

West Contra Costa Unified School District
Office of the Superintendent

Friday Memo
August 24, 2018

Upcoming Events – Matthew Duffy

August 29: Agenda Setting, Superintendent’s Office, 4:00 PM
September 3: Labor Day Holiday, Schools and Offices Closed
September 5: Agenda Setting, Superintendent’s Office, 4:00 PM
September 5: Board of Education Meeting, DeJean, 6:30 PM
September 6: Back to School Night, Elementary Schools
September 11: School Board Candidate Forum, Pinole MS, 6:00 PM
September 13: Back to School Night, Middle Schools
September 16: El Sobrante Stroll and Festival, 11:00 – 4:00
September 18: School Board Candidate Forum, Helms MS, 6:00 PM
September 19: Agenda Setting, Superintendents’ Office, 5:00 PM
September 27: Contra Costa County Teacher of the Year Gala Dinner, Hilton Concord, 6:00 PM

DLCAP Meeting Schedule for 2018-19 – Marcus Walton

All Meetings Take Place at Kennedy High School Library 6:30 – 8:00 pm

LCAP Data Debrief and Training:

September 11

Meetings & Work Sessions:

September 18
October 23
November 13
December 12
January 15
February 12
March 19
April 30
May 21
May 28
June 4

News Articles of Note - Marcus Walton

Attached are four news articles that might be of interest.

Public Records Log – Marcus Walton

Included in this week’s memo is the log of public records requests received by the district. If you have any questions, please contact me.

Public Records Request Log 2018 - 2019
Week Ending August 17, 2018

	Date of Receipt	Requestor	Requested Records/Information	Current Status
56	3/22/18	Scott Rafferty	Communications regarding CVRA allegations	3/26/18 Email sent with DOCs & Links 3/27/18 Email sent with DOCs & Links Gathering/Reviewing Documents
62	4/17/18	Scott E. Jenny Jenny & Jenny LLP, Attorneys	Pinole HS Project- Tree removal, trenching and hill excavation project between Subject Properties, 2059 Shea Drive and 2069 Shea Drive, Pinole CA	5/31/18 Email sent extending date Gathering/Reviewing Documents
65	4/27/18	J. Paul Fanning Lankford, Crawford, Moreno & Ostertag LLP	Richmond High School / Asbestos Records	6/8/18 Email sent requesting clarification in order to narrow search, per our Facilities Department 6/11/18 Updated/Revised PRR received by Requester Gathering Documents
67	5/9/18	David Stephan	Roster of all WCCUSD High School Faculty	5/15/18 Acknowledgement email sent
1819-03	8/5/2018	Yolanda J Rodriguez - Graybar Bill Pay	A copy of the payment/performance bond CAC713536, for the following project in which Graybar is a material supplier: Juan Crespi Middle School Lighting Retrofit	8/10/2018 – Acknowledgement Letter Sent
1819-04	8/1/2018	Scott Rafferty	Communications, social media regarding trustee elections	8/6/2018 - Acknowledgement letter sent
1819-06	8/6/2018	Partida - Berkes Crane Robinson & Seal	Documents regarding the presence of asbestos at De Anza HS	8/10/2018 - Acknowledgement letter sent
1819-07	8/15/2018	Ann Swinburn – CTA	Notices of Violation and/or Notices of Concern for Amethod Public Schools, Benito Juarez, John Henry High School, or Richmond Charter Academy	8/24/2018 – Acknowledgement letter sent Documents ready by Sept. 14, 2018

Contra Costa Community College District announces free tuition for first-time, full-time students

August 23, 2018



Contra Costa College campus

There's not just the Richmond Promise.

Now, local students have access to the California College Promise.

First-time, full-time students can receive free tuition for up to one year at Contra Costa College, Diablo Valley College and Los Medanos College effective Monday, Aug. 27, the first day of the new school year, the Contra Costa Community College District announced today.

