

Principal’s Board Report

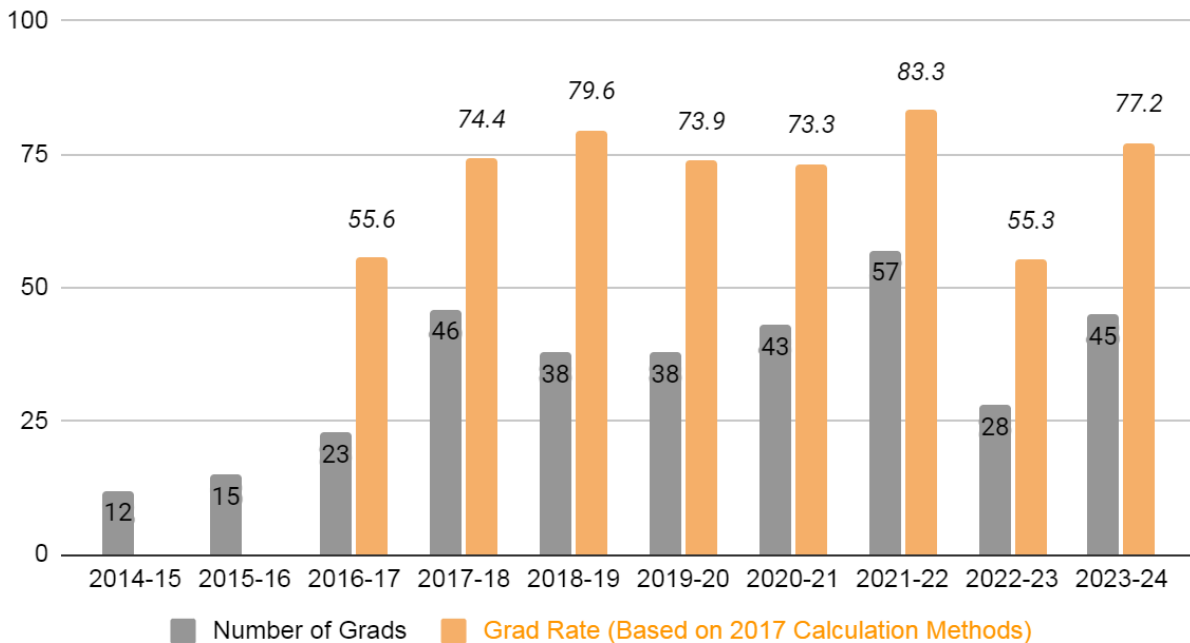
February 28, 2025

Fusion Class of 2025 Winter Graduation was held January 24, 2025 to honor the 25 Fusion students who completed all graduation requirements during the first semester. Eighteen students walked the stage at Fusion’s eleventh ceremony, the first ever to be held in the winter. Thirteen were recognized as honor students, led by Outstanding Graduate Trent Silva, who attended Fusion since eighth grade as a flexible school of choice and completed his first college course while earning honor grades at Fusion.



All who graduated with honors completed the final two semesters of high school with an A grade point average (GPA 3.5 to 4.0). Ten graduates had 90% attendance in their final semester at Fusion. Hats off to our newest grads who belong to a group of **370 Fusion alumni!**

Fusion Graduates 2015-2024 with Graduation Rate 2017-2024



Since January, two more students have completed all graduation requirements for 2025. These 27 students represent a 58.8% increase in mid-year completion, compared to 17 graduates a year ago. Fusion currently has 29 seniors, with 10 on track to graduate by May. Others require more support, including several who enrolled far behind in credits.

