



MAY NEWSLETTER

Please join us **Tuesday, May 20, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. on Zoom** for our monthly meeting! *If you haven't already, **PLEASE** make sure to read the important update about Zoom on the announcements page.*

Agenda:

1. Call to Order and Opening Remarks from President Darrel Menthe;
2. Approval of Minutes from April 15, 2025 CCDU Meeting;
3. Report from Treasurer Judy Scott;
4. Report from VP of Membership Rafia Cooper;
5. **Special Guest Speaker: Mayor Karen Bass**;
6. Announcements;
7. Items from the Floor;
8. Adjournment.

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87695865198>

Meeting ID: 876 9586 5198

One tap mobile:

+16694449171,,87695865198# US

+16699006833,,87695865198# US (San Jose)

If you are unable to register until the day of the meeting, please allow yourself an extra 5 minutes to register beforehand.

Please ensure you change your name to a proper First Name and Last Name. Waiting room guests with names such as 'iPhone 6,' 'Living Room iPad,' 'Tom,' etc. will not be admitted into the meeting.

Zoom Waiting Room is opened at 6:45 pm on meeting nights, Waiting room is accepted into the meeting at 7:00 pm.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By President Darrel Menthe

Culver City Unified School District is facing financial hardship that is resulting in budget cuts and elimination of some positions. The immediate cause of this crunch is that district reserves are now below the 3% minimum level required by state for all school districts. CCUSD spent millions more in 2022-2024 than it received in revenue. If changes are not made, the shortfall is projected to be approximately \$3 million for the 25/26 school year. CCDU endorsed the election of two new Board members, Lindsay Carlson and Andrew Lachman in 2024. They have had the unenviable job of responding to the inherited fiscal situation by voting to make unwanted reductions in services and personnel.

There are two major reasons for the overspending. First, the district received one-time COVID-era funds that the district used for positions and programs that continued after the funding ceased. Second, the district accumulated arrangements with vendors and contractors along with other spending that went unexamined due to the appearance of prosperity from the one-time COVID dollars. The district is now working to analyze expenditures and reduce these costs and outside contracts. However, the cuts have to be deeper now because this work was not done earlier.

While these local problems are significant, we should be cognizant of the larger issues too. It is the State of California that is failing our students. Education funding in most states takes place through local property taxes. That funding source in California was destroyed by Proposition 13 in 1978, and funding cratered during the 1980s under Republican rule in California. Since then, California has cobbled together a system where it doles out money to schools from both the general fund and property tax revenues according to formulas derived largely from average daily attendance. This funding is simply inadequate.

California may be near the middle of the pack of states in per-pupil spending, but our money buys less because most education spending is on labor, and this is a high-cost-of-living state. High-cost-of-living states like California need to spend more per pupil just to provide the same services that other states do. According to the US Census Department, New York spends about \$29,000 per student while California spends about \$17,000 per student. In terms of realized value per student, California is actually in the very bottom tier.

As Democrats, we need to own this problem. We Democrats have had unified control of California government for almost a generation but have done almost nothing to fix the problem of underfunded schools. Democrats need to become the party of education again. Reviving funding for public education should be the centerpiece of every Democratic legislator's agenda, and what I will look for as the Democratic Party makes endorsements in 2026 for state offices.

Darrel Menthe

President

Culver City Democrats United

ANNOUNCEMENTS

HATS AND BUTTONS!

We now have hats available for purchase, as well as buttons! See photos below, and email eli@culvercitydems.com to purchase a **hat for \$20**, or a **button for \$5**.



ZOOM UPDATE

At our Tuesday February 18, 2025 meeting, we received feedback that the Zoom registration reminder emails were confusing. As a result, we have decided to go back to individual registration for each Zoom meeting. While some of the meetings will likely be in-person, please register as if all 9 are taking place on Zoom.

What does this mean? Everyone needs to re-register for the remaining Zoom meetings of 2025. While this change may be temporarily inconvenient, it will allow folks to receive the reminder emails from Zoom BEFORE the meetings, and not just after registering, which should reduce potential confusion.

What do you need to do? When you click on the link below, you will see a dropdown menu with the option to choose between our remaining 8 meetings. Please select which meetings you will be registering for, and if you are registering for all 8, please select all 8 boxes.

To re-register, visit:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMrfuyggD4rE9zPFF3qBBXpP8qnnhQ2Alc3#/registration>

Once registered for your selected meetings, you will receive a confirmation email. On meeting nights at 5:30pm, registered folks for that specific date will receive a second reminder of their confirmation email from Zoom.

2025 MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Your involvement is crucial as we continue our efforts to advocate for transformative policies and engage our community. By renewing your membership, you ensure that your voice remains part of the important conversations shaping our future. To renew your membership, please visit this link:

<https://secure.actblue.com/donate/ccdu2025members> and select your desired membership level. Remember, if you choose to become a Sustaining Member, simply check the "Make it monthly!" option and enter any amount of \$20 or more.

AD55 United Slate Officially Commissioned at Assembly District 55 Ceremony

The AD55 United slate of California Democratic Party Delegates was officially commissioned during a full-house ceremony on Sunday, April 25, marking a powerful moment of unity, purpose, and grassroots representation for Assembly District 55. The event took place at the historic Culver City Foshay Lodge.

Each delegate received a Certificate of Recognition from the Office of Assemblymember Isaac Bryan and a commemorative Democratic Party pin—presented by Darrel Menthe on behalf of the delegation. Also in attendance was Culver City Councilmember and former Mayor Albert Vera, a lifetime member of the Heart of LA Democratic Club and LACDP 2022 Democrat of the Year. **Congratulations AD55 Delegates!** See event photos below.

