

## Principal's Board Report

February 20, 2026

I am pleased to present Fusion Charter School's quarterly report and provide an update on our continued progress in serving students and families through high-quality academic programming and strong student support systems. This quarter has been especially meaningful as we celebrated major student milestones, including our Winter Graduation Ceremony, where students were recognized for their perseverance and achievement in reaching graduation goals.

**Fusion Class of 2026 Winter Graduation** was held January 23, 2026 to honor Fusion students who completed graduation requirements during the first semester. Eighteen students walked the stage as members of Fusion's twelfth graduating class. Ten students were recognized as graduating with honors, based on an A average earned in the final two semesters of high school. Outstanding Graduate Mercy Thompson achieved both excellent attendance and high honors every semester of high school and was one of three graduates who attended Fusion since ninth grade as a flexible school of choice. Hats off to our newest grads who belong to a group of **430 Fusion alumni!**

The Winter 2026 event was only the second year for a group graduation ceremony held indoors in the middle of the school year. An individualized outdoor Spring ceremony will be held Wednesday, May 27, 2026.



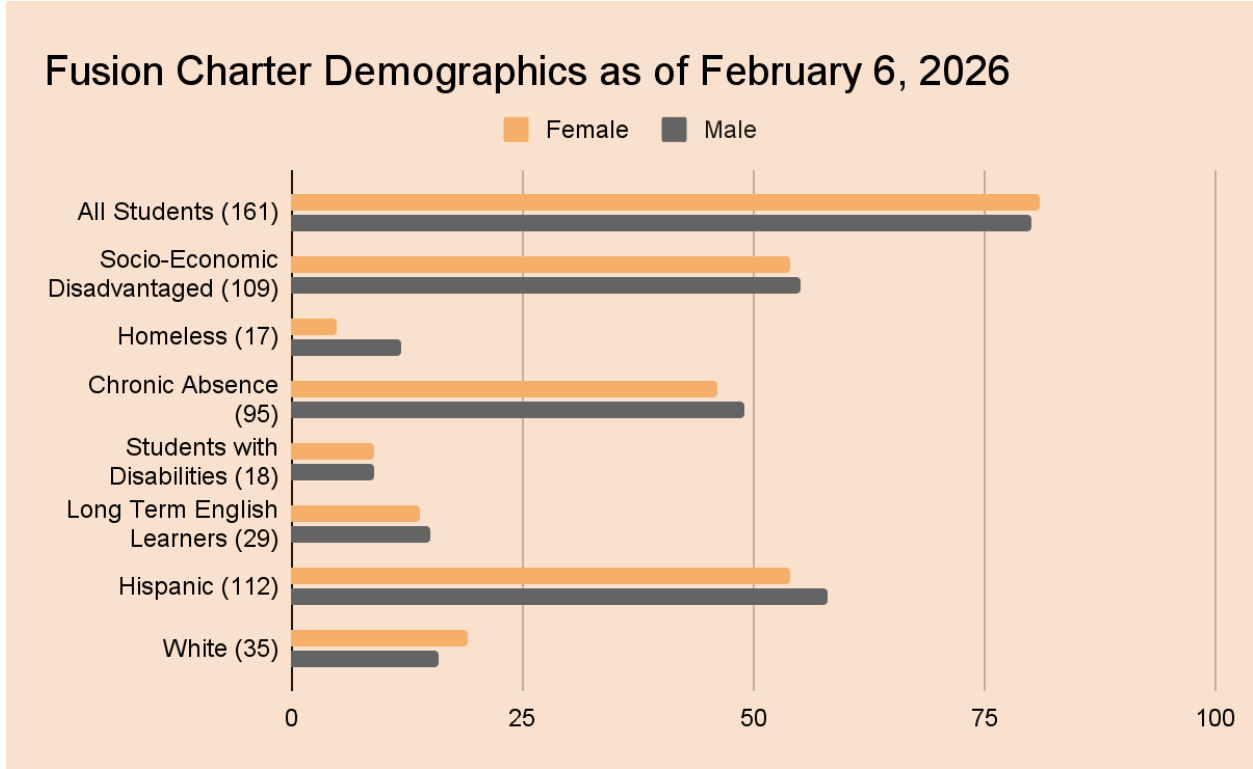
In addition, our **Awards Night** provided an important opportunity to honor students for academic growth, attendance, leadership, and dual enrollment accomplishments. These events reflect the dedication of our staff and the resilience of our students, while highlighting the supportive school culture we continue to build at Fusion.