A. Student Services and Information

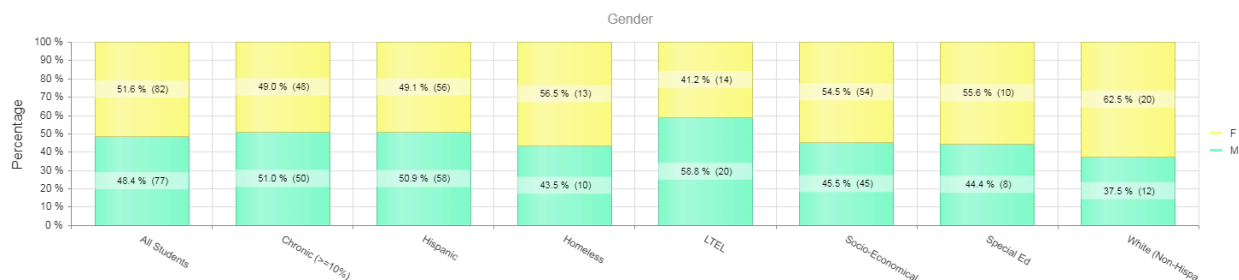
As of 2/12/2025, Fusion has served 222 students during the 2024-25 school year, a 13.3% increase from one year ago. On 2/9/2024, Fusion had served 196 students, a 20.2% increase over the 163 students served as of 2/9/2023. This growth in cumulative numbers result from both district referrals and open inquiries from parents and students.

Since launching the new Fusion website on August 15, 2023, fifty individuals have contacted us via the www.fusioncharter.org website, either to enroll or to request more information about Fusion. To expand Fusion's community outreach, we placed a banner on the front fence on January 14. Six students are in the enrollment process.



For the first time since Fusion opened, there are more girls than boys, with 82 female students, a 51.6% majority, surpassing a previous record percentage of 44.1% one year ago. This is a major difference from the numbers before the pandemic. By comparison, the percentage of female students was only 21.4% in 2018, the same year that the largest subgroup of enrolled students included 73 male residential Foster Youth. The numbers of residential youth declined from that point on,

Female students are enrolling from all subgroups. In the chart below, the proportion of female students (indicated in yellow) to male students (indicated in aqua) is approximately equal for subgroups with 18 or more students included in the analysis.



Schools: Fusion Charter Schl, Archive Schl
Grades: K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12

Currently four out of five students are identified as Socioeconomically Disadvantaged; the number in the chart above is inaccurate, as it does not reflect the qualifying data of many students enrolled after Census Day. The numbers are accurate for the 14.5% of all students designated as Homeless Youth. Of the 23 Homeless Youth enrolled, 13 are female (56.5%) and 10 are male (43.5%). Only three Foster Youth are currently enrolled, two female and one male.

While we do not yet know the full implications of changing demographics, Fusion is ready to adapt and serve our student needs and confront obstacles to school success. For example, Fusion currently has enrolled eight Pregnant and Parenting teens, five female and three male. Fusion leadership is exploring ways to benefit this population in collaboration with the **Aspiranet Family Resource Center (FRC)** and other services for teen parents and infants. The FRC will come to the Fusion campus to provide assistance in stabilizing clients in crisis, parenting classes, life skills workshops, and job readiness. They will help clients complete court-ordered open-CPS case plans. The FRC also provides a walk-in food and hygiene pantry and clothing closet for all ages.

B. Student Activities

Participation in all types of activities has increased at Fusion. The Student Council, under the guidance of teacher Abraham Zuniga, is active and well organized.

Fusion's **Frosty Fest** Holiday Party and Video Game Tournament held on December 20, 2024 was popular with music, food, cookie decorating, holiday crafts, video game tournaments and gifts for 150 students. A fine art workshop was a popular party activity.

On February 12 a record number of 82 students attended on campus for **Cupid's Club**, with creative games, sweet crafts and Candy-grams for all.

The next Student Council activities will be a Mardi-Gras theme in March, state convention in April in Santa Clara and the Fusion Prom in May.



During Fusion's annual **National School Choice** night for families a total of 70 continuing students from all grade levels 7-12 were recognized. Fusion Charter celebrated on Thursday, January 30, 2025 with an awards ceremony, a Title I meeting inviting parent participation in school decision making, door prizes for parents and cake for all. Parents had an opportunity to view a slideshow of student activities and place

orders for the second volume of the Comic Con book created by students in the weekly Friday club.

The 65 students congratulated for **good attendance** qualified by being enrolled at Fusion for at least two monthly learning periods with 90% or higher cumulative attendance. This is more than twice the group of 32 students with good attendance one year ago, a result of daily monitoring of attendance by Fusion office and classroom staff.

