

Subcommittee members were heavily focused on the Governor's proposal to stabilize ELO-P funding, particularly the Tier 2 rate. While there was broad agreement that volatility in the current formula makes it difficult for districts to plan, members questioned the Administration's approach of setting a \$1,800 minimum, while still allowing the rate to fluctuate.

Several members pointed to the Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) recommendation to set a specific Tier 2 rate in statute as a more straightforward

solution. Members also raised concerns about whether funding increases should be tied to clearer program expectations and outcomes rather than provided broadly.

A significant portion of the discussion centered on fragmentation across afterschool programs, with members highlighting the lack of data on overlap between ELO-P, After School Education and Safety Program, and 21st Century Community Learning Centers funding streams. They emphasized the need to ensure funds are not duplicative and are instead maximized to serve more students. Equity concerns were also raised, particularly the disparity between TK-8 districts, which benefit most from ELO-P, and high school districts that have limited access to comparable funding. These concerns were compounded by frustration over the lack of timely data, as key participation and outcome information is not expected until 2027, limiting the Legislature's ability to assess program effectiveness in the near term.

Differentiated Assistance

The Governor proposes to restructure the system of support by shifting toward universal and targeted assistance, aligning differentiated assistance to a three-year cycle with Local Control and Accountability Plans (LCAPs), and revising eligibility criteria for identifying local educational agencies (LEAs) in need of support.

Subcommittee members were generally receptive to elements of the Governor's proposal, including the shift toward a more proactive system of support and the move to a three-year cycle aligned with LCAPs. Members noted that a longer cycle could reduce churn and give districts more time to implement meaningful improvements.

However, there was significant concern about proposed changes to eligibility criteria, particularly the potential removal of statutory triggers tied to student subgroup performance. Members stressed the importance of maintaining strong equity guardrails and ensuring that the system continues to prioritize closing achievement gaps. The discussion also reflected a broader concern about balancing flexibility with accountability, with members expressing caution about shifting too much authority to the State Board of Education and underscoring the Legislature's role in setting clear standards for identifying LEAs in need of support.

Universal Meals and KIT Grants

The Governor proposes to continue funding Universal School Meals and provide an additional \$100 million (one-time Proposition 98) for the KIT grants to support school capacity to deliver meals. The Governor also proposes \$25 million ongoing General Fund for the Farm to School Grant Program, administered by the Department of Food and Agriculture.

Discussion of the KIT grants reflected strong overall support from subcommittee members, despite the LAO's recommendation to reject the proposed fourth round of funding. The subcommittee recognized these programs as critical supports for students and families, particularly given ongoing affordability challenges and potential reductions in federal nutrition assistance. Rather than questioning the value of the programs, members focused on implementation capacity, emphasizing that continued investment in kitchen infrastructure and workforce training is essential to sustain and expand universal meal access.

Subcommittee members highlighted that, without adequate facilities and trained staff, schools may struggle to meet expectations around meal quality and increased participation. Overall, the conversation suggested a

willingness to continue and potentially expand these investments, with an emphasis on ensuring that operational capacity keeps pace with policy goals.

