

AUGUST 12, 2020 Regular Board Meeting
Public Comment Items appear in Order Received by Area.

OPPORTUNITY for Public Comment on Consent Agenda Items

A-2, ADOPT Resolution No. 20-02 in Support of an Ethnic Studies Program in Fresno Unified School District

1. **Josefa F. Vega**

FUSD board, I would like to declare my support for creating an ethnic studies program that is inclusive and equitable by reflecting our district and all of the history of communities within it.

The movement surrounding the safety and health of Black lives makes this the perfect moment to include their history in students' curriculums. By supporting ethnic studies we can create a learning opportunity that's available all year rather than be limited to a single month. Let's invest in our community's education and include history that doesn't uphold white supremacy and truly reflects who Fresno unified is. In community.

2. **Heather Miller**

To whom it concerns,

My name is Heather Miller and I am a concerned teacher and community member. I would like to submit a statement in support of Ethnic Studies in Fresno Unified School District. Within our community we recognize that institutional racism and systemic oppression permeates all of our institutions. Ethnic Studies is explicitly anti-racist. The class centers the experiences of historically racialized groups and provides a safe space for students to examine racism and the institutions that uphold it. I believe Ethnic Studies is necessary because it will help to engage all students in the learning community and give them the skills to understand systemic oppression and how to build a better world. I expect that by the next school board meeting, there will be a board resolution that discusses the proposals made by the Fresno Ethnic Studies Coalition. Sincerely, Heather Miller

3. **Amy Sepulveda**

My name is Amy Sepulveda. I am an educator at Fort Miller Middle School who will be teaching Ethnic Studies during the 2020-2021 school year. I am a piloting member of the Fresno Ethnic Studies Coalition. I lead the Chicana Latinx Student Association on campus and provide our Latinx students with equitable curriculum and have witnessed the power of culturally relevant education. I ask that you support a board resolution to implement Ethnic Studies courses at all middle schools in FUSD, as well as at every other site at the primary and secondary level. Our students deserve a safe space to discuss race, ethnicity, and life experiences while engaging in critical dialogue surrounding these issues. As the third largest district with over 90% students of color, FUSD needs to do better. We need to invest in our students and their right to an equitable, anti-racist curriculum that they can see themselves being a part of- a curriculum that does not erase who they are. There is plenty of data that demonstrates the benefits that would uplift the culture of our campuses, the academic performance of our youth, and increase the connection with our community. I ask that you consider adopting the Fresno Ethnic Studies Coalition proposal and integrate Ethnic Studies district wide as well as establish a leadership committee designed to establish curriculum, a functional PLC model, and a qualified ES advisory. The time is now. We must invest in our students and show them that who they are matters.

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4. **Lauren Beal**

To Whom It May Concern: My name is Lauren Beal and I piloted African American Studies at Edison High School. I have seen the direct impact of African American Studies at Edison and the positive ripple effects throughout the southwest community. In African American studies at Edison High School, students have a safe space to address race & ethnicity. For some students, this is also the first time they have seen themselves reflected with intention in content, curriculum, and pedagogy. I am here to ask that you adopt Resolution No. 20-02 in Support of an Ethnic Studies Program in Fresno Unified. As an educator, I am pleading with you to pass this resolution. Affirming your support, both structurally and monetarily, for the development, addition, and integration of Ethnic Studies in Fresno Unified will be monumental, historic, and it's what our students need. Fresno Unified can once again lead in the Valley, as it adopts Ethnic Studies as a graduation requirement. As the third largest school district in California, I believe Fresno USD should establish Ethnic Studies course offerings at the high school and middle school levels and integration of Ethnic Studies principles into primary grades at piloted schools across the district. Create an Ethnic Studies Leadership Committee by FUSD Ethnic Studies teachers so that Ethnic Studies classes can be vertically aligned, have an established scope and sequence, and guiding principles across the district. As educators, we know that learning never stops. We need a creation of a functional Professional Learning **(250-word limit reached)**.

