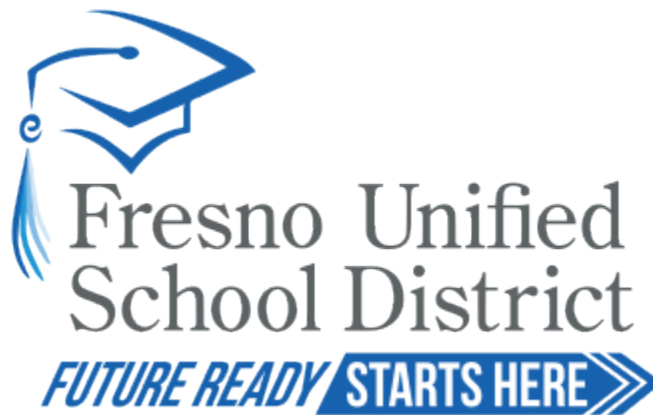




BOARD COMMUNICATIONS - SEPTEMBER 11, 2026

TO: Members of the Board of Education

FROM: Mao Misty Her, Superintendent

Page

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Mao Misty Her, Superintendent
2. **OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT**
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3. **OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF STAFF**
Ambra O'Connor, Chief of Staff
4. **OFFICE OF BUSINESS & FINANCIAL SERVICES**
Patrick Jensen, Chief Officer

4.1 [School Services of California Weekly Update Report for September 04, 2026.docx](#) 3


[School Services of California Weekly Update Report for September 04, 2026.pdf](#) 

4.2

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David Chavez, Chief Officer

8. OFFICE OF THE INSTRUCTIONAL DIVISION

Carlos Castillo, Ed.D., Chief Officer

8.1 [Student Transfer Applications in Atlas Parent Portal.docx](#) 

13

9. OFFICE OF OPERATIONAL SERVICES

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10. OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

Paoze Lee, Chief Officer

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: Kim Kelstrom, Chief Executive

Date: September 11, 2026

Phone Number: (559) 457-3907

Regarding: School Services Weekly Update Reports for September 04, 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 September 04, 2026, include the following articles:

- Legislature Wraps up the 2025-26 Legislative Session – September 01, 2026
- Long Talks but No Deal to Modify California Law Combating Antisemitism in Schools – September 01, 2026
- California Schools Are Sitting on Arts Money. A Change in Law Might Get Them to Spend it – September 03, 2026

If you have any questions about the information included in this communication, or need further information, please contact Kim Kelstrom at (559) 457-3907.

Cabinet Approval:



Name and Title: Patrick Jensen, Chief Financial Officer



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DATE: September 4, 2026

TO: Misty Her
Superintendent

AT: Fresno Unified School District

FROM: Your SSC Governmental Relations Team

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

Bill Signing Protocol

On September 1, 2026, the California Legislature concluded its work for the final year of the 2025-26 legislative session. The Legislature is now on recess and will formally conclude their work on November 30. Newly elected senators and assemblymembers (along with the 20 senators not up for election this cycle) will return to the Capitol on December 7, 2026, which is when the new and returning members will be sworn in and the 2027-28 legislative session officially begins. Below we provide the *Fiscal Report* article “Legislature Wraps up the 2025-26 Legislative Session” that details the key bills that were approved by the Legislature during the final days of the session.

With the Legislature on recess until after the midterm elections, all eyes turn to Governor Gavin Newsom, who has until the end of the month to sign or veto legislation. This year’s signing period carries some additional significance because it will be Newsom’s final end-of-session opportunity to act on legislation before leaving office in January. Given that the Governor has publicly acknowledged he is considering a run for President in 2028, his final signing and veto decisions may receive greater scrutiny for what they signal about his legacy in California, and the policy record he could carry onto the national stage.

While it remains difficult to predict how those considerations may affect any individual measure, his potential ambition provides an interesting backdrop as the Administration reviews the hundreds of bills awaiting action. Governor Newsom can act on bills sent to him at any time this month, but he has yet to act on any of the noteworthy public education bills highlighted in the article below. For this reason, we thought this week’s update would be a good time to provide a rundown on how Governor Newsom will unveil his actions over the next several weeks.