The following report outlines key accomplishments, program updates, and ongoing priorities as we move forward into the next quarter.

**A. Student Services and Information**

As of February 6, 2026, Fusion Charter School has 161 students currently enrolled. To date, Fusion has served a total of 231 students during the 2025–26 school year and has supported 32 students in successfully graduating. This reflects continued growth and progress in comparison to the same point last year, when Fusion had served 222 students and celebrated 27 graduates. The increase in both total students served and graduates highlights Fusion’s ongoing commitment to providing targeted academic and social-emotional supports that help students remain engaged and achieve their goals.

Fusion continues to serve a diverse student population. The percentage of Hispanic/Latino students has increased to 69.57%, while White students represent 21.74% of the current student body. All other demographic categories include fewer than ten students. Specifically, Fusion currently serves six Black students (3.73%), six Multi-Ethnic students (3.73%), one American Indian/Alaskan Native student (0.62%), and one Asian student (0.62%). These demographic trends reflect the evolving needs of the communities Fusion serves and reinforce the importance of culturally responsive student services and family engagement.



Source: Aeries Analytics 2/6/2026

In addition, Fusion currently serves one Foster Youth student (0.62%), emphasizing the need for continued collaboration with community agencies and support systems to ensure stability and academic success for this highly vulnerable population. Fusion also supports seven (4.3%) students who are Pregnant/Parenting, requiring individualized academic planning, counseling support, and flexible scheduling to ensure these students can remain on track for graduation while balancing family responsibilities. Fusion currently serves eight (5%) students with Juvenile Justice involvement, underscoring the critical role of restorative practices, mentoring, and wraparound services in supporting student reintegration, engagement, and long-term success.

Overall, Fusion's student service data reflects the school's mission-driven focus on serving students with complex needs while continuing to improve graduation outcomes and maintain a supportive, inclusive learning environment.

## **B. Student Activities**

Fusion Charter School proudly hosted its **5th Annual Frosty Fest Celebration** on December 19, 2025, bringing students and staff together to celebrate the holiday season and strengthen our school community.

The event included a fun-filled video game tournament, along with food, crafts, music, and a variety of games and activities that created an engaging and festive atmosphere for all in attendance. A special highlight of the celebration was a surprise appearance by the Grinch, which brought laughter and excitement to



students throughout the event. In addition, 180 gifts from the Aspiranet Holiday Gift Drive were provided, ensuring students and families felt supported and celebrated during the season. The Frosty Fest continues to be a meaningful annual tradition that promotes connection, joy, and a positive school culture at Fusion.

Upcoming Student Council events include the following:

- March 19 – Mardi Gras Spring Event for All Students
- April 17-20 – Sunset State Beach Camping for Student Leadership
- April 24 – Community Spring Movie for Students and Family Members
- May 15 – Prom for High School Students and Approved Guests
- May 28 – Island Water Park Trip for Students with Good Attendance

During Fusion's annual **National School Choice** night for families, a total of 57 continuing students from all grade levels 7-12 were recognized. Fusion Charter celebrated on Thursday, January 29, 2026 with an awards ceremony, a Title I meeting inviting parent participation in school decision making, door prizes for parents and pizza and salad dinner for all. A record number of 125 people attended the event!



