

# ABCFT YOUnionews



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**HONORING  
ABRAHAM  
LINCOLN'S  
BIRTHDAY**  
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## **HOTLINKS!** In this edition of YOUnionews

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**HOTLINKS-** Contact ABCFT at ABC Federation of Teachers [abcft@abcusd.us](mailto:abcft@abcusd.us)

- For confidential emails - use your non-work email to write to us at: [abcft2317@gmail.com](mailto:abcft2317@gmail.com)
- [ABCFT 2023-2026 Strategic Plan Summary](#) **NEW!**
- [ABCFT 2023-2026 Strategic Plan Details](#) **NEW!**
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# PUBLIC SCHOOLS UNITE US

SUPPORT EDUCATORS

HELP OUR STUDENTS

PROTECT OUR RIGHTS

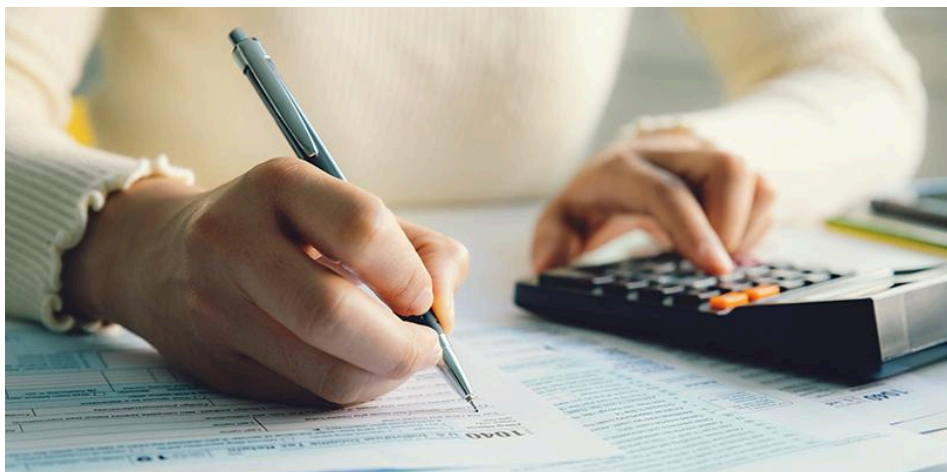
ADVANCE DEMOCRACY

UNITE OUR NATION

## MEMBERSHIP TAXES UPDATE

When members file for their taxes, we often receive questions about the amount of dues they can claim. Last year's dues were challenging to calculate due to changes in the dues and adjustments made in the middle of the year. Here is a link to the complete documentation of the dues and changes—this document also breaks down the monthly dues amounts.

[You will find the details at the bottom of the document \(CLICK THIS LINK\).](#)



**Total full-time dues for January 2024  
through December 2024 = \$1,259.38**

# FAQ - NEWS AND CLARIFICATIONS

## **Schools are getting smaller, do I need to look at an Order of Employment list?**

We are currently working with Human Resources to get an updated list. They are having to go back and readjust the list due to guideline changes by the state of California that have been made that may impact hire dates. (For example, I was an intern credential and wasn't given credit on the list for those two years I was under an inter credential. The state changed guidelines to include those years as the start of employment ~Ray)



We hope to have one out shortly. Seniority lists are typically only used by districts during layoffs, which we don't anticipate having this year. However, we are encouraging the district to release an accurate list shortly because it is important to ABCFT members.

## **Temporary teachers got an official letter from the district stating that their employment for ABC is concluded at the end of the school year. What is this letter and what do I do?**

This letter to temporary teachers is a state law that all temporary teachers must receive a notice by March 15 that their service ends after the school year is completed. This doesn't mean they don't have a position for the following school year, but it does allow the district to release teachers as needed. We encourage temporary teachers to discuss their status for the next year with their principal or program supervisor. The administrators are more aware of who will return and are always the best advocates for a position. They lobby the district for positions throughout the Spring.

## **I'm a special education teacher being asked to go over my caseload maximum. Furthermore, I am also doing more initials and there could be more students that will qualify. OR I'm a classroom general education teacher being asked to go over my class size maximum. What do I do in these situations?**

ABCFT encourages all Special Educators to follow the contract maximums that have been negotiated so that Special Education teachers have adequate time for individual instruction, interventions, communication, and paperwork. All students deserve protected time and contractual efforts to ensure a proper education. You have 20 days from your email to file a grievance concerning caseload levels.

## CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Every February CFT joins educators, unions, and communities across the country in celebrating Black History Month. This month is an opportunity not only to recognize African Americans' critical contributions to our country and communities but also to recommit ourselves to fighting for equity, equality, inclusion, and teaching honest history. This year's national theme is [African Americans and Labor](#).





To help CFT members recognize Black History Month, we've compiled a great set of resources on the [CFT website](#), including articles to read, K-12 curricula, and great videos. Join the conversation on [Instagram](#) and [Bluesky](#) to follow along and share.

## ABCFT PRESIDENT'S REPORT - Ray Gaer



*Consistent and regular communication is a union's most important tool for advocating for its members at the bargaining table. Every conversation with members is focused on the result of negotiating for the future prosperity and well-being of ALL ABCFT members. This weekly report informs members about issues impacting their working/learning conditions and mental well-being. Our work as a Union is a larger conversation and united, we make the YOUnion.*

**Every week is action-packed across the district! It's been raining and the students at the elementary level are extra squirmy in the chairs; schools have OPEN HOUSE events, staff and students getting sick or trying not to get sick by doing extra cleaning, a school board meeting, a union chat, an ABCFT Site Representative meeting that included their principals, an emergency staff meeting on the legalities of undocumented students and law enforcement, and \_\_\_\_\_ (insert your site events, classroom shenanigans and any crisis here) \_\_\_\_\_. However, when visiting with teachers and nurses, they hold things together.**

Ruben and I are on a site visitation world tour over the next few months. Visits with teachers and nurses before negotiations is a decisive moment of energy exchange with members. Teachers are full of good insights and thought-provoking questions, and I am grateful to have the opportunity to engage with you face-to-face. Many of you I have known for a long time and I'm always eager to meet new people because everyone's perspective is unique. I never know which person will spark an idea. For example, I was at Kennedy today having lunch with the staff and we had a good discussion about the calendar, its complicated history, and how the school year calendar has changed over the years. A fresh option was discussed during our conversation, adding a fresh new piece of the puzzle that will help teachers. Your insights are a critical element of our collective bargaining process.

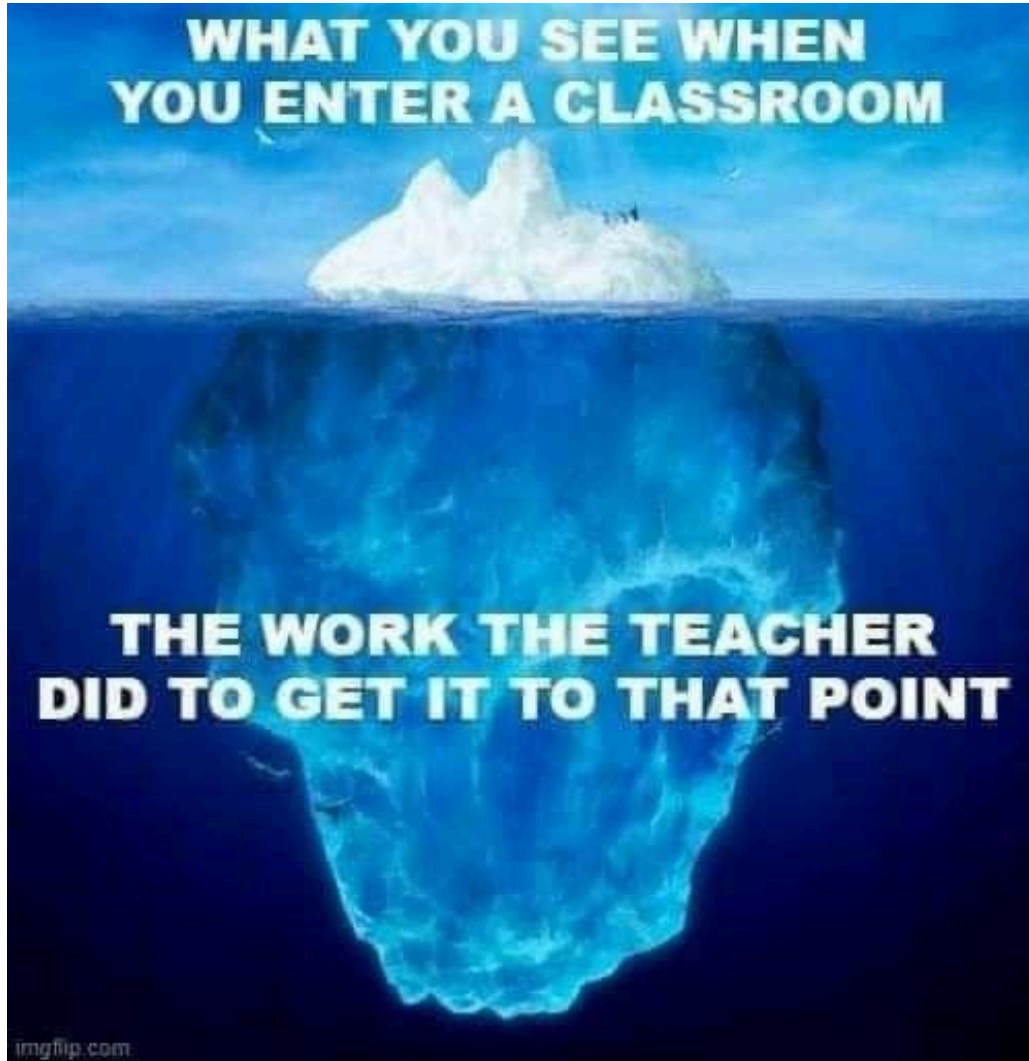
ABC teachers and nurses have an incredible level of background understanding on most topics. ABCFT members can have high-level, thought-provoking discussions and constructive insights into many of the significant issues we are dealing with as a school district. The inclusion process in decision-making in ABC empowers us all.