The District's free one-year tuition program is part of the statewide initiative to fund tuition at community colleges, called the California College Promise, an expansion of the former Board of Governors fee waiver program for low-income students. The program was signed into law by Gov. Jerry Brown last October under Assembly Bill 19.

To be eligible, students don't have to demonstrate a financial need or meet any income requirements. However, they must be a first-time college student, must complete the college district's Pledge Application as well as the FASFA or California Dream Act application, must construct an educational plan, and must enroll in and complete a minimum of 12 units while maintaining a minimum 2.0 GPA.

After accomplishing all of those steps, students' enrollment fees will be refunded.

"The District will cover the \$46 per unit enrollment/tuition fee using a combination of College Promise Program dollars, private donations and other funding sources," the district said in a statement. "While tuition is covered for up to one year, participating students will still be responsible for any books, supplies and materials and other non-course fees that a class requires."

The program can further augment college's affordability for local students. Recipients of the Richmond Promise program can also apply for the California College Promise.

The Richmond Promise provides \$1,500 annually (with a renewal for up to four years) to every high school graduate from Richmond and North Richmond, along with a network of guidance and support in financial aid, academics and college acclimation. Those grant funds can go not just toward tuition but also toward the full cost of attendance as determined by a college or university, including travel, housing, books, food, etc.

RELATED: [Richmond Promise creating college success culture in city.](#)

Established in 2014, the Richmond Promise was launched by a \$35 million investment from a \$90 million community benefits agreement between Chevron Richmond and the city of Richmond connected to the Chevron Richmond Refinery Modernization Project.

Mike Aldax

NFL's Takk Mckinley welcomes WCCUSD students back to school with audio message

August 20, 2018

What better way to get pumped up for the new school year than to have an NFL star provide a pep talk.

The West Contra Costa Unified School District (WCCUSD) welcomed its students and families back to school today with an audio message from Atlanta Falcons defensive end Takkarist McKinley, a Kennedy High graduate and 2017 first round draft pick.

"My season starts Sept. 6, and your season starts Aug. 20," McKinley said in the message. "My education in WCCUSD helped me achieve my dreams. Now it's your turn to achieve your dreams."

Takk also had a message for students' families.

"It's important your students show up on time," he said.

And his advice for kids: "We need you at school every day, ready to learn and ready to participate," he said.

Superintendent Matt Duffy also took part in the message, stating, "Thank you Takk. Students, we're all cheering for you and your success. Good luck and have a great school year."

Mike Aldax



Lottery Is No Jackpot for El Cerrito Schools

State lottery money covers few of the growing bills for education. Here's how much West Contra Costa Unified School District receives.

By [Bea Karnes](#) | Aug 21, 2018 6:30 am ET | Updated Aug 21, 2018 9:30 am ET



EL CERRITO, CA — As a new school year begins this month, the state's financially troubled school districts will be counting on millions of dollars from the pockets of gamblers hoping to hit it big in the California Lottery.

1 Dairy Queen Coupons

Print Free Coupons for Dairy Queen. Print Your Free Coupons Now!



befrugal.com

2 Schools (Hiring) - Find Great Jobs Near You.

Earn \$18-\$25 per hour. No Experience Required. Get Jobs And Email Alerts.



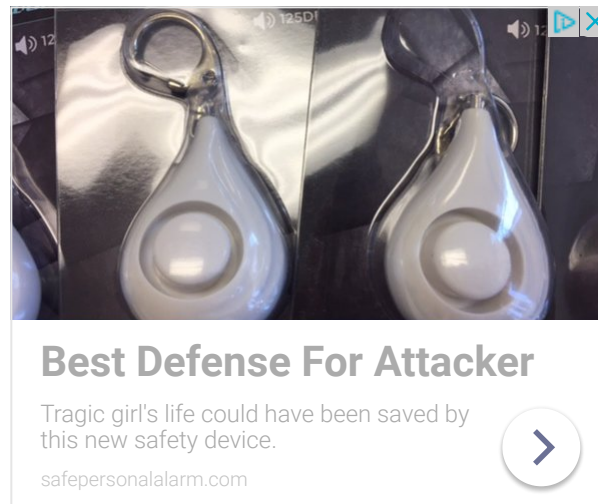
schoolsjobs.myjobhelper.com

Educators themselves may not pony up a dollar for their dream, but they've learned to love those who do. The ubiquitous lottery signs adorn more than 22,000 businesses from gas stations to donut shops and liquor stores, beckoning customers to take a chance on becoming rich while helping school kids in the process, or so goes the Lottery's marketing campaign.