5. **Kelly Smith**

My name is Kelly Smith and I am a concerned parent. I would like to submit a statement in support of Ethnic Studies in Fresno Unified School District. Within our community we recognize that institutional racism and systemic oppression permeates all of our institutions. Ethnic Studies is explicitly anti-racist. The class centers the experiences of historically racialized groups and provides a safe space for students to examine racism and the institutions that uphold it. I believe Ethnic Studies is necessary due to the diverse population that resides in the valley and attends public school. I expect that by the next school board meeting, there will be a board resolution that discusses the proposals made by the Fresno Ethnic Studies Coalition. Thanks, Kelly.

6. **Dr. Patricia D. López**

My name is Dr. Patricia D. López and I am an Assistant Professor and concerned community member submitting a statement in SUPPORT of Ethnic Studies in the Fresno Unified School District. I believe Ethnic Studies is necessary because we live in a society that continues to grapple with racial/ethnic differences and discrimination that many K12 schools similarly perpetuate. These courses center the experiences of historically racialized groups and provides a safe space for students to examine racism and the institutions that uphold it. Ethnic Studies has personally impacted my life by allowing me to understand the histories, cultures, and contributions of marginalized peoples of Color, including my own. The knowledge I gained from Ethnic Studies courses were instrumental in my identity development as an educator, artist, and community advocate. These courses also helped me to develop relationships that supported me to obtain the highest academic degrees and return to my community to teach and work for transformational change. K12 youth are the future of the Central Valley and their understanding of the rich history, cultures, and experiences of historically marginalized communities will make them better leaders in society. High school youth should not have to wait until college to gain deeper insights of the world and their place in it. I ask the Board to

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please ADOPT Resolution No. 20-02 and support Ethnic Studies in Fresno Unified. Respectfully,
Patricia D. López, Ph.D.

7. **Matt Espinoza-Watson**

My name is Matt Espinoza-Watson, and I would like to submit a statement in support of Ethnic Studies in FUSD. I am an Instructor of Chicano-Latino Studies at Fresno City College, and also an alumni of Fresno schools. For the last fourteen years, I have had the honor of teaching at Fresno City College, with my class usually being the first time students are examining their own background or culture in an academic setting. I have also taught many students who are not of Latino heritage, who have benefited from getting a sense of who their neighbors (or family members) are. It is to all of our advantage to have a better idea of the histories, cultural production, and experiences surrounding us, but which are often hidden in plain sight. I grew up going to school with Mexican American, Hmong, African American, Indian, and Arab students (among many others), yet I had to wait until college to learn the first thing about these groups. We can do better than that. The times we are living in now demand that we investigate our intertwined histories and experiences, and examine what has divided us and why. I assure you that myself and many of my colleagues at Fresno City College would be thrilled to act as resources, mentors, or in whatever capacity we might serve to facilitate Ethnic Studies in the classrooms of FUSD. Matt Espinoza-Watson, J.D. Instructor & Program Coordinator, Chicano-Latino Studies, Department Chair, Cultural & Women's Studies, Fresno City College.

8. **Becky L. Noël Smith**

Hello, I am writing tonight to express my support for Ethnic Studies, Resolution #20-02. I am a parent of a FUSD high school student as well as a professor. I am strongly in favor of Ethnic Studies because our students all deserve to be exposed to a diverse set of cultural and historical perspectives that can help them not only understand the complexity of experiences within our society, but that can help the students and community construct the type of knowledge necessary to contest and dismantle systemic oppression and racial injustice. Please note that I provide this statement as a parent who identifies as white. I believe it is important that my child's friends - most of whom are Latino/a, Hmong, and/or Black - have the ability to learn from the great minds of people who share similar cultural identities and experiences, but I also want my child to have the opportunity to learn from the wisdom of a multitude of perspectives. Thus, I ask the Board to ADOPT Resolution 20-02 and show its support for Ethnic Studies here in Fresno. Thank you, Becky L. Noël Smith, Ph.D.