For Fusion students, showing up for school consistently leads to success; 34 students were honored for both attendance and grades. The **honor roll** students were required to have completed at least 15 core high school credits. For the B Honor Roll (3.0-3.49 GPA) there were 24 honorees (5 graduates and 19 continuing students), compared to 26 students one year ago. For the A Honor Roll (3.5-4.0 GPA) there were 46 honorees (13 graduates and 33 continuing students) compared to 39 students in 2024.

C. Community Involvement

Fusion receives technical assistance from both Community Schools and Seity Health. On February 6 we submitted an implementation grant with plans to provide greater emphasis on increasing parent and community engagement for the next five years.

The **Fusion BBQ Club** has launched with new grills donated to Fusion by Char-Griller. The club is integrating the greenhouse and gardens with student cooking and grilling events, fostering hands-on learning experiences centered around sustainability, nutrition, and teamwork.

Fusion Charter plans to host more on-campus events that actively engage families, strengthening community ties and creating opportunities for students to showcase their skills. The *Lunch and Learn* career-related presentations and *Family Movie Nights* have been well received, encouraging student participation and family involvement. These initiatives not only enhance our school culture but also reinforce Fusion's commitment to experiential learning, community-building, and student success.

Fusion has reserved \$16,500 in state Learning Communities (LCSSP) funds to support home visits to increase family engagement. This year parents will be invited to respond to the anonymous Healthy Kids Survey along with students and staff. All previous surveys have shown a very high level of parent satisfaction with Fusion's program. We look forward to new ways to build on this satisfaction and build strong collaboration.

D. Personnel

As always, Fusion's greatest strength is our dedicated staff. Fusion teacher Lorraine Jones retired in January and Casey Hammond increased to full time at Fusion. Classified staff are being hired to replace math tutor Zachary Lambert and CSUS intern Max Olsen, who have both moved on in their career pathways. Our final open position for 2024-25 school year is a new full-time custodian/groundskeeper to be shared with Aspiranet Residential.

With board approval, Fusion will follow the enclosed **TUSD Calendar for 2025-2026** for all student days. The faculty and staff may elect to use **Educator Effectiveness** funds for additional professional development days during school breaks without students.

E. Professional Development

Fusion continues to engage in academic professional development both in house and at conferences, with regular updates and training from our curriculum providers. We also participate in SCOE and TUSD professional development, especially for new teachers.

All Fusion staff members are assigned Cornerstone Human Resource training by Aspiranet, with an emphasis on Safety topics and Cultural Competencies. Fusion also participates in all Aspiranet Leadership Strategic Planning and is building new connections with other Aspiranet divisions and programs through on-site visits and coordination of services.

Professional development throughout the rest of the school year includes a February presentation on Student Anxiety by our counselor Mark Evanoff and a March introduction to the new Ethnic Studies graduation requirement by teacher Daniel Vera.

In February Abraham Zuniga will attend the California Activities Director Conference, and in March representatives from Fusion will participate in the California Charter School Association conference and the federal "All Titles" conference. By invitation, David Ashby and team members will repeat workshops in June at the Community Schools Conference in Fresno and the PSC Summer Learning Institute in Morro Bay on the topic of **Restorative Practices: The Art and Science of Talking Circles**.

F. Facility

Fusion's facility serves more than academic needs on a daily basis. The campus is a safe place and a community hub for students to access resources such as daily support from credentialed teachers, academic tutors, meals, transportation, career development, engaging activities, counseling and restorative justice talking circles.

Fusion's facility is also used to serve the community. In addition to our parent and family events, the Student Council organizes a Fall Festival in October for neighborhood children from a large low-income housing complex across the street. Our multi-purpose room is used regularly by Aspiranet social workers for new staff training and the Aspiranet Family Resource Center hosts an annual holiday party for foster children.



Again this year Fusion will participate in **Love Turlock Day** on April 26, 2025, with outdoor clean up tasks on campus and an opportunity to share the good work of our program with the community volunteers. We hope that this year a new groundskeeper will be involved in the event and will provide input into ways to keep Fusion's facility beautiful and productive for many years to come.