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Since the state lottery began operating 33 years ago Californians have anted up more than \$33 billion in funding for education by picking 'lucky' numbers or trying to scratch their way to a fortune. But this extra revenue is merely pocket change for many districts.

During the 2016-17 school year \$1.54 billion in lottery revenue was distributed to more than 1,200 local school districts, charter schools, community colleges, the California State University chancellor's office, the University of California, California Youth Authority, Hastings College of Law and the California Maritime Academy.



Of this West Contra Costa Unified School District received \$5,461,979.08 and so far this fiscal year the district banked another \$4,660,370.93. Since the first lottery checks were written in 1985 the district has received a total of \$138,561,903.56.

How districts spend the money is pretty much up to them, although a few strings were attached by Proposition 37 approved by voters in 1984 establishing the lottery. Lottery proceeds can't be used for non-instructional purposes such real estate purchases or school construction but can be spent on teacher salaries and benefits.

Additional spending restrictions were imposed in 2000 when voters approved the Cardenas Textbook Act, commonly known as Proposition 20, requiring a portion of the lottery receipts to be spent solely for purchasing instructional materials and establishing a formula for calculating what that amount would be each year.

State law defines instructional materials as those “designed for use by pupils and their teachers as a learning resource and help pupils to acquire facts, skills, or opinions or to develop cognitive processes” and may include, among other things, “textbooks, technology-based materials, other educational materials, and tests.”

No question gamblers are providing extra cash for schools, and every little bit counts in an era of tight budgets, teacher salary increases and burgeoning retirement costs. But by the time lottery money trickles down to individual districts it isn't necessarily a jackpot for students. State Department of Education statistics show school districts spend more than half of their total lottery distributions on salaries and benefits.

El Cerrito expenses

Although lottery distributions may appear substantial, they cover just a fraction of what it costs to keep schools open. Last year West Contra Costa Unified School District spent \$127,237,390 on salaries for administrators and teachers, \$55,673,974 for other district employees, \$75,922,126 in combined benefits for all employees, \$11,276,140 on books and other supplies and \$59,618,408 for district operating costs.

However, the chronic problem plaguing school districts during budget season and throughout the school year is simply that there's no way to know precisely how much lottery money they'll ultimately receive because payouts are based upon both lottery sales and a district's average daily student attendance. For example, the 2016 fiscal year proved more lucrative for schools than most because of the nearly \$1.6 billion Powerball jackpot, the world's largest so far. Distributions for the 2018 fiscal year may also be greater thanks to five large jackpots since January – three Powerball and two Mega Millions.

The California lottery generates the fourth largest amount of state revenues after the Franchise Tax Board, which collects state income taxes; the Board of Equalization that collects sales and use taxes and the DMV.

Last year the lottery reported \$6.2 billion (\$6,233,468,423) in total sales, the bulk of those in scratcher tickets (\$4,576,028,713) and Lotto games (\$1,041,071,687.) Winners were paid nearly \$4 billion in prizes (\$3,963,453,360) and after operating and game costs almost \$1.6 billion (\$1,559,668,537) remained for schools.

— *Story by Bob Porterfield and Bea Karnes, Patch; Image by Shutterstock*

[See article on Patch >](#)

More from El Cerrito, CA Patch

Driver Killed In Police Chase Crash

El Cerrito Weekend Weather Forecast

Renewed push to offer SAT and ACT as California's 11th-grade test

Superintendents support the idea but president of state board calls it unworkable

AUGUST 23, 2018 | JOHN FENSTERWALD



CREDIT: UC DAVIS

Activities and Recreation Center at the University of California, Davis.