The awards night included recognition of the Fusion Student Council and the recent Rotary Student of the Month nominees for the outstanding character traits of Positivity, Focus and Empathy. The school was proud to announce that four Fusion students completed the college level "Healthful Living" course and are participating in Dual Enrollment in additional Modesto Junior College coursework in the Spring.

Attendance is critical for Fusion students; showing up for school consistently leads to success. Forty continuing students were honored for 90% or higher cumulative attendance, including 19 students who excelled in both attendance and the completion of multiple classes with high grades. Honor roll students were required to have completed at least 20 graduation credits during the Fall semester with an average of B (3.0-3.49 GPA) or A (3.5-4.0 GPA).

For the B Honor Roll, the 41 honorees (6 graduates + 35 continuing students) compared to 24 one year ago (5 graduates and 19 students). For the A Honor Roll, 43 honorees (21 graduates + 22 students) compared to 46 one year ago (13 graduates and 33 continuing students). This is a total of 84 honor roll students, a 20% increase compared to 70 students a year ago. The greatest growth was in high honors for the new graduates who were celebrated during the previous week's commencement ceremony.



### **C. Community Involvement**

**Turlock Christmas Parade**—Fusion participated in the Turlock Christmas Parade for the first time this year, marking an exciting milestone in strengthening our presence and connection within the local community. The event brought together 25 students and staff, who either rode on the Fusion float or walked alongside it, representing the school with pride and enthusiasm. This memorable experience promoted school spirit, student engagement, and community involvement, while highlighting Fusion’s commitment to creating positive, inclusive opportunities for students outside of the classroom.



**SEITY Health**—Fusion’s partnership with SEITY Health has been valuable in supporting student wellness, leadership development, and social-emotional growth. This year, SEITY facilitated two interactive meetings with Fusion’s Student Council, focused on helping students strengthen their understanding of core values, personal wellbeing, and life direction. During these sessions, students participated in a structured wellness experience that included logging into the SEITY app, completing a wellbeing check-in, and engaging in group discussions and activities designed to build self-awareness and problem-solving skills.

SEITY staff introduced a practical problem-solving framework and guided students through collaborative activities that encouraged critical thinking and reflection on challenges they may face in school, life, and future careers. A key highlight was the focus on Core Values, including a video presentation and an activity where students identified their personal values and shared them with peers as part of a leadership-building exercise.



Each session concluded with students completing a survey to provide feedback and support continued improvement. Overall, SEITY Health's partnership has strengthened Fusion's efforts to promote student wellbeing and empower student leaders with tools for success.

#### **D. Personnel**

Paraeducator **Fernando Hernandez** was hired as a full time Special Education teacher in Fresno after four years with Fusion. Congratulations to Fernando on his new position.

**Introduction of New Fusion Charter Staff Members**—Fusion is pleased to welcome four new members to our team, Samantha Trevino, Michael Masuda, Katie Dilts and Kimberly Gmachowski, who bring experience and enthusiasm to their respective roles.

**Samantha Trevino** joins the team this quarter. Samantha rotates through classrooms providing individualized tutoring and targeted academic support, helping students strengthen their math skills, build academic confidence, and make progress toward meeting course and graduation requirements. Her support has been a valuable addition to classroom instruction and has helped reinforce student engagement and achievement in mathematics.

**Michael Masuda** comes to the team to expand student opportunities in Career Technical Education and innovative learning experiences. Michael will rotate through classrooms Monday through Thursday, supporting students and staff with the implementation and use of virtual reality (VR) goggles as part of college and career exploration activities. On Fridays, he will lead student sports and enrichment activities, promoting teamwork, physical wellness, and positive student engagement.

**Kimberly Gmachowski** serves as the van driver and campus supervisor. In this role, Katie will oversee student transportation services and support daily campus operations by helping ensure a safe, organized, and welcoming environment for students and staff. Her presence strengthens both student supervision and reliable transportation support for families.

**Katie Dilts** joins the team as a Teacher's Aide, providing direct support to students in English reading and writing. Kim works closely with students to strengthen literacy skills, improve academic confidence, and support classroom instruction. She is also an aspiring English teacher and is currently enrolled in a teaching credential program, bringing both enthusiasm and a strong commitment to student growth and learning.