9. **Fernando Santillan**

I am Fernando Santillan. I piloted Chicano Studies at Edison. I have been able to see the direct impact of teaching a curriculum that reflects the population of the students and that gives them the language to speak to and about race. My course has provided a space to think critically about their communities, society and themselves that they, many times, are not able to do elsewhere. I ask that you support and adopt resolution 20-02 outlining the adoption and implementation of Ethnic Studies as a graduation requirement as is. The resolution includes the creation of an Ethnic Studies Teacher Leadership Committee led by teachers, and calls for there to be a separate advisory committee. The Teacher Leadership committee is critical to the continuous development of our curriculum into a robust and effective program. The purpose of an advisory committee would be to include academics

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in the field of Ethnic Studies as well as district management and the community to assist in the implementation of Ethnic Studies across the district. This committee would be tasked with ensuring the fidelity of Ethnic Studies as a program including logistical concerns such as the recruitment, training and development of Ethnic Studies teachers and coordination and alignment of the program across the district. In our discussions with other districts we have found the advisory committee to be critical to the sustainability of Ethnic Studies courses. Please stand with Fresno and make this critical investment in our community and our students, they deserve it

10. **Uziel Jimenez**

MY NAME IS UZIEL JIMENEZ. I HAVE THE IMMENSE HONOR OF TEACHING ETHNIC STUDIES AND HISTORY IN FRESNO UNIFIED. I AM ALSO A FOUNDING MEMBER OF THE FRESNO ETHNIC STUDIES COALITION.

REGARDLESS OF ONE'S POLITICS, WE FIND OURSELVES AT A WATERSHED MOMENT IN HISTORY. WE ARE MOVING STEADILY TOWARDS A MORE JUST AND INCLUSIVE AMERICA. WE ARE ALL LOOKING FOR WAYS TO SHED THE GHOSTS OF OUR PAST AND EMERGE STRONGER AND MORE UNITED THAN EVER. IN AMERICA TODAY, 84% OF K-12 TEACHERS ARE WHITE. YET IN FRESNO UNIFIED TODAY, 90% OF OUR STUDENTS ARE PEOPLE OF COLOR. SPECIFICALLY, TODAY I WISH TO POINT OUT SOMETHING VERY DEEPLY PERSONAL AND PAINFUL.

LIKE MYSELF, TWO-THIRDS OF OUR STUDENTS ARE OF LATIN AMERICAN DESCENT, YET LATIN AMERICAN REPRESENTATION IN OUR HISTORY BOOKS MAKES UP A PALTRY 4% OF COVERAGE. I REFUSE TO ACCEPT THIS AS NORMAL. I REFUSE TO TEACH KIDS THAT TO BE ACADEMICALLY SUCCESSFUL MEANS FOCUSING ONLY ON THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF A GROUP PEOPLE WE DON'T BELONG TO.

BUT HOPE IS NOT LOST...

TODAY THE BOARD HAS THE OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE HISTORY BY MAKING ETHNIC STUDIES MANDATORY THROUGHOUT FRESNO UNIFIED. A BOARD RESOLUTION WOULD EMBLAZON AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE AND ENSURE THAT THIS CRUCIAL PROGRAM IS NOT CUT IN LEAN FINANCIAL TIMES

STUDENTS MAY SOON BE ABLE TO SEE THEMSELVES IN THE CURRICULUM IN AN AUTHENTIC WAY. NOT JUST IN FEBRUARY OR CINCO DE MAYO. NOT JUST THROUGH TOKENS LIKE FOOD AND CLOTHING, BUT COMPLETELY EMBEDDED INTO A CURRICULAR SYSTEM.

11. **Michael Gonzalez**

I am a community member here Fresno writing to support the implementation of a required ethnic studies program. Fresno Unified has a diverse student population and therefore it is important we move beyond euro-centric curriculum and engage in coursework that enhances critical thinking skills for everyone while also empowering our underrepresented minorities.

12. **Inez Zuniga**

Dear FUSD Trustees, Hi my name is, Inez Zuniga, Fresno High School alumni class of 1998, born and raised in Fresno. I am writing to show my support of the integration of ethnic studies into the high school curriculum. I believe educating our youth is key to abolishing racism and developing a more integrated valley--as it should be. Thank you.