Gov. Jerry Brown may soon decide whether to let California school districts choose to give high school juniors the SAT or ACT instead of the state's current standardized tests in math and English language arts. He'll be lobbied hard by both sides of the issue if **Assembly Bill 1951** does pass its last hurdle — approval by the state Senate — and arrives on his desk by the end of next week.

Dozens of school superintendents, along with organizations representing school boards and administrators, are behind the bill. Some districts already offer a college readiness exam at their own expense to all juniors, in addition to the state-mandated Smarter Balanced assessments.

Eliminating Smarter Balanced will let them cut back on high school standardized testing while encouraging more students to apply to a 4-year college. Combining free SAT or ACT with tutoring, Saturday classes and other preparation for the tests, as Long Beach Unified and other districts have done, has helped raise SAT and ACT scores, enabling students to get into the college of their choice, they argue.

“This is about getting more kids into college and getting more underserved students to take the ACT or SAT — smarter testing, not more testing,” said Assemblyman Patrick O’Donnell, D-Long Beach, a former high school history and government teacher who chairs the Assembly Education Committee and is the author of AB 1951.

But two opponents who will have the governor’s ear, State Superintendent of Instruction Tom Torlakson and State Board of Education President Michael Kirst, a longtime Brown adviser, see the bill through a different lens. They say Smarter Balanced tests were designed specifically to test students’ knowledge of the Common Core standards that California adopted. That has never been the purpose of the ACT and SAT, which measure students’ readiness for college work. The College Board, which administers the SAT, points to its own studies that say the SAT is strongly aligned to the Common Core. [An analysis by the national education nonprofit Achieve](#) found this is only partly so and recommended against using it as a replacement for a state high school assessment.

In a Aug. 21 letter to state senators urging a “no” vote on AB 1951, Torlakson wrote that the bill would “undermine” the state’s new accountability system, because the SAT and ACT would not produce accurate scores that can be compared with Smarter Balanced scores, especially for the lowest-performing students as well as students with disabilities and English learners. The California Advisory Commission on Special Education also opposes AB 1951 because it says that the ACT and SAT do not provide the same set of accommodations that English learners and students with disabilities receive for the Smarter Balanced tests. Therefore, these students would be at a disadvantage compared with other students, Gina Plate, the commission’s chairwoman, [wrote in a July letter](#).

O’Donnell says that he is not taking those concerns lightly. Under the bill, the next state superintendent would have to affirm that those and other issues are addressed before authorizing the use of either the SAT or the ACT. There would have to be comparable accommodations for students with disabilities; the state would have to certify that the tests measure the state’s academic standards and that the scores are valid — all requirements under federal law. And a rigorous federal “peer review” panel, appointed by the U.S. Department of Education, would have to verify

that the same conditions have been met for any state that wants to substitute a “nationally recognized high school assessment” like the SAT or ACT for a state test.

School districts would then have to choose one of the options for all of its students. The state would cover the test administration cost at the rate of reimbursement for the Smarter Balanced test. Most districts would likely choose the SAT over the ACT, since in California that’s the assessment that most college-bound juniors take.

O’Donnell says what shouldn’t be lost in this discussion is what counts for students. Juniors take a lot of tests in the spring: the SAT or ACT — some students take both — and a test for every Advanced Placement course they take. The test that means the least personally to students is Smarter Balanced, whose scores aren’t used to determine college admissions.

In March 2017, Kirst and Torlakson asked the University of California and California State University systems to consider incorporating student scores on the Smarter Balanced 11th-grade tests into their admissions decisions — as a potential replacement for the SAT and ACT. This week, Kirst released [a letter from a UC admissions administrator](#) who said that the university Academic Senate had authorized a study of Smarter Balanced 11th-grade scores to determine if it would be appropriate to do so.