The Governor reveals his end-of-session legislative actions via press releases, which are often issued by policy area or topic (education, healthcare, energy, public safety, labor, etc.). Historically, education bills are among the last batches of legislation that the Governor acts on, meaning he typically waits

towards the end of the month to reveal what key education bills he has signed or vetoed. For some noteworthy bills, the Governor will host a bill signing ceremony either in Sacramento or at a location that is relevant to the measure being signed. Since this is an election year, it would not be surprising to see the Administration strategically use bill signing ceremonies, as these events can generate positive media coverage for both the Governor and legislative authors.

When the Governor vetoes a bill, it is accompanied by a veto message that provides the rationale behind returning the bill to the Legislature without his signature. Veto messages are often an interesting read because they provide critical insight into the Governor's legislative priorities and can offer a roadmap for how a proposal could be more successful in a future legislative attempt. However, that roadmap may be less instructive this year because any legislation reintroduced next year will be considered by a new Governor and Administration with potentially different policy priorities.

While the Legislature can override a gubernatorial veto with a two-thirds vote by both the Senate and Assembly, the state has not seen a successful veto override since 1980. Despite the comfortable supermajority Democrats currently hold in both houses, a veto override remains highly unlikely. If a lawmaker wishes to pursue a proposal that has been vetoed, the more likely path is to revisit the measure in the next legislative session and work with the incoming Administration on changes that could make the proposal more successful.

The Governor has until the end of Wednesday, September 30, 2026, to sign or veto the bills sent to him at the end of session. We will continue to provide bill signing updates on the key education bills that he acts on over the next several weeks.

Leilani Aguinaldo

Legislature Wraps up the 2025-26 Legislative Session

By Kyle Hyland
School Services of California's *Fiscal Report*
September 1, 2026

Today, September 1, 2026, the California Legislature concluded its work for the final year of the 2025-26 legislative session. While the California Constitution generally prohibits the Legislature from passing bills on or after September 1 of the second year of the biennial session, it provides exceptions for certain measures, including urgency statutes. The final bills considered by lawmakers today fell within these constitutional exceptions, allowing the Legislature to complete its remaining business before gaveling the session to a close.

Over the final days of session, the Legislature sent a number of significant bills to Governor Gavin Newsom that could have implications for local educational agencies (LEAs) if signed into law. Below, we highlight noteworthy education measures approved during the closing weeks of session.

As a reminder, because 2026 is the final year of the two-year legislative session, bills that failed to meet the August 31 deadline are now dead. If lawmakers want to pursue these proposals after the 2027-28 legislative session begins, they will need to introduce new legislation and start the legislative process anew.

Bills Sent to Governor Newsom

[Assembly Bill \(AB\) 917](#) (Ávila Farías, D-Concord)—**County Offices of Education: School Districts: Average Daily Attendance of Less than 250 Pupils: Permanent Status.** This bill would eliminate distinctions in permanent-status requirements based on a school district's or county office of education's (COE) size and generally provide permanent status to certificated employees after two consecutive years of service and reelection for a third year. Beginning July 1, 2027, service as an instructor in a regional occupational center or program would also count toward permanent status with the employing school district or COE.

[AB 1381](#) (Muratsuchi, D-Torrance)—**Education-Related Positions: Previous Employment Disclosures: Commission on Teacher Credentialing: Unprofessional Conduct.** This bill would strengthen employment-history requirements for certificated and classified school employees, including prohibiting an LEA or private school from hiring an applicant without completing required employment-history inquiries. Failure by a certificated applicant to disclose required employment history, or by certain administrators to ensure compliance, could constitute unprofessional conduct subject to Commission on Teacher Credentialing action.

[AB 1590](#) (Ransom, D-Stockton)—**California Career Technical Education Incentive Grant Program: Revised Allocation Formula.** This bill would require the California Department of Education (CDE), no later than the 2027-28 fiscal year, to develop a revised California Career Technical Education Incentive Grant allocation formula that ensures all funds appropriated for the program are fully allocated to eligible applicants each fiscal year.

[AB 1763](#) (Lee, D-San Jose)—**Excused Absences: Religious Observance.** This bill would require pupils to be excused from school to observe a holiday or ceremony of their religion without the existing requirement for a written parental request and principal approval.