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13. Mercedes Martinez

My name is Mercedes Martinez. I am a piloting member of the Fresno Ethnic Studies Coalition and the Ethnic Studies teacher at Gaston Middle School. I began in this position during the 2019-2020 school year, and I have already witnessed the impact that these courses provide to our students and community. Currently, our textbooks and curriculums are oversaturated with Eurocentric viewpoints that are polarizing for non-white students. As a district, we are failing to recognize that 90% of our students are children of color. Ethnic Studies provides all students with a safe space to explore the racial and cultural experiences and differences that are especially relevant in our current social climate. Ethnic Studies opens the door for students to see themselves reflected in the curriculum that we teach. I implore the board to adopt a resolution to make Ethnic Studies a graduation requirement. I implore the board to adopt a resolution to affirm Fresno Unified's support, both structurally and monetarily, for the development, addition, and integration of Ethnic Studies. I implore the board to adopt a resolution to mandate Ethnic Studies course offerings at the high school and middle school levels and to integrate Ethnic Studies principles into primary grades. I implore the board to adopt a resolution to establish a functional Ethnic Studies Professional Learning Community in order to provide educators an ongoing and regular opportunity to learn and collaborate. Together, we must work to institute change at home. We must invest in our students and our community.

14. Ariel Lopez

My name is Ariel Lopez. I am a substitute in the district along with a former FUSD student. I am asking that the board adopt this resolution to approve ethnic studies. These types of classes are incredibly important and have been historically lacking in the curriculum. I have personally experienced the positive results of not only taking Chicano Studies classes, but having educators teach me my history. I felt powerful, visible, and most importantly I felt as though the history of my people mattered. We are currently in a watershed moment where we must actively fight for equality and justice. If the district is actually concerned with diversity and uplifting our students of color, educators must dismantle white supremacy in their own classrooms. This means including the history of all of us, not just a small portion of the American public. Ethnic studies courses teach us about ourselves and other people.

15. Crissy Martinez

Dear FUSD Trustees, Hi my name is, Crissy Martinez , Fresno High School alumni class of 2007, born and raised in Fresno. I am writing to show my support of the integration of ethnic studies into the high school curriculum. I believe educating our youth is key to abolishing racism and developing a more integrated valley. Thank you, Crissy Martinez

16. Rebecca Romero

Dear Fresno Unified, I urge you to implement Ethnic Studies so that students of color can be engaged and empowered about the historical contributions of our major racial and ethnic groups in America. According to research that examined the impact of pilot Ethnic Studies courses in San Francisco, students enrolled in Ethnic Studies courses showed increased results in "student attendance by 21 percentage points, GPA by 1.4 grade points, and credits earned by 23. These surprisingly large effects

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are consistent with the hypothesis that the course reduced dropout rates and suggest that culturally relevant teaching, when implemented in a supportive, high-fidelity context, can provide effective support to at-risk students" (Dee and Penner, 2016). With this said, I urge you to implement Ethnic Studies so that students are empowered in their academics and personal life. Thank you for your time. Regards, Rebecca Romero.

17. Elijah Carrillo

To whom it may concern, I write this email to voice the need to have an Ethnic Studies course adopted and implemented in the Fresno Unified School District Social Studies curriculum. I've taught U.S. History and World History for seven years in this district at the middle and high school levels. Until recently, with the adaptations of our new social studies curriculum of McGraw Hill textbooks, I've observed and experienced inadequate social studies curriculum for our twenty-first century learners. I believe by adopting Ethnic Studies into our general social studies will improve this further because will help our students dive deeper into their understanding of our nation was created, how institutional racism has affected our communities of people of color, how we as a district can truly reach not just equality but also equity as well. Elijah Carrillo

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UNSCHEDULED ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

1. **Anthony Gonzalez (Voice Message Transcribed)**

Thank you, my name is Anthony Gonzalez, I am an alumni of Fresno High School class of 1967 and I would like to see if this time in my public comment, moment here request the Unified board to consider removing the mascot at Fresno High School, you can keep the name but change the image the Indian image no people should be a mascot. Thank you very much my phone number is 415-577-1492, my email eltony1492@gmail.com

Thank you and I support the efforts for ethnic studies at Fresno Unified, it will be a big step forward in our efforts to keep decolonize ourselves and be more respectful to each other's culture. Thank you.