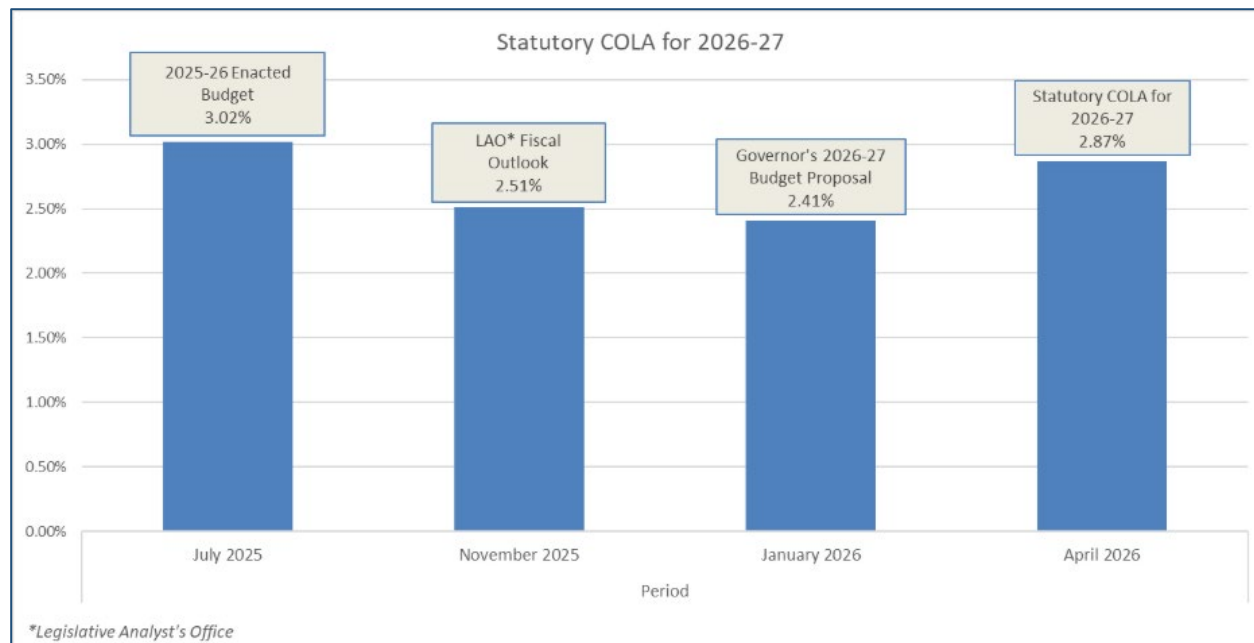
Leilani Aguinaldo

Statutory COLA for 2026-27 is 2.87%

By Dave Heckler
School Services of California's *Fiscal Report*
April 30, 2026

Today, April 30, 2026, the U.S. Department of Commerce released the 2026 first quarter value of the implicit price deflator for state and local government goods and services, which provides the final data point needed to calculate the 2026-27 statutory cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for K-14 education per Education Code Section 42238.02(d)(2).

The latest data point sets the statutory COLA for 2026-27 to be 2.87%, below the forecasted 3.02% when the 2025-26 State Budget was adopted, and greater than the 2.41% estimated in January as part of the Governor's Budget. The calculation of the statutory COLA is unrelated to state factors. Rather, the COLA is calculated based on nationally aggregated data of state and local government consumption.



Between the release of the May Revision and the enactment of the 2026-27 State Budget, the Governor and Legislature must determine if there will be sufficient revenues in 2026-27 to fund the statutory COLA. As noted in the April 2026 *Fiscal Report* article, "[State Revenues Continue to Outpace Projections as Economic Growth Moderates](#)," the state's revenues are ahead of schedule for the 2026 calendar year. However, geopolitical policies have created uncertainty which is highlighted in the current major stock market indices. Those indices have a direct correlation to state income due primarily to the state's progressive tax structure. The Governor will unveil his May Revision in less than two weeks which will provide clarity on how his office views the near-term forecast for the state economy.

Note: Education has not been a dominant issue in California's gubernatorial race so far, but the candidates who have addressed it present contrasting approaches, ranging from expanding school funding and free college to emphasizing stricter teacher accountability and limiting transgender students' participation in sports.

California Gubernatorial Candidates Divided Over Education Funding and Social Issues

By Diana Lambert
EdSource
April 30, 2026

Education is not a central issue in California's crowded governor's race, but the candidates addressing it offer sharply different visions, from expanding school funding and free college, to stricter teacher accountability and restrictions on transgender students in sports.

The next governor would follow a predecessor who made education a priority, increasing K-12 per-pupil funding by 61%, investing in community schools, expanding universal transitional kindergarten to all 4-year-olds, providing free school meals for all students, adding more after-school and summer programs, funding teacher recruitment efforts and approving legislation that changed how children are taught how to read.

According to the latest California Democratic Party Voter Index Survey, Republican Steve Hilton, a political commentator and former adviser to UK Prime Minister David Cameron, is the front-runner in the race. He is closely followed by Republican Chad Bianco, Riverside County Sheriff-Coroner; and Democrats Tom Steyer, a billionaire investor; Xavier Becerra, former U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services; and Katie Porter, a former congressional representative.

Polling with 4% or less of support are Democrats Matt Mahan, San Jose mayor; Antonio Villaraigosa, former Los Angeles mayor; and Tony Thurmond, California state superintendent of public instruction.

Democrat Eric Swalwell, former U.S. Representative for California's 14th congressional district, was once a front-runner, but dropped out of the race on April 12 because of allegations of sexual misconduct.

In total, 61 candidates are competing in the June 2 primary. The two top vote-getters will advance to the Nov. 3 general election.

Student achievement is on every agenda

All the major candidates agree on one point: student test scores are too low. According to state data, 49% of California students met proficiency standards in English language arts, 37.3% in math and 32.7% in science last year.