AB 1871 (Fong, D-Alhambra)—Dual Enrollment: College and Career Access Pathways Partnerships. This bill would streamline participation in College and Career Access Pathways partnerships by eliminating the principal-recommendation requirement, allowing one application for continued participation, and removing the four-course-per-term limit while retaining the 15-unit cap. The bill would also revise annual reporting requirements for participating LEAs and community college districts.

AB 2017 (Haney, D-San Francisco)—State Holidays: Eid. This bill would add Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha as state holidays and authorize public schools and community colleges to close on those days, subject to applicable local procedures and collective bargaining requirements.

AB 2142 (Garcia, D-Rancho Cucamonga)—School Districts: Community College Districts: Short-Term Employees: Classified Service. This bill would create a rebuttable presumption that a TK-14 district must convert a short-term employee position into a classified service position when specified conditions are met, including when an employee exceeds prescribed time thresholds or is repeatedly rehired to perform substantially the same duties.

AB 2225 (Patel, D-San Diego)—Education Governance: Education Commissioner: Reporting. This bill would require the Education Commissioner, by October 1, 2028, to report to the Governor and Legislature on the state's progress toward consolidating and streamlining California's education governance structure and identify additional opportunities to eliminate fragmented or duplicative state requirements.

AB 2241 (Boerner, D-Encinitas)—School Facilities: Inclusive School Playgrounds. This bill would require the CDE to curate and maintain an online resource identifying best practices for designing inclusive school playgrounds that allow individuals with and without disabilities to play together.

AB 2440 (Muratsuchi)—Arts and Music in Schools—Funding Guarantee and Accountability Act: Allowable Uses: Pooled Funding: Certifications. This bill would clarify various provisions of Proposition 28 (2022), how LEAs may pool funding across school sites subject to specified requirements, and the methodology for demonstrating compliance with the supplement-not-supplant requirement. The bill would also revise related reporting and audit requirements.

AB 2468 (Patel)—School Accountability: Pupils with Disabilities: Inclusion. This bill would establish the Supporting Inclusive Practices Project in statute, with the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence (CCEE) responsible for statewide universal support and the CDE responsible for targeted assistance to LEAs and charter schools. The bill would also direct the \$30 million provided for the project in the 2026-27 Enacted Budget to the CCEE for allocation to the El Dorado COE for the universal-support component.

AB 2490 (Valencia, D-Anaheim)—Teacher Credentialing: Emergency Career Substitute Teaching Permit: Alternative Qualifications. This bill would expand eligibility for the Emergency Career Substitute Teaching Permit by creating an alternative pathway based on professional development, orientation, and mentoring rather than prior substitute-teaching experience. Qualifying permit holders could serve for up to 70 cumulative days in a single classroom assignment, including a special education classroom.

AB 2496 (Solache, D-Lakewood)—School Accountability Report Card: California School Dashboard: Local Control Accountability Plan: Local Control Funding Formula Budget Overview. This bill would require the CDE to report to the Legislature on duplication between information in the School Accountability Report Card (SARC) and other publicly available data. The bill would also eliminate the February 28

deadline for presenting the annual Local Control and Accountability Plan update and Local Control Funding Formula Budget Overview and remove certain SARC reporting requirements.

AB 2526 (Muratsuchi)—Special Education Local Plan Areas: Apportionments: Alternate Assessments. Contingent upon increased state funding, this bill would revise the special education low-incidence funding formula to include both pupils with low-incidence disabilities and pupils eligible to take specified alternate assessments.

AB 2555 (Patel)—English Learners: Reclassification. This urgency bill would substantially revise the process for reclassifying English learners as English proficient. Beginning July 1, 2027, pupils meeting the state-established score on the applicable English language proficiency assessment would be reclassified as English proficient. Beginning July 1, 2028, the bill would also establish an alternative reclassification pathway for certain English learners with Individualized Education Programs and require four years of monitoring following reclassification.

