

# Data science course is down for the count

UC decision to disallow alternatives to advanced algebra causes math anxiety.

By TERESA WATANABE

Briana Hampton, a San Gabriel High School junior, is determined to get into a four-year university to achieve her dream of becoming a social worker or psychiatrist. But she feared she would fail a third-year math course heavy on advanced algebra.

To meet her math requirement, she opted instead for an introductory data science course, approved a few years ago by the University of California as an alternative to advanced algebra. She loves the challenge of learning how to code, conduct surveys and analyze data on topics relevant to her life — sleep hours, stress levels, snacks consumed. She’s also boasting a B average in the class, compared with the Ds and Fs earned in her first-year math class.

“I’ve always struggled with math, but I heard that [data science] was like a really good class and something new and easier than algebra,” Briana said.

But the data science option is gone, at least for now. Last month UC notified California high schools that three of the most popular data science courses no longer count toward the advanced math requirement because the classes fail to teach the upper-level algebra content all incoming students must know.

The decision has ratcheted up math anxiety and fomented confusion among high school students throughout California as they chart their high-stakes path for coveted UC admissions. California high schools offering data science classes — about 435 across the state — are also uncertain over how to revise curriculum and counsel their students.

UC first approved a data science course submitted in 2013 by Los Angeles Unified [See Math, A8]

## Golfers tee off on brokers

Players pack an L.A. meeting demanding an end to a pay-to-play system they call unfair. CALIFORNIA, B1

## State help for FAFSA woes

A bill would extend the deadline for college aid applicants affected by glitches and delays. CALIFORNIA, B1

## Planting ‘seeds’ at the Geffen

The inaugural season for Artistic Director Tarell Alvin McCraney features classics, new works. CALENDAR, E1

**Weather**  
Mostly sunny.  
L.A. Basin: 72/53. B6

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WALLY SKALIJ Los Angeles Times

# A mountain village finds itself in hungry bears’ crosshairs

At Pine Mountain Club in Kern County, home and vehicle break-ins are a recurring source of stress, as well as community division

By LOUIS SAHAGÚN  
REPORTING FROM PINE MOUNTAIN CLUB, CALIF.



CODY MILLER

**SOME BEARS** can stay active throughout the year because of abundant, accessible sources of human food. Above, a dumpster raider in Pine Mountain Club, Calif.

climbed onto the gas stove and turned on the burners. A few cars were nearly totaled by bears rummaging for crushed cookies between the seats.”

Wildlife authorities across the nation have been reporting an increase in human-black bear interactions for decades, and this is especially true in California, where urban growth — as well as increasingly severe wildfires and drought — has caused a growing number of bears to seek food in areas dominated by humans.

Although crowded tourist enclaves such as Lake Tahoe and Mammoth Lakes are well known for bear incidents — particularly those in which the animals are struck and killed by vehicles — the ursines are also being reported along the Central Coast and in the Transverse Ranges of Southern California, where they were never seen 50 years ago.

At Kern County’s Pine Mountain Club, where annual black bear invasions began in earnest about a decade ago, [See Bears, A9]

# Prosecutors accuse Grossman of illegal conduct from jail

She and allies aimed to influence witnesses and jury after murder verdict, filing says.

By RICHARD WINTON

Prosecutors want Rebecca Grossman’s access to jailhouse phones cut off after they say she encouraged illegal conduct and her team attempted to tamper with jurors who convicted her of double murder.

Deputy Dist. Atty. Ryan Gould and his colleague Jamie Castro filed a motion Monday that detailed several jailhouse calls Grossman had with her daughter and husband after her Feb. 23 conviction for killing two young brothers in a crosswalk while speeding on a residential Westlake Village street.

According to court documents, Grossman told her daughter, Alexis, to make public a deputy-worn body-camera video that had been

sealed by the judge and to direct another person to talk to the judge about a new trial. She also encouraged tracking down witnesses to get them to say their testimony had been directed.

The jury last month found Grossman, 60, guilty of two counts of murder, two counts of gross vehicular manslaughter and one count of hit and run in the 2020 deaths of Mark and Jacob Iskander, ages 11 and 8. She faces 34 years to life in prison at sentencing.

Gould and Castro wrote that two jurors have reported that three others on the jury were contacted by Paul Stuckey, a private investigator, despite the judge’s sealing of jurors’ personal information.

“This investigator did not properly identify himself, rather stating he was a ‘private investigator for the family,’” prosecutors wrote in the motion filed Monday. Stuckey does not work for the Iskanders or the prosecution, but rather for Gross- [See Grossman, A11]



JOSE LUIS VILLEGAS For The Times

**BALLOTS** are sorted March 11 at the San Joaquin County registrar’s office.

# Election conspiracy theories abound following fraud arrest

By MACKENZIE MAYS

STOCKTON — As the polls closed in California on Super Tuesday, Jim Hicks stood watch in the parking lot of a community center while election officials wearing red vests retrieved ballots from a drop-off box.

He jiggled the handle of the metal container when they were done to ensure it was locked and peeked his head into the white van holding boxes of ballots that would be transferred to the San Joaquin County regis-

trar of voters to be counted.

“We just need to have eyes on things after everything that’s been going on,” Hicks said as he rushed to his SUV to tail officials down dark farmland back roads to more drop boxes where ballots were waiting to be collected, all part of his role as a self-appointed election observer.

Hicks, a real estate agent from Lodi, believes California’s universal vote-by-mail process is fraught with fraud risks, echoing unfounded messaging from the far right that [See Central Valley, A11]

# TEXAS CLEARED TO MAKE BORDER ARRESTS

Supreme Court vote to let state enact new law has implications for federal authority.

By DAVID G. SAVAGE

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court on Tuesday turned down a plea from the Biden administration and cleared the way for Texas to begin enforcing a new state law that authorizes its police to arrest migrants who illegally cross the Rio Grande from Mexico.

The decision came on a 6-3 vote, and it may signal a major change in immigration enforcement.

At issue is whether Texas and other red states may strictly enforce laws against coming into the U.S. illegally. Those state leaders say they are acting because of what they view as lax enforcement by the Biden administration.

In her appeal, U.S. Solicitor Gen. Elizabeth Prelogar had argued that the federal government, not the states, has the sole power to decide on the “entry and removal” of people at the borders.

But the justices turned down her appeal without comment and refused to block the Texas law from going into effect.

The court split along ideological lines in the case, United States vs. Texas. The six conservative justices sided with Texas, while the three liberals voted in favor of the Biden administration’s appeal.

Conservative Justices Amy Coney Barrett and Brett M. Kavanaugh pointed to procedural reasons to explain their vote. They noted that the conservative U.S. Court of Appeals for the 5th Circuit had yet to rule on the Texas law, and said that the high court should not weigh in on its constitutionality beforehand.

Issuing a strong dissent [See Immigration, A7]



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