G. Accountability

Fusion submitted the **2023-2024 School Accountability Report Card** on the February 1, 2025 deadline to the link at [23-24 SARC \(School Accountability Report Card\)](#).

Attendance has improved but is our greatest area of concern for our students, most of whom arrive at Fusion with a history of low attendance patterns. Last year, 80.8% were identified as "chronically absent" due to more than 10% of school days without school participation via either on-site attendance or remote logins. (For detailed subgroup information, see page 17 of the SARC.) For the first three attendance periods of the current school year, the chronic absence rate, based on students absent for more than 10% of the school days, was 52.5%.

The daily percentage of students participating in schoolwork has **increased from 70.74% in 2023-24 to 81.66% in 2024-25 to date**. This increase in attendance helps keep students engaged in school and positively impacts Fusion's funding numbers. Our funding level will increase from February 2025 through June 2025 to compensate for the increase in first semester P1 attendance. If the ADA continues to increase through the Spring P2 in April, additional funds will be paid out in the summer to reflect the increase.





Each year Fusion proposes an **Attendance Challenge** to keep students motivated. The 2025 Attendance Challenge begins Thursday, February 20. Students are challenged to login for 25 days of 100% attendance and win prizes for their classroom groups of no more than 12 students (called Sessions) and will have an extra opportunity to earn a **Taco Lunch** for the whole school.

Individual and group incentives will be purchased with funds from our recent Red Robin fundraiser and other donations. **The first Session to reach 25 days of 100% login attendance will have the right to choose their prize package first.**

H. Mandatory Testing

Fusion Charter has [Dashboard Alternative Schools Status \(DASS\)](#), because we welcome, enroll and serve a majority of at-risk students. Although DASS schools are not evaluated for charter renewal based on state scores, our schools annual test score performance is monitored. Fusion will receive Differentiated Assistance from SCOE to improve Mathematics and English Language Arts (ELA) performance. The only subgroup large enough to generate a separate score is Socioeconomically Disadvantaged, which consists of more than 80% of the total and has similar results.

During February students are completing alternate assessments in Math and Reading through NWEA for tracking of individual growth. Students are reassessing for growth this month, prior to California Standards (CAASPP) tests for grades 7, 8 and 11. English Learner Proficiency (ELPAC) exams are being administered to 35 students classified as English Learners, 22% of our population. These students may need additional support to meet grade level English proficiency on other standardized assessments.

CAASPP State Standards	All Students	Socioeconomically Disadvantaged
<p>ELA</p> <p>In 2024 eight Fusion students met the CAASPP Dashboard ELA standard. Two Grade 11 students who graduated early in Fall 2024 met the standard. One Grade 8 student and one Grade 11 student who transferred back to the district met the standard. Of currently enrolled students, two in Grade 11 and one in Grade 8 met the state standard.</p>	 <p>Red 162.3 points below standard Maintained -1.2 Points Number of Students: 49</p>	 <p>Red 175.8 points below standard Declined 11.1 Points Number of Students: 44</p>
<p>Math</p> <p>For the Math tests in 2024, two Grade 11 students who are no longer enrolled at Fusion met the standard.</p> <p>No currently enrolled students met the state standard in Math.</p>	 <p>Red 236.8 points below standard Declined 13.5 Points Number of Students: 50</p>	 <p>Red 246 points below standard Declined 16.5 Points Number of Students: 44</p>

I. Strategic Planning for 2024-25

Fusion continues to work closely with Aspiranet on long-term strategic plans that support a second decade of impact on vulnerable youth in our community.

In preparation for five-year renewal, Fusion has collaborated with TUSD to revise the school charter to reflect Fusion's current mission and vision statements

Mission Statement: Fusion Charter will use a trauma-responsive approach that puts social and emotional needs first, followed by practical, flexible, individualized learning to engage students and provide a pathway to college or career.

Vision Statement: We envision trauma-responsive schools in which all students are loved and respected as individuals and all graduates enter the adult community with the resources to thrive.