Senate Bill (SB) 133 (Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review)—Education Finance: Education Omnibus Trailer Bill. This education cleanup trailer bill would make numerous changes to implement and clarify provisions of the 2026-27 Enacted Budget, including modifications related to universal prekindergarten, community schools, school nutrition, dual enrollment, educator workforce programs, the Student Support and Professional Development Discretionary Block Grant, differentiated assistance, literacy coaches, and programs serving newcomer and homeless students. The bill would also make various changes to previously appropriated funding, including expenditure timelines and program eligibility and implementation requirements.

SB 685 (Cortese, D-San Jose)—Special Education: Nonpublic Schools and Agencies. This bill would eliminate the requirement that certified nonpublic schools and agencies (NPS/As) be nonsectarian while prohibiting public funds from being used for religious instruction. The bill would also strengthen NPS/A certification, credentialing, background-check, incident-reporting, monitoring, and enforcement requirements.

SB 1067 (Weber Pierson, D-San Diego)—Pupil Instruction: Math Assessments. This bill would establish a statewide framework for mathematics diagnostic assessments for pupils in kindergarten through second grade. Beginning in the 2028-29 school year, LEAs would be required to annually administer a state-approved diagnostic assessment to identify pupils' mathematics knowledge, learning needs, and need for additional support.

SB 1083 (Pérez, D-Pasadena)—Noncertificated Public School Employees: Private School Employees: Egregious Misconduct: Statewide Data System: Commission on Teacher Credentialing: Adverse Actions: Contracts and Background Checks for Educational Services. This bill would strengthen employment-history disclosure, misconduct reporting, and background check requirements for noncertificated public and private school employees. The bill would also expand statewide misconduct data requirements and impose additional background check and notification requirements on contractors and subcontractors who provide services involving contact with pupils.

Next Steps

The Legislature is now in recess until Monday, December 7, 2026, when lawmakers will convene the 2027-28 legislative session for organizational purposes, and newly elected legislators will be sworn into office.

Following the organizational session, lawmakers will adjourn and return to Sacramento in January to begin their regular legislative work.

Governor Newsom has until September 30 to sign or veto bills sent to him during the final days of the legislative session. Budget bills and urgency measures generally take effect immediately upon being signed into law, while most other measures will take effect January 1, 2027, unless a different operative or effective date is specified in the bill.

We will monitor the Governor's actions on these bills over the next month through subsequent *Fiscal Report* articles and provide analysis on how newly enacted measures will impact LEAs.

Note: Lawmakers ended the session without reaching an agreement to clarify provisions of Assembly Bill (AB) 715 (Zbur, Statutes of 2025), leaving the state's new anti-discrimination law unchanged despite concerns from education groups that its requirements for "factually accurate" and unbiased instruction could limit classroom discussion of controversial topics.

Long Talks but No Deal to Modify California Law Combating Antisemitism in Schools

By John Fensterwald
EdSource
September 1, 2026

Months of intensive negotiations that continued up to last week's filing deadline failed to produce an agreement on a bill that would clarify the language in a highly contested law that expanded anti-discrimination protections in California classrooms.

Gov. Gavin Newsom signed Assembly Bill 715 last October with the understanding that the authors, Assemblymembers Rick Zbur, D-Hollywood, and Dawn Addis, D-Morro Bay, would clarify language that some of the bill's opponents said would chill open discussion of highly charged issues, such as the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

AB 715 took effect on Jan. 1. It strengthened existing bans on discrimination based on race, ethnicity, religion, nationality, sex and gender preference. It extended protections to prohibit textbooks, instructional materials and teacher professional development that would subject a student to discrimination. It also requires that classroom instruction be factually accurate and align with adopted curriculum.

The legislation also created a new Office of Civil Rights, which would include an antisemitism prevention coordinator to identify and work to prevent bias and discrimination through training and resources. Parents would be notified annually of their right to file formal complaints about discriminatory conduct.

The California Legislative Jewish Caucus pressed for the law, with the support of other legislative ethnic and racial caucuses, following a sharp rise in documented antisemitic incidents involving student conduct and biased instruction. Oakland Unified is the latest district to be sanctioned by the California Department of Education for its failure to address antisemitism.

But school organizations, including the California Teachers Association and the California School Boards Association, as well as Arab American and some Jewish groups, argued that vague language in the bill would discourage frank discussions and criticism of the Israeli government and its treatment of Palestinians. Teachers predicted they would be subjected to complaints by those who misconstrued criticism of Zionism as antisemitism or who questioned literature or works of art not deemed factual.