Ruben is in Sacramento this week, becoming a Commissioner for the state credential committee. I'm sure he will share his gained knowledge and experience in next week's message. It was a busy week but I did take the time to participate in a District Empathy Interview, where I was asked about some of my experiences in ABC over the span of my career. I was interviewed by former Assistant Superintendent of Academic Services, Dr. Valencia Mayfield, with whom I have worked for over two decades. At the end of the interview, she asked if there was a question that she didn't ask that I would have liked to answer. I told her that you never asked me why I stayed in ABC. It is a big question and complicated, but my answer was clear. I waited and will continue to remain as long as there is a culture of inclusion and collective problem-solving, and that gives me HOPE. It

gives me HOPE that we can do what's right for students, the employees, and the community. Without HOPE, we wouldn't have ever become teachers. That's why I stayed...well, and the people here are cool too! Okay, I've gotta get this out since I'm running late. Have a great three-day weekend!

In YOUnity,

Ray Gaer  
President, ABCFT



*A Union of Educators  
& Classified Professionals*

**CALIFORNIA FEDERATION OF TEACHERS**



# AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS

## AFT's Weingarten on Trump Order Attacking Public Schools

**WASHINGTON**—AFT President Randi Weingarten issued the following statement after media reports indicated President Trump was preparing to sign an executive order designed to syphon federal money for public schools into unaccountable private hands:

"Americans of all political stripes want safe and welcoming public schools where kids are engaged and have the knowledge and skills to thrive in careers, college and life. This plan is a direct attack on all that parents and families hold dear; it's a ham-fisted, recycled and likely illegal scheme to diminish choice and deny classrooms resources to pay for tax cuts for billionaires. "We already know that vouchers go mostly to wealthy families whose kids are already in private school. This order hijacks federal money used to level the playing field for poor and disadvantaged kids and hands it directly to unaccountable private operators—a tax cut for the rich. It diminishes community schools and the services they provide. It dilutes crucial literacy and arts education grants. It takes an ax to the Department of Defense schools that are a global model for student success. It weakens Bureau of Indian Education schools already struggling due to underfunding and neglect.

"Voters overwhelmingly rejected billionaire-backed voucher scams in November—even in states Trump won—because they know vouchers hurt student achievement, bankrupt state budgets and deny opportunity to rural and urban communities. They spurned extremist school board candidates and opted again and again for levies and ballot initiatives to improve public schools.

"While this order will succeed in uniting parents and educators in a righteous effort to defend public schools, it is unfortunate that we have to spend time fighting for—rather than strengthening—the institutions 90 percent of American kids attend."

## AFT's Randi Weingarten Responds to Elon Musk's Invasion of Our Privacy

**WASHINGTON**—AFT President Randi Weingarten issued the following statement after reports that Elon Musk has been granted illegal access to Americans' personal data:

"Why is President Trump allowing Elon Musk to muck around with people's private financial data?

"It appears Musk has hacked into millions of Americans' personal information and now has access to their taxes, Social Security, student debt and financial aid filings.