2. **Pastor Kevin Smith**

Having watched the interview of Mr. Slatic on Sunday Morning Matters I am deeply disturbed by his decision to respond to the complaints of Rev. Eli Loera and myself and the new complaint raised by Board President Thomas, by obfuscation and attempted character assassination. Rev. Eli Loera is a man of honor and integrity and undeserving of the epithet "racist."

I have known Pastor Loera for many years and am privileged to call him a friend. He has demonstrated he is trustworthy and is a servant leader both of the congregation he leads and in the Fresno/Clovis area as well. He does not exhibit either a messiah or savior complex. Instead he quietly ministers in this community, not desiring notoriety but, rather, seeking to serve. He knows that I live and pastor "north of Shaw" and still associates with me (even though by Mr. Slatic's statement, Pastor Loera should consider me a racist).

In my brief acquaintance with Trustee Slatic I initially observed a man who admitted error and assured me he had learned from his experiences. I salute that in any person. My observation of his actions since then, beginning with our meeting at Uncle Harry's, has led me to the conclusion that he believes himself to be the only arbiter of truth, considers opposition a personal attack and is willing to engage in gamesmanship and manipulation in order to be the winner in conflict or supposed conflict.

When I contrast what I know of these two men I **(250-word limit reached)**

3. **Reverend Dr. Gordon R. Donoho**

Dear Keisha,

Let it be known that Pastor Eli Loera is one of Fresno's top leaders and pastors. He is a man of utmost integrity. I have known Eli for well over 20 years and worked with him on numerous projects and events. Knowing that Pastor Eli was a leader and man of God I asked him to become the leader of the Fresno-Clovis Pastor Clusters which I founded in 1998. Pastor Clusters represent over 200 local pastors.

He also leads the every Tuesday morning pastors prayer time with dozens of pastors with a broad ethnic representation.

As a former Army Ranger he is well disciplined, speaks with authority and is loved by the other pastors across our great city.

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I stand with Pastor Eli Loera 100%.
Reverend Dr. Gordon R. Donoho

4. **Jerry Dyer**

I have been asked to provide my opinion and views of Pastor Eli Loera as a result of his integrity being called into question.

I have known Pastor Eli for more than twenty years and have worked very closely with him on community issues during the entire time I was the police chief in Fresno. Pastor Eli has also worked closely with other members of the police department to address neighborhood issues.

Over the years I have found Pastor Eli to be a man of tremendous wisdom, faith, and character. It is because of these traits and his dedication to the community that I asked Eli to serve on the Police Chiefs Advisory Board, as well as the selection panel for Deputy Police Chief. I have come to value Eli's opinion as he is a person of extreme integrity and is not afraid to speak the truth, even when the truth hurts.

Pastor Eli has also become a very close friend of mine. He is someone that I trust completely and am able to share confidential information with. I have never once questioned his integrity.

Pastor Eli Loera has done so much for the Fresno Community at large. He is not restricted by the interest of his own church, but has taken on additional responsibilities to represent the interest of other churches and Pastors throughout the Fresno and Clovis areas. When issues of concern arise, Eli is diligent in bringing those to the attention of those who need to know **(250-word limit reached)**

B. CONFERENCE/DISCUSSION AGENDA

B-27, DISCUSS AND ADOPT Resolution 19-44, Authorizing the Issuance and Sale of General Obligation Bonds, Election of 2016, Series C, in the Aggregate Principal Amount of Not to Exceed \$90,000,000, and Authorizing the Execution and Delivery of Documents and Actions in Connection Therewith

No comments received for this Agenda Item.

B-28, DISCUSS and ADOPT Resolution 19-45, Authorizing the Issuance and Sale of 2020 Refunding General Obligation Bonds to Refund Outstanding General Obligation Bonds, Election of 2010, Series D, and Outstanding 2012 General Obligation Refunding Bonds, and Approving Related Documents and Actions

No comments received for this Agenda Item.