Changes to the previous charter document require board approval prior to submission to the TUSD board for a **public hearing on Tuesday evening, March 18**. The primary change to the charter draft is the foundation of Fusion's trauma informed approach.

The draft contains TUSD concerns/requests for change on the following pages:

- Page 6. 180 day school calendar aligned with TUSD dates
- Page 7. TUSD Percentage of Students (80% in 23-24)
- Page 11. Clarifications about core curriculum alignment with State Standards and measures of content mastery
- Page 13. Alternative assessments via NWEA identified with hyperlinks
- Page 14. Fusion English Learner reclassification criteria identified
- Page 15. Special Education MOU identified
- Page 28. Employee Job Descriptions replaced with an organization chart
- Page 32. Admissions lottery preferences remain unchanged from 2017 with TUSD given priority over other districts for new students
- Page 35. Financial reporting deadlines five working days to TUSD before legal deadlines. The June LCAP Board meeting should be held no later than Monday, June 23 in order to adhere to these deadlines.

J. Financial Developments (The Financial Report contains additional information.)

The **Second Interim** report due by March 8 to TUSD and SCOE is attached. Although the projected LCFF is set conservatively at 116.20 ADA for the 2024-25 school year, Fusion has prepared for growth in the second semester by increasing special education capacity and adding another junior high session for students who enroll mid-year.

The **Community Schools Implementation (CCSPP)** grant application was submitted February 6 for a five to seven year period of support from the CDE to engage the community in partnerships to provide an integrated focus on academics, health and social services, youth and community development, and community engagement.

Fusion has been awarded an additional \$421,191 for **Comprehensive School Improvement (CSI)** for Fiscal Year 2025-26. Fusion will receive the new CSI funding to increase the Dashboard College and Career Indicator and Math and English Language test scores. The first 25% will be disbursed by June, followed by reimbursements through September 30, 2026. Improving our foundational math and ELA scores, and increasing the college and career indicator are high priorities for our plans as well.

This new second year of funding follows the first year allocation of \$174,382 with \$43,596 disbursed in June, 2024 and the remainder to be reimbursed in 2024-2025, based upon expenses for “evidence-based” interventions to improve student outcomes. Fusion is collaborating with the local Turlock Unified School District (TUSD) and SCOE for technical assistance in the planning and implementation of these funds.

College and Career Access Pathways Grant (CCAP)--Fusion has received the first \$90,000 of a \$100,000 award to support dual college enrollment over a three-year period. Fusion is purchasing a hybrid van for transportation and tutoring to support student success in Modesto Junior College courses prior to high school graduation.

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.

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. Moss Adams conducted the audit of Fusion in the previous school year. Upon board approval we must submit the audit firm confirmation to TUSD and SCOE.

K. Advocacy Update

Fusion and all charter schools continue to monitor new legislation. There are no current advocacy issues that the charter school association has brought to our attention.

L. Fusion 2024-2025 Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) Goals

Fusion's on site accreditation renewal visit by WASC will be conducted April 14-16, 2025. A link to the [WASC report](#) will be presented as an information item prior to the February meeting. The WASC Action Plan aligns with the following LCAP goals, WASC Accreditation Action Plan and Title I School Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA).

The CDE has set a February 28 deadline to present a mid-year LCAP report to the Board, based on the schoolwide goals below developed by the Site Council made up of parents, students, and school staff, approved by the Aspiranet Board of Directors

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)

Fusion 2024 Dashboard College and Career Indicator: All Students

Red
Prepared = 0%



M. Summary

Spring Graduation will be held Wednesday, May 28, 2025. The final day of the 2024-2025 school year is May 30, 2025.

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



- **Charter Renewal**
- **Calendar** for 2025-2026 to Follow TUSD School Dates
- **Approval of Audit Firm** for 2024-2025
- **School Accountability Report Card (SARC)** for 2023-24
- **Second Interim** Financial Report through January 31, 2025

Links are provided for the following lengthy documents:

- [Mid Year LCAP](#) for board approval by February 28, 2025
- [WASC 2025 Self Study Report](#) for board review

The annual **Form 700** is due April 1, 2025 for all board members.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Nisan, Fusion Principal
February 19, 2025