An effort to clarify the law's potential 'unintended consequences'

When Newsom signed the law, he said representatives of the entire education ecosystem had “urgent concerns about unintended consequences” of the law, and added that he had commitments by the bill’s authors to “work quickly on a follow-up measure.”

Lawmakers got to work on a proposed bill to clarify the language. Zbur said there was agreement on a few issues in the proposed bill, Assembly Bill 2615, such as excising troublesome passages of text without removing the entire text or materials and giving districts 20 days to respond to complaints.

But, there was no agreement on “language that would preserve the safeguards of AB 715 and address the concerns of stakeholders,” he said.

“We do not believe that the points they (the opponents) raised have merit,” Zbur said. “They continue to assert that the protective provisions of the bill could prevent teaching controversial topics in the classroom. We do not believe that was the case.”

“They wanted changes that were outside the scope of a cleanup bill,” he said.

CTA President David Goldberg faulted Zbur and Addis for failing to compromise.

“The authors committed to clean up this language to address concerns, and they didn’t deliver. As written, AB 715 opens the door to endless fights over what counts as ‘accuracy’ — and that chills teachers’ ability to explore tough, controversial issues,” he said in a statement. “We are committed to defending every student’s right to a comprehensive education.”

Troy Flint, chief of communications for the California School Boards Association, credited those involved with clarifying the law. But he expressed disappointment over failure to reach a deal.

“Negotiations with the authors lasted for months as we sought to achieve clarity on what instruction teachers are allowed to provide under the subjective ‘fair and balanced’ standard cited in the original legislation,” Flint said in a statement.

“Our impression is that both sides worked in good faith and the coalition won some concessions, such as the ability to excise transgressive sections from textbooks instead of discarding the entire textbook,” he said. “In the end, we were unable to reach agreement on the critical issue of defining, in a meaningful and practical way, what constitutes a violation of AB 715.”

“Nor could we agree on how subjective topics like fictional literature could be accommodated under the ‘factual’ information restriction included in AB 715,” he said.

An Assembly analysis of AB 2615 in late April, the last time the bill had been amended, summed up the unresolved, problematic issues with state-adopted curriculum raises additional concerns, the analysis said.

“Teachers have always had the ability to introduce new content in order to keep their subjects current, explore new ways of teaching concepts, and make school engaging for students. It is unclear if content beyond the adopted curriculum could be delivered under the requirements of this bill.”

In early January, a judge in U.S. district court in Oakland rejected a lawsuit by four teachers and several parents of students to prevent the enactment of AB 715, which they said would violate their First Amendment rights. Judge Noël Wise ruled it was premature to determine the consequences of exercising speech, since, on balance, the state has the power to determine what must be taught in public schools.

She dismissed the amended lawsuit in a final order in July. “Student plaintiffs have not alleged that they were going to receive information related to Israel and Palestine and now will not,” Wise wrote.

With the first full school year under the law underway, Flint said that the school board association will monitor the law’s impact.

Note: A bill on the Governor’s desk, AB 2440 (Muratsuchi, D-Torrance). Look to clarify provisions of Proposition 28 (2022) funding.

California Schools Are Sitting on Arts Money. A Change in Law Might Get Them to Spend it

By Carolyn Jones
CalMatters
September 3, 2026

A bill to clarify how schools should spend California’s \$1 billion annual investment in arts education is headed for Gov. Gavin Newsom’s desk after legislators reached a compromise with a champion of the original initiative.

“I’m delighted to come to an agreement that will further arts education for kids in California,” said Austin Beutner, former superintendent of Los Angeles Unified and chief architect behind Proposition 28, California’s ambitious vision for music, theater, drama and fine art in K-12 schools.

The bill, AB 2440, seeks to streamline and clarify some of the finer points of Prop. 28, which voters overwhelmingly passed in 2022. Prop. 28 requires schools to use their new arts funding to supplement – not replace – existing programs. But schools’ confusion over Prop. 28 rules had led dozens of districts to return their arts money to the state, for fear of spending it incorrectly and getting sued.