"We are deeply concerned, as an organization that represents hundreds of thousands of educators, healthcare providers and public service workers who pay taxes, including Social Security, and who have their own student loan debt or are parents of students enrolled in the federal student aid program.

"What are the guardrails to stop this unlawful invasion of privacy? No one gave the U.S. government permission to weaponize confidential financial and personal information against American citizens. And certainly no one gave Elon Musk the right to steal private data—presumably to assist in cutting taxes for himself and other billionaires.

"Musk is an unelected and unaccountable oligarch. His so-called Department of Government Efficiency was not created by Congress. And voters certainly did not elect Trump to hijack their financial information and hand it over to billionaires like Musk, whose secret operation is operating with zero transparency and in [clear violation of federal law](#).

"We are urging Congress and the president to protect those they were elected to serve and to restrain Musk before he puts millions of Americans' personal finances at even graver risk."

###

[Find the latest AFT news here](#)

Follow AFT President Randi Weingarten: <http://twitter.com/rweingarten>



## ----- NEWS STORY HIGHLIGHT-----

### **1 in 5 child care workers is an immigrant. Trump's deportations and raids have many terrified**

In America, 1 in 5 child care workers is an immigrant. In big cities like New York, immigrants make up more than 40 percent of the child care workforce. In Los Angeles, it's nearly 50 percent.

"In the care economy, immigrants are a backbone of this work," said Erica Phillips, executive director of the National Association for Family Child Care. These early educators are "dedicating themselves to providing one of the most essential and impactful services to young children across the nation."

America can ill afford to lose child care staff. Many programs already struggle with chronic turnover, which can create instability in the lives of the children in their care. Turnover rates in the child care industry are 65 percent higher than the median in other industries. Low wages — the average child care worker makes \$13.07 an hour — make it hard to recruit staff. Caregivers often lack benefits and can make more working in fast food or retail roles. The pandemic sapped the workforce, and it has been slow to recover. In response to a shortage of child care workers, several states have tried to pass laws allowing teenagers to work in those classrooms.

<https://hechingerreport.org/1-in-5-child-care-workers-is-an-immigrant-trumps-deportations-and-raids-have-many-terrified/>

### **President Trump prepares order to close the Education Department**

President Donald Trump is reportedly preparing an executive order aimed at eventually closing the Education Department, according to three people briefed on its contents, who said it could be released as early as this week. The department, with approximately 4,400 employees and an annual budget of \$79 billion, has broad responsibility over three major areas: managing approximately \$1.6 trillion in federal student loan debt, overseeing implementation and enforcement of the nation's special education law, and administering Title I. It is among the agencies that Elon Musk's Department of Government Efficiency is looking at as part of its efforts to overhaul federal bureaucracy. The executive order would shut down all functions of the agency that aren't written explicitly into statute or move certain functions to other departments. The draft order reportedly acknowledges that only Congress can shut down the department and instead directs the agency to begin to diminish itself, by placing staff on administrative leave, and offering staff the opportunity to take voluntary redundancy. A White House official confirmed that it is preparing for executive action later this month that will fulfill Trump's campaign pledge to defund the department.

USA Today   NPR   Wall Street Journal

## ----- STUDENTS PROTEST -----

### **Children skip school to take part in 'day without immigrants' protest**

On Monday, teachers reported lower attendance as children across Southern California, and nationwide, took part in observance of "A day without immigrants." Dozens of businesses and families also joined the protest against President Trump's immigration policies. Throughout Los Angeles USD, attendance was 66% Monday compared with 93% for the year as a whole — and 91% last week, according to district data. A teacher at Parmelee Avenue Elementary School in South Los Angeles, who asked to not be named because they were not authorized to speak out, said that 390 of the school's 670 students were absent Monday and that many parents had said it was because of the protest. Victor Narro, project director at the UCLA Labor Center, added

that the protest highlighted the fact that with the population growing older and birth rates falling, the country will have to rely more on the immigrant workforce for the economy to remain strong.