## E. Professional Development

With board approval, Fusion will follow the enclosed **TUSD Calendar for 2026-2027** for all student days. The faculty and staff will meet on the August 10 and 11 professional development days before the first day of school on August 12, 2026 and will determine the date for the third inservice day, either October 19, 2026 or June 1, 2027.

## Community Health Worker Certificate Program

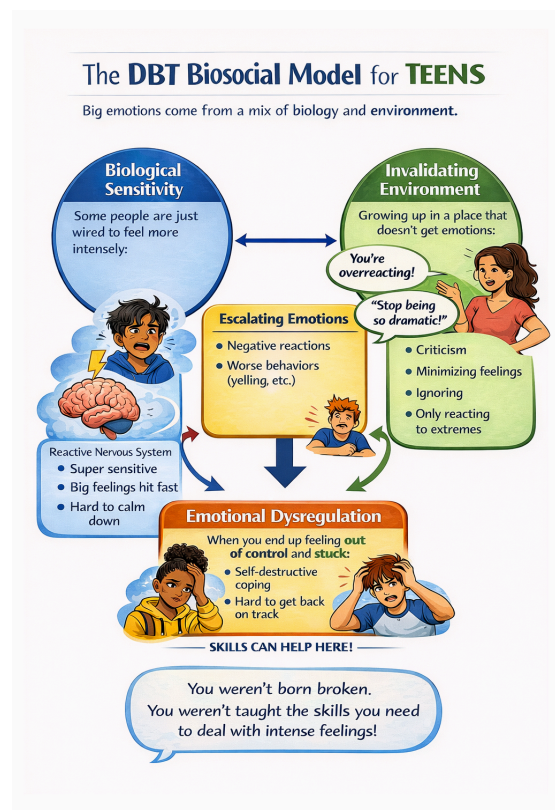
Fusion is excited to share that **Veronica Morales** will begin a certificate program to become a Community Health Worker (CHW) as part of the CYBHI program at Fusion.



This certification program is designed to provide individuals with the essential skills and knowledge needed to effectively promote health, wellness, and access to resources within the school setting and the broader community. Veronica's participation will strengthen Fusion's capacity to support student wellbeing and enhance the connection between families, school-based services, and community health supports.

## Staff Behavioral Health Training

Fusion Charter School welcomed back **Deb Lazarri**, former Special Education teacher, to lead staff Behavioral Health training. The first of two sessions focused on understanding brain chemistry and how a student's brain reacts when triggered or has experienced trauma. Staff explored strategies grounded in the Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) model for teens, gaining practical tools to support emotional regulation, resilience, and positive student outcomes. This training strengthens Fusion's capacity to provide trauma-informed care and reinforces the school's commitment to the social-emotional well-being of all students.



## **F. Facility**

### **Multi Purpose Room**

The Fusion gym has been repurposed to meet the evolving needs of our school community and is now a Multi-Purpose Room. While it is no longer used for traditional athletics, the space has become a versatile hub for a wide range of activities, including school events, driving simulator sessions, 3D printing, virtual reality experiences, Aspiranet training, staff meetings, dances, and study lounge use. This transformation maximizes the functionality of the space, supporting both academic and extracurricular programs while fostering collaboration, innovation, and community engagement.

### **Greenhouse**

Fusion Charter School students and staff are actively participating in the Garden Club, led by teacher Ashley Maderr, making full use of the school's greenhouse space. In December, students planted seeds in the greenhouse, which provides a warm, controlled environment to nurture seedlings through the winter months. The Garden Club started vegetable and flower plants in the greenhouse and then will transplant them to the raised garden beds at the end of February. The goal is to harvest the crops by the end of May, just before students leave for summer break. This hands-on program provides students with practical learning opportunities in horticulture, responsibility, and teamwork, while enhancing the school grounds and fostering a connection to nature and healthy living.