"These results should be a five-alarm fire in our state," Mahan, a former middle school English and history teacher, told EdSource in a survey. "Too many California students are not meeting basic benchmarks in reading and math, which has long-term consequences for them socially and economically, and for our entire society."

Mahan said he would invest in high-dosage tutoring for students who are behind, and would ensure districts are accountable for adopting evidence-based literacy curricula. At a CBS gubernatorial debate on Tuesday, Mahan said teachers should be rewarded if their students improve academically, while teachers whose students falter academically should be provided with additional coaching and training.

Hilton has said he will hold teachers accountable for student performance by rewarding the best and firing the worst. He has also advocated for keeping students back in third grade until they can read.

“The failure of our government-run schools is an outrageous scandal that we cannot tolerate any longer,” Hilton said in a statement on his website. “That means taking on the ideologues and activists who have removed accountability for teachers and lowered expectations for students.”

Bianco has proposed expanding career technical education and high-performing charter schools; increasing the focus on reading, writing, math and science; increasing funding for teacher training and recruitment; promoting mental health supports; and ensuring all schools have an assigned law enforcement officer.

Thurmond said he would launch a five-year plan that would ensure that every student in the state can read by third grade. He would also make kindergarten mandatory and offer career training programs.

“For all 57 years of my life, we’ve been talking about closing the achievement gap,” Thurmond said during a gubernatorial forum in February hosted by the Black Action Alliance and KTVU Fox 2. “You know, if we can send a person to the moon, we can close the achievement gap. We have to have the political will to do it and then back it up. It’s not an achievement gap — our kids can achieve, but there are barriers in their way, and we have to remove those barriers.”

No agreement on need for more funding

Education funding is a priority for many Californians, according to a PPIC survey. Thirty-seven percent of survey respondents said K-12 education should be the highest priority for state government spending. Six percent of those surveyed said it should be higher education.

Candidates are divided on how they would approach funding. Some Democrats have proposed increasing funding to schools by increasing taxes on billionaires and corporations, while the two Republican candidates say schools don’t need more funding and should cut wasteful spending.

Steyer has proposed investing more money in public schools and increasing teacher pay to help recruit and retain them. He says he’ll generate up to \$50 billion in new revenue by raising taxes on corporations and wealthy individuals, with funds split between health care and education.

During the CBS debate earlier this week, Thurmond addressed the funding crisis that has been created for school districts because of declining enrollment.

“What folks aren’t saying on this stage is the biggest challenge for our schools is declining enrollment,” Thurmond said. “Schools get their revenue based on attendance, OK. And we’re one of only six states in the nation that still gives revenue based on average daily attendance. We have to move to an enrollment system as we recognize that schools are losing revenue.”

Affordable college a priority for some

For a student in the University of California system, the total annual cost — including tuition, school fees, housing, food and other living expenses — is about \$47,000. At California State University, total costs range from \$26,000 and \$37,000.

If elected, Steyer would like to make education free from universal preschool at age 3 to community college in California, while Porter proposes making state universities tuition-free for California residents by raising corporate taxes.

“For more than 100 years, California students didn’t pay even 1 cent for tuition,” Porter said. “That was the promise California made to its taxpayers, that changed under Ronald Reagan before he sold our country on trickle-down economics. He sold out California students by charging our first tuition fees that turned the public right to a higher education into a private burden on families.”

Villaraigosa does not promise free tuition. Instead, he says he would expand financial aid, increase dual-enrollment opportunities for high school students taking college courses, grow career technical education programs and make it easier to transfer from community colleges to four-year universities, according to a survey returned to EdSource.

Culture wars on full display

Changing state policies that prohibit parental notification when students indicate they may be transgender, and allowing transgender athletes to participate in girls’ sports are top priorities for Bianco.

“After I am elected governor, you will never have to worry about boys in your locker room, boys in your restroom or having to compete against boys in athletics,” Bianco said in an Instagram post. “Until then, we will continue doing everything we can to keep you safe as we fight against this insanity. Stay strong.”

Bianco also opposes phasing out gas-powered school buses and says he will remove vaccination requirements to attend schools.

Despite the governor’s power to develop a state budget and seat officials in state agencies and commissions, these promises, as well as Hilton’s promise to make teachers more accountable, may be difficult to achieve in a state where Democrats have a veto-proof supermajority in both houses.

Thurmond has said he will identify new tax revenue by closing tax loopholes and taxing billionaires to provide more funding for education and health care. He also said he will fight to keep immigration officers out of schools, a popular sentiment in California.