[Los Angeles Times](#)

## ----- NATIONAL NEWS -----

### **Federal spending freeze felt across energy projects**

Although two court orders have ordered the Trump administration to unfreeze funding for federal grants, a list of impacted initiatives reveals that all but one Inflation Reduction Act grant program remained frozen, as of Wednesday. The list includes the Clean School Bus Program. "We can't access these funds, so we don't want to put them in a situation where they've signed a contract or even spent money and can't get this back from the federal government," commented Kirsten Stasio, chief executive of the Nevada Clean Energy Fund (NCEF), a state-created nonprofit and green bank. The Clean School Bus grant is intended to benefit rural districts that can't afford to replace their aging buses, which she said are "literally running into the ground." Stasio said her group told school districts to hold off on planning those purchases, adding: "[W]e don't want to put them in a situation where they've signed a contract or even spent money and can't get this back from the federal government." However Michelle Moore, CEO of fellow nonprofit Groundswell, said she expects that the federal government will unfreeze funding after the administration has time to review how it fits into Trump's policy agenda. "The federal freeze doesn't mean that you don't have to do the work. It just means that the federal government isn't reimbursing you right now," she added.

[Politico](#)

### **Oval Office prepares executive order to eliminate Department of Education**

The Trump administration is reportedly drafting an executive order that would initiate the process of eliminating the Department of Education. The prospect of dismantling the Department of Education has led to questions and fears over potential chaos over how key responsibilities and billions in federal funding, including handling federal financial aid, grants for disadvantaged students, and civil rights enforcement, would be affected. The department's K-12 programs serve more than 50m students attending 130,000 public and private schools; federal grant, loan, and work-study assistance benefits more than 13m post-secondary students. On Tuesday, the president said he wants Linda McMahon, his pick for Education Secretary, to "put herself out of a job." He also criticized the cost and performance of the U.S. education system, commenting "We spend more per pupil than any other country in the world, and we're ranked at the bottom of the list," and adding he wants to "let the states run schools." The main obstacle to Trump's goal would be in the Senate, where Republicans hold a 53-47 majority but major legislation, like a bill to eliminate a cabinet-level agency, would need 60 votes and thus the support of seven Democrats to pass.

[CNN](#) [Los Angeles Times](#) [New York Times](#) [Reuters](#)

### **Trump's order targets transgender student athletes**

President Donald Trump signed an executive order on Wednesday aimed at withholding federal subsidies from K-12 schools that permit transgender girls to compete on women's teams. During the signing, Trump stated, "You've been waiting a long time for this. So have I," highlighting the order's alignment with National Girls and Women in Sports Day. The action is part of a broader initiative to reverse protections for transgender individuals, as many states have already enacted laws restricting transgender participation in sports. Around 3% of high school students identify as transgender, with 2% questioning their gender identity, according to U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention data. Those students face higher rates of bullying and



depression than their peers. Transgender students are less likely than their peers to participate in school sports. The order mandates that the Secretary of Education prioritize civil rights cases against schools allowing transgender girls on girls' teams, and threatens funding revocation for non-compliance. The order also seeks to influence major athletic organizations, including the Olympics, to ensure participation eligibility is based on sex rather than gender identity.

[NPR](#) [Reuters](#) [New York Times](#)

## **Parents urge NYC schools to respond to EO on race and gender**

Parents and educators in New York City are expressing concern over the lack of a systemwide response from Chancellor Melissa Aviles-Ramos regarding President Donald Trump's recent executive order on race and gender in schools. The order threatens federal funding for schools that support gender nonconforming students or teach about racism. Eliza Hittman, a parent, stated, "The silence is alarming," reflecting the anxiety among families. While the New York State Education Department condemned the order as "antithetical" to protecting vulnerable students, the city's response has been muted. Parents like Justin Krebs are calling for clarity and reassurance from city leadership, emphasizing the need for communication about protections for LGBTQ+ students. Education Department spokesperson Nicole Bronwstein mentioned they are evaluating the executive order's impact but did not confirm plans for a systemwide statement.

[Chalkbeat](#)

## **Education Department places dozens of officials on leave over Trump's DEI order**

Dozens of U.S. Department of Education officials were placed on paid administrative leave Friday night, according to Brittany Holder, a spokesperson for the American Federation of Government Employees. The union estimated that at least 55 staffers received leave notices on Friday, but the group expects that number to climb. The employees worked in multiple offices across the agency and included civil rights attorneys, public relations and IT specialists, people who helped students defrauded by colleges and others. Sheria Smith, union president for Department of Education career employees, said the employees placed on paid leave had attended a two-day diversity training seminar in 2019 during the first Trump administration "that was required for senior-level employees and strongly encouraged for others," as well as similar training under the Biden administration. Others affected had either participated in a one-day lunch training on DEI or had volunteered with an agency group or committee that plans programs such as Black History Month celebrations.

