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MEDIA RELEASE

Fresno Unified Board of Education Selects Misty Her as Superintendent

The Fresno Unified Board of Education selected Misty Her to lead the state's third-largest district as its permanent superintendent. The board's selection follows a national search process, during which trustees confirmed that Her's depth of experience, unparalleled skills and dedication to the students of Fresno Unified make her the ideal person to assume the top leadership role for Fresno Unified. The board announced Her as the finalist for the job at the April 23 board meeting and is expected to approve Her's contract during the April 30 board meeting.

"Misty Her has spent her career dedicated to the students and families of Fresno Unified, building support within our staff and families because of her unmatched integrity and expertise. As an immigrant who came to this country as a child, she understands the reality of so many of our students who must overcome language and cultural barriers. A product of Fresno Unified schools, she is the ultimate success story, and an example of how caring teachers and staff can change students' lives," said Valerie Davis, president of the Fresno Unified Board of Education.

Her has served Fresno Unified her entire career, starting as a bilingual instructional aide more than 30 years ago. Her has served Fresno Unified as a teacher, vice principal, principal, instructional superintendent, and deputy superintendent. She was named interim superintendent in May 2024 following Bob Nelson's announcement that he would join Fresno State as an assistant professor in the Department of Educational Leadership.

"I am absolutely committed to a new era in which our entire district is laser-focused on student achievement. We already have the new goals and guardrails in place, and I look forward to doing all in my power to bring about the academic gains our students and families deserve," Her said. "I know firsthand the many challenges our district faces, but I believe that with the expertise and talent of our staff, collaboration and a research-based approach, we will make incredible progress. I am beyond excited about the opportunities ahead."

Her assumes the permanent post following the adoption of her contract at the April 30th, 2025 board meeting.

National Search Validated Selection

The board hired search consultants McPherson & Jacobson, LLC on February 12th, 2025 to lead the national search to identify qualified candidates to fill the post of permanent superintendent for Fresno Unified. There were several applicants who applied from several states, with four candidates interviewed. The search was guided by the [goals and guardrails](#) adopted by the board on January 22, 2025, which reflect a student outcomes focused style of governance. With the goals and guardrails in place, the search excluded any candidates whose philosophies did not match the priorities of the community.

Board President Davis stated that during the search process, Her's strong focus on academic achievement, accountability for both staff and students and the well-being of the entire Fresno Unified community made a lasting impression on the board. Davis also noted that Her's extensive experience and the positive reputation she has built among teachers, administrators, students and parents distinguished her during the national search.

"As interim superintendent, Misty Her was instrumental in refocusing our district on student outcomes and achieving operational excellence, recognizing that our district was not progressing because we lacked focus and clarity districtwide. As our superintendent, I expect her to lead us to gains we have not seen before," President Davis said.

Public input was vital in determining the kind of leadership that the district needs and deserves. With over 30 community listening sessions, the community's diverse perspectives and priorities were thoroughly considered. The insights garnered from these outreach efforts were instrumental in shaping the goals and guardrails, which guided consultants in selecting finalists and informed the board of education's final decision.

The transparent superintendent search process brought each step of the superintendent search to open session of Fresno Unified Board of Education meetings, including the RFQ for the search firm, the award of the search firm, the job description, the search screens, and the exclusionary

criteria. This approach ensured that feedback and input from our staff and the public were actively sought and incorporated.

Specific terms of Her's contract will be highlighted at the Wednesday, April 30th board meeting.

A New Focus

The board emphasized that Her's appointment is a critical step towards focusing on improving student achievement, with both short- and long-term academic goals. They also expect her to guide the district in honoring the community's priorities regarding resource allocation. With new goals and guardrails already established, Her will be responsible for clarifying priorities, tracking progress, aligning resources and communicating outcomes. The board believes that Her's deep familiarity with Fresno Unified will enable her to efficiently and effectively advance these goals. Additionally, she will continue to foster key relationships and build new partnerships to further the district's goals and vision.

Misty will be Fresno Unified's first female superintendent since the district's inception in 1873.

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