



COLLECTIVE UNIFICATION NEWSLETTER

This Unification Newsletter is a joint effort of the Monterey County Office of Education (MCOE), Greenfield Union School District, King City Union Elementary School District, and South Monterey County Joint Union High School District. Its intent is to provide timely updates as district and county leadership continue the state-directed planning process for a potential dual unification.

On March 30, 2026, district and county leaders met at the MCOE Board Room and via Zoom to continue discussions regarding the potential reorganization of the South Monterey County Joint Union High School District area into two unified school districts. The meeting included superintendents, governing board members, legal counsel, and MCOE consultant Christy White, who are working collaboratively to develop the formal plans and recommendations requested by the State Board of Education.

As background, the State Board of Education directed the Monterey County Committee on School District Organization to prepare recommendations regarding the possible reorganization that would dissolve the existing South Monterey County Joint Union High School District, Greenfield Union School District, and King City Union School District and replace them with two new unified school districts: a Greenfield Unified School District and a King City Unified School District. These recommendations are expected to move forward to the State Board of Education for consideration at their July meeting.

Highlights from the March 30 Planning Meeting

Two public hearings were held on March 23, one in Greenfield and the other in King City, providing opportunities for community members to learn more about the proposal and share input. Leaders reviewed feedback received following the public hearings, including a formal letter submitted by King City Union Elementary School District. The letter highlighted several important areas needing clarity to ensure fairness and long-term sustainability for both proposed unified districts.

Leaders discussed ways to address potential future liabilities that may arise after unification. Because these situations are often unknown or hypothetical, the group explored options such as including language in the plan that outlines a process for resolving issues if they occur.

Additionally, insurance options, such as securing a “Tail Policy,” are being explored to ensure coverage for any pre-unification liabilities.

The group reviewed options on how to equitably manage retirement and post-employment benefit obligations. Because staff assignments may shift following unification, an actuarial approach is being considered to fairly divide existing liabilities, while ensuring that future costs are the responsibility of the employing district.

Discussions also included how to equitably manage staff during the transition period. Leaders are exploring solutions to ensure these costs are fairly balanced during an initial transition period, especially in a scenario of uneven staffing costs.

To address these topics, legal counsel from all districts are working collaboratively to develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or Agreement. This Agreement will provide information on how specific issues, such as liabilities, benefits, and staffing, may be addressed, and will be included as part of the final plans and recommendations. This Agreement is targeted for completion by April 15, 2026, allowing each district’s governing board to review and approve it during their April meetings. The approved Agreement will then be submitted to the Monterey County Committee on School District Organization for its April 28, 2026 meeting, where it will be included in the final Plans and Recommendations.

The next Unification Planning Meeting is tentatively scheduled for April 14, to review the draft Agreement and ensure alignment across all districts.

Additionally, the Monterey County Office of Education continues to work closely with the California Department of Education (CDE), providing updates on local progress and preparing materials for submission to the State Board of Education’s planned July 8 or 9, 2026 meeting. This collaborative effort remains focused on thoughtful planning, transparency, and ensuring that any future decisions support the long-term success of students, families, and communities across South Monterey County.