[CNN](#) [USA Today](#)

## **Chuck Schumer calls for safety board revival**

Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) has criticized the Trump administration for disbanding the Federal School Safety Clearinghouse External Advisory Board, which was established to advise on school safety measures. Schumer stated: "I'm asking President Trump and [Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem] to immediately bring the safety board back because it is the law." The board, created under the 2022 Bipartisan Safer Communities Act, included school superintendents, safety experts, and parents of victims from school shootings, such as Tony Montalto, whose daughter Gina was killed in the Parkland shooting. The Department of Homeland Security justified the disbandment as part of a broader directive to eliminate advisory committees that do not align with national security priorities. The agency's press office emphasized that it would no longer support committees that undermine its mission.

[Education Week News](#)

## ----- STATE NEWS -----

### Thirty-two California school districts unite to demand better conditions

Over 77,000 educators from 32 California school districts have united to demand better conditions, including smaller class sizes, additional resources, competitive wages and benefits for teachers, and improved mental health support for students. The We Can't Wait campaign, launched by the California Teachers Association, was announced in a virtual press conference, which featured remarks by California Teachers Association President David Goldberg, parents, and union leaders throughout the state. Goldberg said that the 32 districts served more than 1m students and generated \$22.8m in revenue every year, and the campaign would be about districts throughout California supporting each other in getting their demands met. The campaign highlights that smaller districts like Live Oak are not alone in the conditions they face.

[KQED](#)

### California responds to trans student athlete ban

President Donald Trump's executive order banning transgender women and girls from participating in school sports has provoked an immediate response in California. Organizations like the **California Interscholastic Federation** and **San Jose State University** have expressed their commitment to supporting transgender athletes. NCAA President Charlie Baker emphasized the need for "clear, consistent, and uniform eligibility standards" in response to the order. Shannon Minter, legal director for the National Center for Lesbian Rights, criticized the policy as "unnecessary, extreme and dangerous," warning it could lead to invasive scrutiny of young female athletes. Advocacy group Athlete Ally expressed concern for the trans youth affected, stating: "Our hearts break for the trans youth who will no longer be able to know the joy of playing sports as their full and authentic selves."

[The Sacramento Bee](#)

### California stands firm on Title IX

Following the U.S. Department of Education's rollback of Title IX protections for students based on gender identity, California's State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Tony Thurmond, reassured that state law remains intact. The Biden Administration had previously expanded Title IX protections, but the Trump Administration's recent decision reverts to 2020 rules. Thurmond emphasized: "In California, 'all' still means all," affirming that California schools will continue to protect students against discrimination based on gender, gender expression, gender identity, and sexual orientation. He stated that despite federal changes, California's commitment to safeguarding student rights remains unwavering.

[EdSource](#)

## ----- DISTRICTS -----

- How [Pasadena Symphony is replacing student instruments](#) lost in the wildfires. (KCRW)

### LAUSD invests \$2.2bn for recovery

Los Angeles USD has announced a significant investment of \$2.2bn to repair and rebuild schools damaged by recent fires, aiming to enhance their resilience against future natural disasters. Superintendent Alberto Carvalho emphasized the urgency of these projects, stating, "We cannot wait. We need to accelerate these projects to ensure that our facilities are resilient." The funding will address the reconstruction of Palisades

and Marquez elementary schools, which suffered extensive damage, and will also include investments in fire-resistant infrastructure and improved air quality systems. Additionally, Mayor Karen Bass has introduced measures to support fire-affected day-care centers, allowing them to relocate and operate at increased capacity. The district anticipates that students may return to some campuses by fall 2024, with hopes for full rebuilding by 2028.

[Los Angeles Times](#)

## **Pasadena schools begin cleanup Phase 2**

Crews are actively clearing debris from **Loma Alta** and **Edison** elementary schools in Pasadena, marking the start of Phase 2 of wildfire debris removal in Los Angeles County. County Board of Supervisor Kathryn Barger welcomed the launch of Phase 2, emphasizing the need for continued momentum in restoring facilities and communities. Elizabeth Blanco, superintendent of the **Pasadena Unified School District**, expressed gratitude for the support from government agencies as schools prepare to reopen. Despite parents' concerns about the phased reopening and relocation, Blanco said she welcomes government and local support.