Are they talking about the right things?

Lupita Cortez Alcalá, executive director of Stanford-based research center Policy Analysis for California (PACE), said she wants candidates to discuss chronic absenteeism, declining enrollment and teacher shortages. Alcalá described chronic absenteeism — defined as being absent for 10% of the school year — as “a system-level crisis,” noting it reached 19.4% in 2024.

She also said candidates should address reports that half of California’s teachers are considering leaving the profession, as well as the budget cuts and school closures that districts are facing because of declining enrollment.

“If 50% of teachers are leaving the profession, we are going to have a major problem,” she said.

Governor’s role could change

The election is particularly important to schools this year because the next governor may have an enhanced role in education, if legislators agree to move control of the California Department of Education to the governor’s office.

Alcalá said placing the CDE under the governor’s office would allow state leaders to better align timelines, infrastructure needs and capacity to ensure equitable implementation when investing in initiatives and signing education policies. PACE co-authored a report calling for the change.

“I think the connection to implementation at the Department of Education and through all these systems of support, like county offices of education, the California Collaborative for Educator Excellence and even the universities ... really needs to be better streamlined and aligned because our education system is highly fragmented,” Alcalá said.

Unions choose their candidates

California’s largest education unions had lined up behind Swalwell, but withdrew their support after allegations of sexual misconduct emerged. Now, the California Teachers Association has recommended Steyer. The Service Employees International Union, which represents 750,000 workers — including school employees — across the state, has not announced a new endorsement.

Steyer had already secured endorsements from several other unions representing teachers and school staff, including the California Federation of Teachers, the California School Employees Association and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees.

The California Faculty Association has split its endorsement between Becerra and Thurmond.

Porter and Villaraigosa also have a fair share of union support, with both of their websites claiming support from the California Federation of Labor Unions.

President Donald Trump gave his endorsement to Hilton, calling him “a truly fine man” who can turn the state around.

Together, the candidates had received about \$168 million in campaign contributions by April 18, but most of it — \$133.9 million — is in the coffers of the Steyer campaign. The main donor was Steyer himself, who contributed \$133.7 million.

Election contributions
Tom Steyer – \$133.9 million
Matt Mahan – \$12.7 million
Steve Hilton – \$7.2 million
Katie Porter – \$6.3 million
Antonio Villaraigosa – \$4 million
Chad Bianco– \$3.3 million
Xavier Becerra – \$2.98 million
Tony Thurmond – \$275,000
Donations reported by April 18.

Along with individual donors, candidates reported contributions from businesses and unions, but few with ties to education.

Note: Senate Bill 1067 (Weber Pierson, D-San Diego) would establish a statewide framework for early mathematics screening for students in grades K-2, similar to the reading screener mandate that went into effect this school year.

California's Math Scores are Abysmal. Is it Time to Screen Kindergartners for Basic Math Skills?

By Carolyn Jones
CalMatters
April 28, 2026

Just a few months after California overhauled the way it teaches children to read, a new bill takes on math education — and may be just as controversial.

Senate Bill 1067 would require schools to screen all kindergartners, first- and second-graders for basic math skills, and give them extra help if they're behind. The idea is to help those children catch up to their peers who might have had much more exposure to math before starting school.

"A student's early math skills are the most powerful predictor of their later success in school," said Amy Cooper, a senior advisor at EdVoice, an education nonprofit that's cosponsoring the bill. "We're not talking about tracking kids. There's no labels. It's just about getting support to students so that they can get up to grade level."

California students, in all grade levels, have long struggled in math. Last year, just 37% of students performed at grade level in math, with some groups of students faring far worse. Just 16% of Black 11th-graders, for example, met the state's grade-level standard. Nationwide, California ranks 43rd in 4th grade math scores, behind Texas, Mississippi, Alabama and dozens of other states.

One reason for the poor performance, experts say, is California's uneven early education landscape. Until transitional kindergarten became available to all 4-year-olds last year, children showed up at kindergarten with a wide array of abilities and skills. Some had years of exposure to early math — either at preschool or at home — and could count, do basic arithmetic and even read a little. Others, especially low-income children, had no prior exposure to the ABCs and 123s, and lagged far behind. Even now, TK and kindergarten are optional, so some students start first grade with no previous math instruction at all.

'Critical tipping point'

Some of those children catch up eventually, but many continue to fall further and further behind, research shows. And because math is sequential, catching up becomes harder over time, and the gap widens. Some researchers found that early math skills can even be a predictor of how well students do in high school and college.