### **Garden Dedication Ceremony**



On November 21, 2025, Fusion held a garden dedication ceremony honoring former Principal Susan Nisan. The Fusion Charter Garden and Outdoor Learning Space was dedicated to celebrate the school's commitment to connection, wellness, and student growth. Susan's vision and leadership were instrumental in creating a school environment where every student has a place to grow, belong, and thrive. The ceremony highlighted her lasting impact on the Fusion community and the ongoing importance of outdoor learning spaces in supporting student engagement, hands-on learning, and social-emotional development.

## **G. Accountability**

Fusion submitted the **2024-2025 School Accountability Report Card (SARC)** before the February 1, 2026 reporting deadline. A copy is included for Board approval.

Consistent school attendance is Fusion's most pressing concern reported in the SARC. Fusion's 2024-2025 **Chronic Absenteeism** rate continued to be very high, at 77.9% for the entire group of 269 students enrolled throughout the year. For Fall 2025, *Aeries Analytics* reports the rate at 68.8%, based on current students absent for more than 10% of school days in the first five periods of 2025-2026. Absences are highest among specific subgroups tracked by Fusion and the CDE, although some progress is being made with these populations. Among the 231 Low-Income students the rate was previously 80.3% and is now 71.0%. A subgroup of 43 students who had experienced Homelessness and Housing Instability had a Chronic Absenteeism rate of 81.6%, which is currently 70.6%. The 60 English Learners also had a higher rate of Chronic Absenteeism, at 80.4% which is now lower, at 60.7%. Although these numbers are still very high, they are a significant decrease from the 2020-2021 school year baseline of 96% for all students. (Additional subgroup information is on page 17 of the SARC.)

### **AB 461 – Fusion Charter School Attendance Supports**

**Assembly Bill 461**, signed into law on October 1, 2025, fundamentally changes California's approach to truancy by repealing Section 270.1 of the Penal Code, which previously made it a criminal misdemeanor for a parent or guardian to fail to reasonably supervise and encourage their child's school attendance when the child was chronically truant. Under the old law, parents could face fines of up to \$2,000 and up to one year in jail for chronic truancy offenses; AB 461 eliminates those penalties and removes the threat of criminal charges for families struggling with attendance.





Fusion actively implements strategies aligned with AB 461 to support student engagement. Staff monitor attendance daily to identify students at risk of chronic absenteeism and work closely with families to address barriers, such as transportation, health, or personal challenges. Fusion uses personalized outreach, mentorship, and counseling support to re-engage students and keep them on track academically. Additionally, the school emphasizes family collaboration and communication, ensuring parents and guardians are partners in fostering consistent attendance. By combining early identification, targeted interventions, and community resources, Fusion is creating a supportive environment where students are present, engaged, and empowered to succeed. These efforts have contributed to improved attendance trends and reflect the school's ongoing commitment to equity and student achievement.

**State Seal of Civic Engagement**—As a community school, Fusion has the opportunity to promote the **State Seal of Civic Engagement (SSCE)** to be displayed on the student’s diploma. The Board is requested to approve the Civic Engagement Local Guidelines which were presented in November and are included in the board packet for your reference. Fusion seniors will have the opportunity to meet these local and state requirements in time for the Spring 2026 graduation.

**H. Mandatory Testing**

During February students are completing alternate assessments in Math and Reading through **NWEA MAP (Measures of Academic Progress)** assessments. The purpose for the exams is the tracking of individual growth, after establishing a wide range of baseline scores in the Fall, both below and above grade level expectations.

In March and April **California Standards (CAASPP)** tests for grades 7, 8 and 11 will provide additional measures of student improvement. For the Spring 2025 tests, the increase in average scores moved Fusion from the red to the orange indicator due to improvement for both all students and the “Socioeconomically Disadvantaged” subgroup, which resulted in Fusion no longer being identified in “Comprehensive School Improvement” status for the California Dashboard. The increase in points was especially notable in Math scores, an area of focused tutoring for Fusion.