[SGV Tribune](#)

## **Santa Ana School District cuts staff**

**Santa Ana USD** is set to lay off 286 employees due to a significant budget deficit exceeding \$180m and declining student enrollment. The school board approved the layoffs in a 4-1 vote, with Trustee Brenda Lebsack opposing the decision. The layoffs will affect various positions, including teachers and counselors, with decisions based on seniority. The district's enrollment has dropped from nearly 47,000 students in the 2018-19 school year to just over 36,000 this year. The district plans to provide support and resources to affected employees, with the possibility of rescinding some layoffs after hearings in May

[The Orange Country Register](#)

## **Sacramento schools stand against ICE**

In response to executive orders from the Trump administration targeting undocumented immigrants, **Sacramento City USD** officials, including school board President Jasjit Singh, have united to oppose Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). Singh emphasized that "ICE agents would not be allowed to come onto a district campus unless they have a valid court order," and the district is collaborating with lawyers to enhance protections.

[EdSource](#)

## **Empty classrooms signal immigrant protest**

Teachers across California and the U.S. reported significant absences on Monday as many families participated in "A day without immigrants" protest. Wendy Guardado, a Los Angeles activist, noted that nearly 250 businesses closed in solidarity, with some establishments facing staffing shortages. "There is so much more coming," Guardado stated, emphasizing the ongoing nature of the movement. In **Los Angeles USD**, some classrooms were nearly empty, with reports of 390 out of 670 students absent at Parmelee Avenue Elementary School. Victor Narro from the **UCLA** Labor Center highlighted that the protest's impact should be measured by its message rather than economic loss, stating, "The effectiveness of these kinds of mobilizations is more on the message." The protest drew thousands, showcasing the immigrant community's strength and resilience against recent immigration policies.

[Chicago Sun Times](#)

## ----- WORKFORCE -----

### **California invested \$1bn to address teacher shortage**

California has invested over \$1bn since 2018 to address the ongoing TK-12 teacher shortage, according to the report “Tackling Teacher Shortages: Investing in California’s Teacher Workforce.” Major funding initiatives include \$672m for the Teacher Residency Grant Program and \$521m for the Golden State Teacher Grant Program. Despite these efforts, enrollment in teacher preparation programs has declined, with only 19,833 candidates in 2022-23 compared to 26,179 in 2020-21. Desiree Carver-Thomas, a senior researcher at the Learning Policy Institute, said: “It’s important that the kind of supply-demand alignment that the state is supporting can help to address shortages.” The proposed state budget includes additional funding to support teacher recruitment and retention, but the urgency remains as many programs are nearing expiration.

[EdSource](#)

## ----- CLASSROOM -----

### **New curriculum transforms immigrant education**

Maribel, an 11-year-old immigrant from Guatemala, faced significant educational gaps after attending a one-room schoolhouse with an absent teacher. Now enrolled at **Urban Promise Academy** in Oakland, she is learning English and essential academic skills. The school implements a new curriculum designed for students with interrupted formal education (SIFE), developed with support from the California Department of Social Services. Julie Kessler, director of newcomer programs, said she has often seen students with big gaps in schooling disengaged in class. “We were seeing a lot of that because teachers didn’t have a way to connect them to what was happening,” she explained. The curriculum aims to engage students like Maribel, who expressed her initial fear of school but now looks forward to learning. The program is gaining traction across various districts, providing much-needed resources for immigrant students.

[EdSource](#)

### **Educators cast doubt on value of standardized tests**

According to a recent EdWeek Research Center survey, nearly 60% of educators believe that state standardized tests do not accurately measure what students need to know. The survey, which included 1,135 teachers, principals, and district leaders, revealed that only about 40% think these tests reflect essential student knowledge and skills. Mollie Wright, a high school English teacher in Texas, argues that these assessments fail to evaluate critical thinking skills necessary for college and the workforce. She notes that students often lack motivation during testing, stating, “tests are more likely to measure students’ motivation and engagement, not their skills.” Wright advocates for alternative methods to assess student knowledge and abilities.