That was the case with Los Angeles Unified, which Beutner sued in 2025, claiming the district cut existing arts programs and replaced them using Prop. 28 money – an allegation the district denies. That case is pending in Los Angeles Superior Court.

Clarifying Prop. 28

AB 2440, by Assemblymember Al Muratsuchi, a Democrat from Torrance, aims to allay schools’ apprehension about spending their arts money. Among other things, the bill more closely aligns Prop. 28

with the state's existing arts framework, so schools would have an exact definition of what constitutes an arts class.

The bill also makes clear that schools can pool their Prop. 28 money and share arts teachers and other resources. And it addresses murky issues such as whether arts funding from outside groups, such as band boosters or nonprofits, counts as part of schools' existing arts budgets.

Beutner originally balked at the bill when he learned of it, saying it "gutted" the intent of Prop. 28 by giving schools too much leeway in how they spent their money. He feared that more districts would use Prop. 28 money to backfill cuts to existing programs, rather than add to the overall arts offerings.

His opposition threatened to derail the bill, but he and the bill's supporters reached a compromise after news coverage in CalMatters and other outlets. The new version of the bill contains the line: "The local education agency shall certify that all provisions of (Proposition 28) have been implemented at each of its school sites."

'This will mean more art'

That amended language was enough to satisfy Beutner, who withdrew his opposition in mid-August.

"My hope is that this causes districts to further reflect on whether they're in compliance with Prop. 28," Beutner said. "I'm delighted we were able to collaborate on this."

The bill passed unanimously.

Kyle Holmes, director of statewide arts initiatives for California County Superintendents, a prominent supporter of Muratsuchi's bill, said he's thrilled it appears headed for passage.

"For kids, this will mean more art," Holmes said. "That's the heart of this bill, making sure schools have better access to Prop. 28 funds, giving schools the clarity they need to get funding to students."

Prop. 28 still has a few obstacles, though. A big one is finding arts teachers. Some districts have had arts teacher vacancies for six months or more, as the existing supply hasn't met the demand. A recent Stanford Research Institute study found a shortfall of 5,000 arts teachers in California.

"We're seeing more and more colleges offering credential programs for the arts," Holmes said. "But more young people need to know that if you're interested in teaching the arts there's a clear pathway to a high-paying career."

Fresno Unified School District
Board Communication

From the Office of the Superintendent

Date: September 11, 2026

To the Members of the Board of Education

Prepared by: Jennifer Stacy-Alcantara, Associate Superintendent

Phone Number: (559) 248-7538

Regarding: Student Transfer Applications in Atlas Parent Portal

The purpose of this communication is to provide the Board with an update on two new features within the Atlas Parent Portal that increase transparency and improve the experience for families navigating the student transfer process. This work was informed by feedback from the Board of Education and our educational partners as part of our ongoing commitment to operational excellence and customer service.

The Atlas Development Team, the Project Management Office, and the Transfers Department collaborated on this initiative over the past three years to streamline the transfer process for families.

The first enhancement, implemented in January 2026, allows families to respond to placement offers directly through the Atlas Parent Portal. This improvement enabled the district to fill seats at magnet and admission-criteria schools approximately two months earlier than in previous years. In addition, daily Atlas Parent Portal usage increased from approximately 280 visits per day to more than 1,000 visits per day, reflecting strong family engagement.

The second enhancement launched on September 01, 2026, allows families to submit transfer requests online through the Atlas Parent Portal. This process is available to currently enrolled students, students not currently enrolled, and students residing outside the district.

The online transfer application, which is available in English, Spanish, and Hmong, became available at midnight on September 01, 2026, and the first application was received at 12:02 a.m. During the first day, 325 families submitted a total of 338 transfer applications. Of these, 246 applications were submitted for currently enrolled students, and 92 applications were submitted for students not currently enrolled in the district.

Family feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. One parent shared that although they had the Transfers Department's step-by-step guide available as a resource, the application process was so user-friendly that they were able to complete it without referring to the guide. Another parent described the experience as "lovely."

If you have any questions about the information included in this communication or need further information, please contact Julie Hoopes at (559)248-7487. Thank you.

Cabinet Approval: 

Carlos Castillo (Sep 10, 2026 10:02:20 PDT)

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