<b>CAASPP State Standards</b>	<b>All Students</b>	<b>Socioeconomically Disadvantaged</b>
<p><b>English Language Arts</b></p> <p>In 2025, 6.56% of Fusion students met the CAASPP Dashboard ELA standard.</p>	 <p><b>Orange</b></p> <p>140.1 points below standard Increased 22.2 Points Number of Students: 36</p>	 <p><b>Orange</b></p> <p>152.9 points below standard Increased 22.9 Points Number of Students: 31</p>
<p><b>Mathematics</b></p> <p>In 2025, 7.94% of Fusion students met the CAASPP Dashboard Math standard.</p>	 <p><b>Orange</b></p> <p>170.4 points below standard Increased 66.4 Points Number of Students: 35</p>	 <p><b>Orange</b></p> <p>172.2 points below standard Increased 73.7 Points Number of Students: 30</p>

**English Learner Proficiency (ELPAC)** exams are being administered to 29 students classified as English Learners, 18% of Fusion’s population (down from 22% a year ago). These students may need additional support to meet grade level English proficiency on other standardized assessments and to redesignate as English Proficient.

### **I. Strategic Planning for 2025-26**

Fusion’s **Community Engagement Initiative (CEI)** team has completed three recent Peer Leading and Learning Network (PLLN) sessions, two virtual and one in-person in San Diego, as part of a statewide effort to strengthen systems that improve outcomes for underserved students. Through structured data analysis and collaborative reflection, the team refined its Problem of Practice to focus on chronic absenteeism and the role anxiety and emotional regulation challenges play in student disengagement.

While Fusion operates from a strong trauma-informed, non-punitive framework, the CEI team identified a need for more consistent, proactive systems that explicitly teach coping skills and create shared language around mental health. Fusion will move forward with a psychoeducational approach designed to build staff capacity, align engagement practices, and strengthen family understanding of anxiety as a barrier to attendance. The CEI team includes Mark Evanoff (Team Lead), Kim Franck (Co-Lead), Cynthia Herrera, Yelena Hinojosa (Student Representative), Deborah Lazarri, Michael Everett, Susan Nisan, Eric Ranes, Kristin Wolfley, and Kim Hawley. The next phase will focus on developing and piloting implementation strategies aimed at improving attendance, belonging, and student resilience.



### **J. Financial Developments**

Fusion anticipates a revision in state funding amounts in March 2026, based on a substantial increase in ADA from 117.81 in Spring 2025 to 129.30 in Fall 2025. The higher ADA will also result in increased funds from federal sources next year. Fusion’s Fall 2025 average daily attendance (P-1 ADA) is 129.3, compared to 116.20 in 2024 and 99.75 in 2023. The **Q2 Finance Report** includes more information about the specific impact of this 9.75% increase on Fusion’s revenues and expenditures. The Financial Report contains additional information about Fusion’s **Second Interim** financial status through January, 2026. This detailed report requires Board approval.

**Audit Firm Selection**—Charter schools must select an annual audit firm at a publicly noticed board meeting, and contract with the firm by April 1 of the current fiscal year. Baker Tilley conducted the audit of Fusion in the previous school year. Upon board approval we must submit the audit firm confirmation to TUSD and SCOE.

**Form 700**—Board members and charter school employees with a potential economic interest in the school's contracts and expenditures must complete Form 700 Statement of Economic Interests by April 1 for Fusion to be in compliance with state laws.

## **K. Advocacy and Legal Updates**

### **AB 3216- Smartphone Use in Schools**

Assembly Bill 3216, known as the **Phone-Free Schools Act**, requires school districts, county offices of education, and charter schools in California to adopt a policy that limits or prohibits student smartphone use while students are on campus or under school supervision. This policy must be developed and adopted by July 1, 2026, with regular updates every five years thereafter. The law gives local educational agencies (LEAs) the authority to tailor the policy to their community's needs while aligning with statewide goals to reduce distractions and support student focus and wellbeing.