[Education Week News](#)

## ----- LEGAL -----

### **Judge protects teachers’ right to oppose gender secrecy policy**

California state policy requiring schools to keep secret from parents’ children’s gender transitions has been deemed unnatural by a federal judge. Judge Roger Benitez has allowed a lawsuit challenging the policy to proceed, potentially laying the groundwork for a challenge to the law enacted last year, AB 1955, that bars



school districts from enacting parental notification policies. The original plaintiffs were teachers in **Escondido USD**, and they were recently joined in an amended complaint by parents of students in other California school districts. Benitez ruled that the secrecy policies infringed on parents' rights and violated constitutional principles. He argued that parents hold a federal constitutional Due Process right to direct the health care and education of their children and that the state rights of the child must be overridden. Benitez also ruled that teachers' First Amendment rights were violated when they were forced to keep gender transitions secrets from parents, as such chicanery turned on an abridgment of parental constitutional rights. [California Globe](#)

### **Education Department rescinds Biden-era book ban guidance**

The U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights has rescinded all guidance that said school districts could violate civil rights law by implementing book bans. Removing "age-inappropriate" books from schools is a decision that should be made by parents and communities, and therefore OCR "has no role in these matters," the Trump administration said on Friday. The agency also eliminated the position of book ban coordinator, whose job was to develop training for schools on how book bans targeting specific communities and driving "hostile school environments" might run counter to federal civil rights laws. "By dismissing these complaints and eliminating the position and authorities of a so-called 'book ban coordinator,' the department is beginning the process of restoring the fundamental rights of parents to direct their children's education," acting Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights Craig Trainor said. "The department adheres to the deeply rooted American principle that local control over public education best allows parents and teachers alike to assess the educational needs of their children and communities. Parents and school boards have broad discretion to fulfill that important responsibility. These decisions will no longer be second-guessed by the Office for Civil Rights at the U.S. Department of Education."

[ABC News](#) [The Hill](#) [K-12 Dive](#)

## **----- CHILD DEVELOPMENT -----**

### **Funding suspension threatens Head Start programs**

Programs serving 20,000 children are facing significant funding delays due to a temporary freeze on federal aid announced by the Trump administration. According to the National Head Start Association, many Head Start programs, which provide essential childcare and preschool education to low-income families, have been unable to access previously approved funds, risking closures. Yasmina Vinci, executive director of the association, said: "While it remains unclear why this delay is happening, it must be resolved immediately or thousands of families and their children will be at risk." In Washington state, one program serving 100 children has been unable to pay bills since the freeze, while in Illinois, several programs are at risk of shutting down.

[NBC Miami](#)

## **----- HEALTH & WELLBEING -----**

### **Children's dental care is falling short at home, poll suggests**

More than a third of parents reported that their child has dealt with dental problems linked to a lack of routine oral hygiene, such as brushing teeth twice daily, according to the University of Michigan Health C.S. Mott Children's Hospital National Poll on Children's Health. As a consequence, parents said children had experienced tooth decay, cavities, stained teeth, gum concerns or pain over the last two years. "People who

have bad teeth are often looked down on, especially in the United States, where having perfect teeth is part of the culture," observed Sarah Clark, a research scientist in the Department of Pediatrics at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor and the poll's co-director. She added: "We want all kids to have a nice, healthy smile and feel good about themselves." The poll, which was conducted in August, is based on a nationally representative sample of 1,801 responses from parents with at least one child between ages four and 17.

[UPI](#)

## ----- HIGHER EDUCATION -----

### **Colleges revert to Trump-era rules**

Following new guidance from the Education Department, U.S. colleges and universities are mandated to revert to sexual assault policies established during Donald Trump's presidency. The directive emphasizes live hearings and enhanced protections for accused students under Title IX, a law prohibiting sex discrimination. The shift follows a federal court ruling that overturned the Biden administration's regulations, which aimed to broaden protections for LGBTQ+ students and redefine sexual harassment. Critics have argued that the Trump-era rules may discourage victims from reporting assaults, while supporters claim they ensure fair treatment for the accused.

[Press Democrat](#)

## ----- OTHER -----



At NTA Life, we're here to provide extra peace of mind with individual supplemental benefits that offer tax-free financial support directly to you or your loved ones. Our benefits are designed to go above and beyond your major medical insurance, helping cover things like deductibles, co-pays, and those unexpected expenses that can come up during an illness or injury.

We offer the following programs:



- Cancer Coverage
- Heart Coverage
- Hospital Coverage
- Accident Coverage
- Disability Coverage
- Life Insurance
- Specified Disease Coverage – which even comes with a return of premium after 20 years!

The best part? Most of our benefits are guaranteed renewable for life, meaning you can keep them even if you switch districts or retire.

We're so thankful for the strong partnership we have with ABCFT, and we look forward to continuing to support and serve your incredible educators.

If you'd like to learn more, feel free to reach out anytime:

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- Shannon Donovan: 714-727-8261 | [shannon.donovan@horacemann.com](mailto:shannon.donovan@horacemann.com)