It's still too early to gauge the impact of transitional kindergarten on students' long-term math performance, but so far there's still a gap between children who've had exposure to math — either through preschool or at

home — and those who haven't. Low-income children are far less likely to get that early exposure, said Alice Klein, a developmental psychologist and research director at the education research firm WestEd.

"It is a critical tipping point," Klein said. "Unless those students get intervention, the gap will widen. It'll be harder for them to access higher-level math classes later on, and this will have implications for future job opportunities and the economic future of California. It's a continual closing of opportunities."

Klein supports the math screening legislation because she said it's an effective way to identify students who are struggling and provide them with support. At least 20 other states have math screenings and have seen positive results, she said.

"I'm so happy that California is considering passing this bill," Klein said. "It's a great start, and could be the next step" in improving math outcomes in California.

Numbers and objects

Districts would have their choice of several screening tests to choose from, each ranging from 10 to 20 minutes long and testing children's knowledge of basic math concepts. For example, kindergartners might be asked to look at two groups of dots and decide which group has more. Or they'd be asked to identify certain numbers and show that they understand what the numbers mean — that "three" means three objects, for example. English learners would take the test in their native languages.

The bill is authored by state Sen. Akilah Weber Pierson, a Democrat from San Diego, and last week passed unanimously in the Senate education committee.

Its cosponsor, EdVoice, was behind the push for phonics-based literacy instruction in California public schools. That initiative passed, but only after a long fight with the California Teachers Association, the state's largest teachers union, and English learner advocates, who argued that it didn't give teachers enough flexibility and that it wouldn't be effective for students whose first language isn't English. The final version of the bill doesn't require schools to take advantage of state-funded teacher training, but it does require them to use phonics-based classroom materials.

Too many tests?

There might be a fight over the proposed math testing as well. The California Teachers Association opposes it, as well as California County Superintendents, the Association of California School Administrators and the California Mathematics Council.

They argue that the screening is unnecessary because the state already has a comprehensive new math framework and has made other big investments in early math. It'll take time for those investments to show results. Also, the math framework emphasizes critical thinking and real-world math problems, and the screening might be too narrow and not take into account young children's developmental differences.

They also argue that the testing will be pointless unless the state funds tutoring to help those students who are identified as needing extra help.

Nick Johnson, an associate professor of teacher education at San Diego State University, questioned whether schools need yet another standardized test. The federal education policy No Child Left Behind, adopted in the early 2000s, focused heavily on testing, and led to few improvements, he said.

“Since No Child Left Behind testing, we’ve assumed that (standardized testing) will improve student learning,” Johnson said. “But the evidence shows that’s rarely true. Is public education in a better place now than it was 25 years ago?”

Magic of math

Rachelle Bacong has been teaching kindergarten and TK for 30 years in National City, near San Diego. She weaves math into every activity the children do. When she sets up an art project, she asks them how many chairs are at the table and how many scissors they’ll need. When she makes smoothies with them, she asks them how much juice or how many chunks of bananas they should add. When the children wash their hands, she asks them how long they spent at the sink.

They also spend a good portion of their day playing with blocks, tiles and tubes, experimenting with shapes and dimensions. Bacong’s goal is to make math fun and easy to grasp, no matter where the child is developmentally.

“Math crosses all cultures, abilities and backgrounds. It’s accessible to everyone. It’s my job to design the learning environment to make it accessible to everyone,” Bacong said. “That’s what’s so magical about it.”

She also spends time every day explicitly teaching them math, although in a way that’s blended with play. She’ll teach them songs about numbers, show them how shapes fit together, and gently guide them when a solution might not be clear. Math instruction needs to come from several angles, she said, because children’s cognitive skills develop at such different rates.

She welcomes extra help for children who need it, but she’s skeptical that a test will reflect how individual children process math concepts. She already knows how her students are faring, and she fears that screening results will be used to stigmatize children, teachers or schools.

“My fear is that it’ll focus on a child’s deficits,” Bacong said. “Math needs to be joyful, fun and developmentally appropriate. We want to set students up for success, so they’ll be prepared for whatever they’re going to be designing or building in the future.”

Fresno Unified School District
Board Communication

From the Office of the Superintendent
To the Members of the Board of Education
Prepared by: Wendy McCulley, Chief

Date: May 8, 2026

Phone Number: 457-3885

Regarding: Monthly Update – March

The purpose of this board communication is to provide the Board an update about the Foundation for Fresno Unified Students.