B-29, DISCUSS and ADOPT Resolution 19-46, Authorizing Execution and Delivery of Amendments to Site Lease and Facility Lease Agreements with Central Valley Support Services Joint Powers Agency Relating to the Central Kitchen Facility, Approving the Issuance of Refunding Lease Revenue Bonds by the Agency, and Approving Preliminary Official Statement and Related Documents and Actions

No comments received for this Agenda Item.

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B-30, DISCUSS and ADOPT Resolution 19-47, Authorizing Debt Service Estimate to be Provided to the County of Fresno Respecting Unsold General Obligation Bonds of the Fresno Unified School District Relating to the Measure X and Measure M Authorizations for 2020/21

No comments received for this Agenda Item.

B-31, CONDUCT a Public Hearing and ADOPT Resolution 19-48, Making a Determination to Submit a Waiver Request to the California State Board of Education with Respect to Certain Provisions of the California Education Code Relating to the Issuance of General Obligation Bonds, and Approving Related Documents and Actions

No comments received for this Agenda Item.

B-32, PRESENT and DISCUSS Diversity, Equity, Inclusion Praxis Collaborative

1. **Marisa Moraza**

On behalf of Fresno Barrios Unidos, we commend the district's new Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Praxis Collaborative. This is an important step in centering the needs of students through an equity framework. We also want to stress the importance of creating clear actions that confront the deep inequities in Fresno Unified that are rooted in racism. It is essential that the collective name inequities and make a bold commitment to racial justice in order to create racially just schools. We support actions such as the implementation of Ethnic Studies and non-euro-centric curriculum in the district. We ask that such programs receive sustainable funding and a strong commitment from the district administration and staff to ensure appropriate implementation that will uplift and not harm our students.

We hope this collective takes actionable steps to address the harms of policing in our schools, contracts with probation, punitive discipline measures, and racism in the district. We cannot overlook the high suspension and push our rate for students in Special Education and students with disabilities. We cannot overlook students who are systems impacted, justice involved, or are English Language Learners. We ask for clear plans for equitable language access as well as language preservation. We ask for clear and accessible disaggregated data. FUSD must commit to racial justice and equity with every decision made. We look forward to hearing more from the DEI Praxis Collaborative and hope to see tangible actions and solutions that center equity and justice in our schools.

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B-33 DISCUSS and CONSIDER ADOPTION of Resolution Reconsidering Censure of Trustee Slatic

1. **Jessica Mahoney**

I Jessica Mahoney would like my follow comments read when this item is pulled and put into the record:

Public censure :

Where as : terry static needs to stop being address as “ major “

Where as: terry Slatic had a 16 old file a civil restraining order and was Granted a stay away order while the case went on but at the end of this case the restraining order was not granted

Where as: terry Slatic did have officially recognize recall effort Against him filed with the Fresno co election office and that recall static group collected many signatures from voters of Trustee area 7 , due to covid-19 and a deadline of May 12 the recall was disbanded

Where as: the Fresno Unified district has spin on legal fees of a sum of 250,000\$ on the troubled that mr Slatic has directly Caused

And where as: the public should also have a public accounting of staff time that had to go into any claims, report, meetings ect that was directly case by mr Slatic bad actions

And where as : mr Slatic is not staff to the district but elected as a trustee to watch over the funds of the district and vote on how that money is to help run the district by contract or by state money/ Grants and or taxpayers

Where as terry Slatic has caused the district to use those public funds and Divert them back onto him self for personal gain And **(250-word limit reached)**.

2. **Ariel Lopez**

My name is Ariel Lopez. I am a substitute in the district along with a former FUSD student. I am asking Member Slatic to resign. I am asking the board to remove him from office. There is no reason that someone who tells members of the public, “to go back to the barrio”, should be interacting with our students. He has shown time and time again that he does not know how to conduct himself, as an elected representative. The things he has said and done are horrible and have no place in the district. We are currently in a watershed moment where we must actively fight for equality and justice. Allowing Slatic, to be in a position of power within our very diverse district is a fight in the opposite direction.