The legislation includes specific exceptions that ensure students may use their phones in certain circumstances, such as during emergencies, with staff permission, when a licensed physician deems it necessary for a student's health, or when phone use is required by a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP).

To comply with AB 3216, Fusion Charter School will use the Turlock Unified School District's cell phone policy for guidance, adapting it as needed to meet the needs of Fusion students and staff while ensuring a safe and focused learning environment.

### **Government Shutdown**

Recently, the U.S. federal government experienced a partial shutdown when funding lapsed due to delays in Congress passing appropriations, although it has since been briefly resolved through a funding bill in early February 2026. Fusion acted quickly to provide students and families with additional funds for groceries through unrestricted CEI funds. The school remains positioned to continue serving students while monitoring federal developments that could affect program funding or compliance timelines.

## **L. Fusion 2025-2026 Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) Goals**

Fusion's **LCAP Goals** align with our WASC Accreditation Action Plan and Title I School Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA). The [Mid Year LCAP](#), with updates on progress this school year on Fusion's goals, requires board approval by February 28, 2026.

Fusion has shown improvement in student outcomes on all four goals.

### **1. Proficient English Literacy Skills for All Students**

*To equip our students with writing skills*

### **2. Applied Math Skills for College and Career Readiness**

*To fill gaps in learning and prepare our students for the future*

### **3. Program Alignment with Trauma-Responsive Mission/Vision**

*To improve well-being and graduation outcomes for all our students, including through grant activities for low income, homeless and foster youth*

### **4. Schoolwide Improvement in College and Career Indicator and Graduation Rates**

*To demonstrate growth on the California Dashboard for College and Career Indicator and Graduation Rate for all measurable subgroups each year (Socioeconomically Disadvantaged, Hispanic)*



## **M. Summary**

In this quarter, Fusion has continued to demonstrate growth, innovation, and a strong commitment to student success. Key highlights include the Winter Graduation and Awards Night, the 5th Annual Frosty Fest, participation in the Turlock Christmas Parade, and continued development of the Garden Club and Outdoor Learning Space. New personnel have strengthened instructional support, career and wellness programs, and campus operations, while partnerships with SEITY Health and staff-led initiatives have enhanced student wellbeing, leadership, and social-emotional growth.

Fusion remains attentive to legislative and policy developments, including AB 461 (attendance supports) and AB 3216 (smartphone policy), and is implementing strategies to ensure compliance and best practices. The school has also reviewed potential impacts from broader federal issues, such as the recent government shutdown, and continues to monitor developments that could affect funding or program operations.

Overall, Fusion is fostering a safe, supportive, and engaging environment where students are empowered to grow academically, socially, and emotionally. The school's Q2 accomplishments reflect the dedication of staff, the resilience of students, and the continued support of the Aspiranet Board in advancing Fusion's mission and vision.

- **Class of 2026 Spring Graduation** will be held Wednesday, May 27, 2026.
- The Island Water Park **Year End Trip** will be held Thursday, May 28, 2026.
- The final day of school is May 29, 2026, with **Grade 8 Promotion** held at 10:00.
- An optional **Summer School** session will run from June 3 to June 25, 2026 for high school students who need to recover credits.



On the February board agenda, Fusion requests approval of the:

- **Calendar** for 2026-2027 to Follow TUSD School Dates
- **School Accountability Report Card (SARC)** for 2024-25
- **Civic Engagement Local Guidelines**
- **Approval of Audit Firm** for 2025-2026

Links will be provided for the following lengthy documents:

- **Second Interim** Financial Report through January 31, 2026
- [Mid Year LCAP](#) for board approval by February 28, 2026

The annual **Form 700** is due April 1, 2026. A copy will be provided by email to each board member and Aspiranet personnel required to complete the form.

Your Obedient Servant,

David Ashby, Fusion Principal  
February 20, 2026