In an interview this week, Kirst said, “We have talked for hours with decision makers in CSU and UC.” The possibility that there may be action within the next year or so is another reason not to pass AB 1951 this year, he said.

SAT and ACT scores are no longer mandatory at hundreds of colleges, including the California State University; however, [SAT/ACT scores are included in the Eligibility Index that determines admission to impacted CSU campuses](#). And the UC requires either the SAT or ACT.

“Students feel invested in the SAT, not Smarter Balanced,” O’Donnell said.

Superintendents in the 30 districts and charter school organizations that administered the SAT this past year without charge say that it is integral to raising students’ aspiration for going to college. Richard Sheehan, superintendent of the Covina-Valley Unified District in Los Angeles County, credited the SAT-for-all for significantly raising the percentage of district students who qualified for admission to CSU and UC.

Smarter Balanced tests are given in grades 3 to 8 and only in grade 11 in high school, so there is a two grade-level gap in measuring students’ academic progress. Long Beach and West Contra Costa

Unified are filling it by administering the Pre-SAT, or PSAT, assessments in 9th and 10th grades to identify students' weaknesses in math and reading and to guide teachers' instruction. They're also supplementing the SAT with extensive tutorials from Khan Academy, the free online site that has partnered with the College Board to close the "test prep" gap — the hiring by wealthy families of private tutors who guarantee they can boost a student's SAT score.

Comparing multiple tests is problematic

The federal Every Student Succeeds Act explicitly permits states to use the SAT or ACT for a high school assessment for federal accountability purposes. The College Board reports that nine states, including several that had been using Smarter Balanced, are offering the SAT; only Connecticut at this point has gone through federal peer review and the results have not been released. Oklahoma offers districts the choice between the SAT and ACT, and North Dakota will offer both the ACT and the state's new standardized test.

But California would be the first state to offer a choice of three tests, and that prospect alarms education measurement experts like Edward Haertel, a professor emeritus of education at Stanford University. Despite the bill's assurances, scores from schools, districts and student groups who have taken two or more "very different tests, developed according to different specifications to serve different purposes, administered under different conditions" are not interchangeable and will not be comparable, he wrote in a [letter to the Assembly Education Committee](#).

"We may wish such a thing were possible, but it simply cannot be done," he wrote. Methods of converting them to a common scale would "fall far short of providing the degree of comparability California's state-of-the-art school accountability system would require."

AB 1951 marks the third attempt by Long Beach Unified Superintendent Christopher Steinhauser to get the authority to use the SAT in lieu of the Smarter Balanced test. In the spring of 2017, Torlakson and Kirst [denied his request](#) for a waiver from using Smarter Balanced. A bill that O'Donnell sponsored last year at Steinhauser's request to set up a pilot program using the SAT failed to get out of the Assembly after Torlakson lobbied against it. AB 1951 has more momentum, with more districts and organizations like the California School Boards Association behind it.

O'Donnell can take solace if it too falls short. Brown, Torlakson and Kirst all retire this year. He can make another pitch to their successors in 2019.



Comments

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leonie haimson 

1 hour ago



CA could not use SAT/ACT as their mandated HS exam would violate CA student privacy law unless they changed their practice of selling data. See Torlakson 2017 letter

<https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/3474271-Account-SAT-Waiver-LongBeach-Answer-022317.html> It could also violate #FERPA; see US ED guidance doc here:

https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/sites/default/files/resource_document/file/TA%20College%20Admissions%20Examinations.pdf

▶ **Doug McRae**

3 hours ago



The SAT/ACT or Smarter Balanced policy debate for high school statewide tests per AB 1951 does not have to be an either/or option for each local school district. Rather, there is potential for an individual-student-choice option that would permit each student to take a test that matches each student's instructional pathway. For CA comprehensive high schools that offer multiple instructional pathways for their students, no one-size-fits-all test will ever appropriately measure all students and their ... [Read More](#)