The Foundation concluded its annual Suit Drive efforts on April 10, 2026, and hosted a Suited for Success event on April 23, 2026, at Duncan Polytechnic High School. Overall, 9,000 items were collected through the Suit Drive, and 407 students were served directly through Suited for Success events. This initiative provides students with access to professional attire and resources to support their preparation for interviews, internships, and future career opportunities.

The Foundation recently hosted its Spill the Tea event on March 14, 2026, featuring a panel of accomplished women leaders from the Fresno community who shared their professional journeys, leadership experiences, and insights. The program also included a student panel, providing Fresno Unified students the opportunity to share their perspectives and engage directly with community leaders. The event was attended by 184 people and \$24,000 was raised towards The Foundation's mission.

The Foundation's Adopt-A-School and Adopt-A-Project initiatives continue to expand in reach and impact through strong community partnerships. In March, The Foundation supported 29 schools across the district with approximately \$29,000, providing essential resources including headphones, food for events, student incentives, art supplies, storage solutions, specialty seating, and clothing. These partnerships allow school and district funds to be redirected toward core instructional priorities. In addition, the Foundation is supporting through Adopt-A-Project fundraising pages, student field trips at Fort Miller Middle School and Duncan Polytechnic High School, further enriching student learning experiences.

The Foundation will also support multiple auxiliary graduation celebrations this year, including the Asian American Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander (AANHPI) Banquet for middle school students, as well as Native American, Latinx, African American, and Asian American Pacific Islander graduations. These events honor the cultural identities and achievements of Fresno Unified students and provide meaningful opportunities for celebration and community connection. Altogether, The Foundation provided approximately \$8,000 for these commemorations.

If you have any questions pertaining to the information in this communication, or require additional information, please contact Wendy McCulley at 559-457-3885.

Cabinet Approval: 

Name and Title: Wendy McCulley, Chief

Fresno Unified School District
Board Communication

From the Office of the Superintendent
To the Members of the Board of Education
Prepared by: Jeremy Ward, Assistant Superintendent

Date: May 08, 2026

Phone Number: (559) 248-7465

Regarding: Update on Career Technical Education Course Enrollment and Internships

The purpose of this communication is to provide the Board with an update on Career Technical Education (CTE) course enrollment. Career Technical Education is defined by the California Department of Education as “a program of study that involves a multiyear sequence of courses that integrate core academic knowledge with technical and occupational knowledge to provide students with a pathway to postsecondary education and careers.” The district utilizes specific structures to offer the widest array of CTE options to students: Linked Learning Pathways, the International Baccalaureate Career-related Program, California Partnership Academies, and CTE courses.

CTE courses are available to students in grades 7-12 and are aligned with the CTE Model Curriculum Standards. Taught by a CTE-credentialed teacher, CTE courses also leverage business and postsecondary partner expertise who provide insight into industry-recognized certifications, skill-specific curriculum, work-based learning opportunities, and college credit course alignment. CTE course enrollment as of December 01, 2025:

Grade	Enrollment	African American/Black	English Learner	Foster	Homeless	Students with Disabilities
07	1,640	133	163	12	25	246
08	1,285	109	111	08	12	200
09	2,628	162	257	20	23	303
10	1,281	70	114	11	02	123
11	2,183	112	237	07	06	195
12	2,621	162	265	11	09	228
Total	11,638	748	1,147	69	77	1,295

Internships integrate classroom knowledge and theory with practical application in professional or community settings. Students develop and apply technical and professional skills in the workforce while exploring different career paths and specializations that best suit their individual interests. Consequently, students better understand what skills and competencies are necessary for a variety of careers and have the resources to make informed decisions for post-secondary training and education. 1,143 CTE students have participated in 1,400 paid or unpaid total internships at 65 industry locations throughout the community since the last instructional day of the 2024/25 school year. 1,017 students, or 72.64%, participated in an unpaid internship; 383 students, or 27.36%, participated in a paid internship. Local companies providing student stipends can either hire the student and pay the student directly or allocate funds through the Foundation for Fresno Unified Students (Foundation) for specific CTE stipends. Students are then paid the stipend through The Foundation.

If you have any questions pertaining to the information in this communication or require additional information, please contact Jeremy Ward at (559) 248-7465.

Cabinet Approval: 
Carlos Castillo (May 7, 2026 09:51:24 PDT)

Name and Title: Chief Academic Officer, Carlos Castillo, Ed.D.