

ELLMAs News in April 2026

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ELLMAs NEWS

Connecting and Sharing



In this edition of the ELLMA newsletter, we highlight how we nurture the whole child as part of our commitment to joyful and excellent learning for multilingual students. Supporting our learners means attending not only to academics, but also to wellness, community, and social-emotional growth. Through strong partnerships with families and community resources, we work to address the non-academic needs that can impact students' success. See our five [Essential Practices for ELL Achievement](#) for more details and linked resources.

Inside, you'll find examples of how we bring this to life—from building meaningful student relationships to strengthening instructional routines. Don't miss our language program spotlights and upcoming PD opportunities!

School in Focus



Global Family

Literacy Night 2026

Global Family Literacy Night 2026

The students and families at Global Family Elementary were transported to "[The Enchanted Forest: A Magical World of Books](#)" on Monday, March 9th as the school hosted their 2026 Family Literacy Night! Walking up to the school, you could feel the excitement in the air as students were pulling the hands of their adults to sign in and rush over to one of the eleven different workshop sessions hosted by classroom teachers and volunteers.

In her workshop, Dr. Monisha Bajaj, professor and author of a children's book, [A Year of Kites](#), students and families practiced chorally reading "Kites fly high" in English, Spanish, and Mam. As Dr. Monisha read her book aloud, one parent lit up as [she shared her own experiences](#) witnessing the bariletes soar over the skies in Guatemala during Dia de los Muertos. In another room, librarians from the [Oakland Public Library](#) answered questions, passed out free books and prizes, made buttons, and even helped families get library cards on the spot! Other workshops included creating your own graphic novels, a [muppet show](#), storyboards, and interactive literacy activities.

"We were fortunate to have the participation of various presenters as well as all the amazing teachers at our site to help facilitate our workshops. We centered our efforts on literacy, recognizing it as a foundational skill vital for student long term success" shared Rosa Jiménez who is a veteran teacher on special assignment at Global Family Elementary.

Families had the opportunity to attend two different sessions during the event before gathering in the cafeteria for a [special performance by 1, 2, 3 Andrés](#) (or click on the image below) and pizza dinner together as a community. English Newcomer Teacher Margarita Jiménez received the A-to-Z Grant from the Oakland Public Education Fund to support the event and shared, "It was a collective effort by the Global Family Literacy Committee to bring the joy of reading to life. I was thrilled to see over 400 students and families attend this event!"



Click above to check out the fun and joy at the 1, 2, 3, Andrés performance!

ELLMA Program in Focus



Community School District

Supporting Immigrant
Families Inside the
Classroom and Out

Community School District: Supporting Immigrant Families Inside the Classroom and Out

At OUSD, supporting multilingual learners means seeing and serving the whole child—and the whole family. For many newcomer students, success in school is deeply connected to stability at home, access to healthcare, and the ability to navigate complex legal systems. Through coordinated, wraparound support, our teams partner across departments and with community organizations to ensure students and families are not facing these challenges alone. From securing housing stability to connecting families with healthcare, legal services, and enrichment opportunities, this work creates the conditions students need to attend school consistently, engage in learning, and plan for their futures.

One recent family's journey highlights the power of this approach. As two Castlemont students maintained strong attendance and academic progress, their family simultaneously navigated a serious medical diagnosis, financial instability, and ongoing immigration proceedings. Through collaboration between school staff, the Castlemont Newcomer Social Worker, and the Lakeview Refugee and Asylee Support Program, the family was supported in filing an asylum application, securing work permits, accessing therapy, and receiving stipended internships. They were connected to [La Familia](#) for utility support, [Soccer Without Borders](#) for enrichment and community, and attorneys through [East Bay Sanctuary](#) for immigration support. When a transitional housing opportunity through [Shelter in Peace](#) did not come through, [New Anchor Foundation](#) and other partners stepped in to help stabilize housing. This layered support is critical—without it, families can become vulnerable to exploitation, including predatory actors online who take advantage of legal uncertainty.

This work also underscores the importance of strong school-site partnerships. In a district of our size, connections are not always automatic. When needs arise, reaching out—through a community school manager, principal, or directly to central teams—can make a meaningful difference. While families like this one are often ineligible for most public assistance and cannot rely on federal or state safety nets, OUSD’s community school model allows us to coordinate meaningful support. Seeing how other districts struggle with this work reinforces the strength of a shared commitment: that schools can and should be hubs for care. We may not always have every resource we wish for, but through strong relationships, partnerships, and creative problem-solving, we are able to provide real, tangible support—and that is the good news.



According to our [Pacing Guide](#), the due date for grades 1-5 CEA #3 administration is 03/18. Ideally, analysis of students’ writing would take place the week after the administration ([see DL PLC Calendar](#)). However, we include two weeks of flexibility in the collection of data on Illuminate.

- Lots of CEA resources, including the Benchmark CEA prompts & the writing analysis Task Card, can be found [here!](#)

Did you know that **Benchmark Unit 6** has been designed to support students to prepare for **SBAC**? The 3-5 Writing lessons address Writing to a Text-Based Prompt:

Informative/Explanatory, Opinion or Narrative.

[Here](#) you have some resources to unpack the writing lessons in Benchmark aligned to Standards.

Next year marks an exciting new chapter as Behavioral Health and the ELLMA team officially join forces to deepen and expand support for our students. For years, the Newcomer Wellness Initiative has been housed within ELLMA through Salesforce-funded efforts focused on newcomer students. As enrollment patterns shift, we have a meaningful opportunity to evolve this work—broadening our impact so that the expertise developed in newcomer support can serve a wider range of multilingual learners and all students across our schools.

Through this partnership, we are bringing together professional learning, supervision, structures, internships, and cross-team collaboration for newcomer, general education, and special education social workers. By aligning our efforts and learning from one another, we are strengthening a more integrated, sustainable system of support. Together, we move forward as one team—building on our shared commitment to student wellness and success: together we thrive.





We look forward to meeting for our last ELL Ambassador meeting on **April 30th from 3:30 - 5:00**. We will review the upcoming spring reclassification cycle, share some important updates, and reflect on this year to inform next!



Language Instruction to Support Text Access, Engagement, and Comprehension - Before, During and After Reading (BDA)

The texts our students read are complex in language and content. We can support our students in accessing these texts with **strategic language support** by:

- Developing and activating vocabulary and schema **before** reading to prepare students to engage with the text
- Scaffolding **during** the reading process in a way that allows students to grapple through discussing and practicing using the language to make-meaning
- Facilitating protocols **after** reading to support students in explaining their thinking about the topic in more precise ways in speaking and writing.

Learn more about BDA and find resources [BDA - Secondary](#) [BDA Elementary](#)