

September 16, 2025

APPROVED: DD:br

Board Meeting – September 16, 2025

Item VI. Consent Calendar Recommendations

- G. Adoption of Board Resolution No. 15 to Recognize National Dropout Prevention during the Month of October 2025

The Superintendent recommends that the County Board take action and approve Board Resolution No. 15 and recognize October 2025 as National Dropout Prevention Month to increase awareness of the long-term effects on students, the economy and society, challenging our nation to become better informed about the strategies and programs to prevent students from leaving school before graduation

Board Resolution No. 15 follows on the next page.

Next Steps:

- Send out LACOE Communication to the 80 districts to encourage districts, schools and community organizations to observe this month with grade level and developmentally appropriate programs and student support.
- Highlight the month at appropriate Communities of Practice to share resources and best practices and to invite school districts to participate in professional development opportunities.

BOARD RESOLUTION

NO. 15: 2025-26

To Recognize National Dropout Prevention Month During the Month of October 2025

WHEREAS, according to the US Census Bureau, California has the highest percentage of high school dropouts in the nation; 84.8 percent of residents aged 25 or over graduated from high school; in Los Angeles County the cohort graduation rate for the 2023- 2024 school year was 86.7 percent, up from 84.4 percent the previous school year; and

WHEREAS, California's dropout rate has increased from 8.2 to 8.9 percent and Los Angeles County's rates has decreased from 9.2 to 7.8 percent in the 2023-2024 school year, while significant achievement gaps continue to persist among certain groups of students including American Indian or Alaska Native, African American, Pacific Islander, Hispanic or Latino, Students Placed in Foster Care and those Experiencing Homelessness, English Learners and Students with Disabilities; and

WHEREAS, students placed in foster care and students experiencing homelessness are two at-risk student populations with the highest dropout rates and the lowest graduation rates of all comparison student groups; and

WHEREAS, although California legislators instituted the fifth-year option for at risk students to complete their high school graduation requirements, progress has been inconsistent with fifth year graduation rates decreasing slightly across California from 88.7 percent to 88.4 percent; Los Angeles County's fifth year graduation rate decreased from 88 percent to 86.6 percent in the 2023-2024 school year for all at-risk students; this slight decline in fifth-year graduation rates suggests a need for continued support and targeted interventions; and

WHEREAS, in the 2023-2024 school year 62.7 percent of students placed in foster care and 78.2 percent of students experiencing homelessness graduated high school in four years compared with 86.7 percent of their peers in Los Angeles County; and

WHEREAS, in the 2023-2024 school year 67.3 percent of students placed in foster care and 77.2 percent of students experiencing homelessness graduated high school in five years compared with 86.6 percent of their peers in Los Angeles County; and

WHEREAS, students in foster care and students experiencing homelessness are more likely to face educational barriers and the Los Angeles County Office of Education's Foster Youth Services Coordinating Program and the Child Welfare & Attendance Unit, which oversees Homeless Education, works collaboratively with county agencies and partners to improve academic outcomes and ensure successful transitions to adulthood through college and career pathways; and

WHEREAS, the Child Welfare & Attendance Unit has expanded staffing resources to better support districts and charter schools across Los Angeles County to address chronic absenteeism and other issues that impact student attendance, which is often the first step to a student disconnecting and dropping out of school; and

WHEREAS, the decision to drop out of school is not due to one single factor, but multiple

and complex family, economic, social and emotional factors and is the result of a process that often begins years before the actual event; and

WHEREAS, students who leave school before graduation are typically qualified for only about 10 percent of the economy's jobs, are more likely to risk involvement in the criminal justice system, are more likely to rely on various sources of public assistance and welfare, have poorer health and shorter life expectancies than high school graduates and are less likely to vote; and

WHEREAS, over a lifetime, high school dropouts earn on average between \$200,00 to \$1.2 million less than those who graduate high school. In dropouts aged 16-24, the incarceration rates are 63 times higher; and high school dropouts experience a poverty rate of 30.8 percent, more than twice that of college graduates; and

WHEREAS, dropouts are four times more likely to experience health issues and engage in high-risk behaviors like substance abuse, crime and violence and more likely to perpetuate poverty through generations, as their children are more likely to follow the same path; and

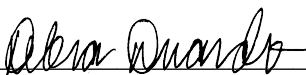
WHEREAS, Research on student engagement, academic success, dropout, and graduation rates has shown the need to include programs such as increased communication, mentoring, counseling, vocational or social-emotional skills training, supplemental academic services, individualized support and extracurricular activities in an effort to improve school climate and increase student connectedness; and

WHEREAS, early, effective dropout prevention initiatives are the result of communitywide efforts that involve families, businesses, faith-based organizations and schools; and

WHEREAS, public, private and nonprofit entities need to raise awareness of these issues and encourage all students to stay in school for a brighter future.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, The Los Angeles County Superintendent of Schools and County Board of Education recognize October 2025 as National Dropout Prevention Month to increase awareness of the long-term effects on students, the economy and society, challenging our nation to become better informed about the strategies and programs to prevent students from leaving school before graduation.

ADOPTED this 16th day of September 2025, by the Los Angeles County Superintendent of Schools and the Los Angeles County Board of Education in Downey, California.


Debra Duardo, M.S.W., Ed.D.
Superintendent


James Cross
Board President