



BOARD COMMUNICATIONS - OCTOBER 03, 2025

TO: Members of the Board of Education

FROM: Mao Misty Her, Superintendent

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Board Communications Approved by:

Mao Misty Her, Superintendent



Fresno Unified School District
Board Communication

From the Office of the Superintendent
To the Members of the Board of Education
Prepared by: Mao Misty Her, Superintendent

Date: October 03, 2025
Phone Number: 457-3884

Regarding: Superintendent Calendar Highlights

The purpose of this communication is to inform the Board of notable calendar items:

- Site visit at McLane High School
- Met with district staff and labor partners regarding priority schools
- Met with Executive Cabinet
- Met with St. Jude Deam Home Giveaway Committee
- Participated in Central Valley Community Regional Foundation Governance Committee Meeting
- Attended Superintendent Series Meeting regarding Political Landscape hosted by Fresno County Superintendent of Schools Office
- Attended APIDA (Asian Pacific Islander Desi American) Leadership Council Meeting at Fresno State
- Met with Rick Miller, CORE Districts
- Held Teacher Listening Session at Scandinavian
- Attended Roosevelt's 4th Annual UJIMA BIPOC Picnic
- Attended the Big Fresno Fair 4.0 Event
- Team taught 1st grade class at Mayfair Elementary School

If you have any questions pertaining to the information in this communication, or require additional information, please contact Misty Her at 457-3884

Cabinet Approval:



Name and Title: Mao Misty Her, Superintendent

Fresno Unified School District
Board Communication

From the Office of the Superintendent
To the Members of the Board of Education
Prepared by: Kim Kelstrom, Chief Executive

Date: October 03, 2025
Phone Number: 457-3907

Regarding: Joint Health Management Board Financial Updates

The purpose of this board communication is to provide the Board the financial updates reported at the September 25, 2025, meeting of the Joint Health Management Board (JHMB).

The Year End Health Fund Report for the 2024/25 fiscal year provides a review of actual JHMB income and expenditures from July 01, 2024 through June 30, 2025. It also provides projected income and expenditures for the entire fiscal year 2024/25 compared to the budget for the same time period (Attachment I). Per the language in each of the District's collective bargaining agreements, the attached is provided by the health plan consultant.

For 2024/25, the report further shows a year-end deficit of \$17.1 million, an increase compared to the approved budget of \$31.6 million mainly due to increased large medical claims and prescription claims. The total expenditures for 2024/25 was \$258.9 million.

If you have any questions pertaining to the information in this communication, or require additional information, please contact either Kim Kelstrom at 457-3907 or Patrick Jensen at 457-6226.

Cabinet Approval:



Name and Title: Patrick Jensen, Chief Financial Officer

MEMORANDUM

TO: Joint Health Management Board – Employee Unit Representatives
FROM: Giovanni Pacheco, Sr. Vice President – Team Leader
DATE: September 25, 2025
RE: Quarterly Health Fund Report for July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025

Attached is the Quarterly Health Fund Report for the 2024/25 fiscal year for the JHMB. This report provides a review of Income and Expenditures compared to Budget for the 2024/25 fiscal year. The Plan is managed by the Joint Health Management Board. We continue to modify and update the format as we work through all the aspects of managing the coverage and funding the Plan.

The fiscal year is showing a deficit of \$17,155,735 compared to the budget surplus of \$14,461,265 for the fiscal year. Plan income ended the year 2.30% higher than the annual budgeted amount per Active for the full fiscal year, while plan expenses were 17.05% above budget on a per capita basis at the end of the year. The attached exhibit provides detailed information and is summarized in the table below.

Please note that the figures contained in this report are based on data available to the JHMB. Audited figures may differ from those set forth in this report.

	<u>Fourth Quarter of 2024/25 Fiscal Year (Actual)</u>	<u>Budget (Projected Period)</u>
	<u>July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025</u>	<u>July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025</u>
Income	\$241,707,119	\$225,994,941
Expenditures	\$258,862,854	\$211,533,676
Surplus / (Deficit)	(\$17,155,735)	\$14,461,265
Transfer of Reserves	\$0.00	\$0.00
Net Surplus / (Deficit)	(\$17,155,735)	\$14,461,265
Encumbered Reserves	\$120,823,756	\$102,930,281
Unencumbered Reserves	\$99,604,762	\$131,221,762
Total Reserves	\$220,428,518	\$234,152,043

Please note that expenses shown in the vendor reports can differ slightly from the paid amounts shown in the District's Monthly Financial Report, as adjustments, credits, and delayed postings on the vendor side result in differences in the monthly costs compared to the amounts shown as paid by the District. The annual costs shown in this report have been adjusted to account for these differences and match the audited year-end financial report prepared by the District.

Definitions

Encumbered Reserves: A part of the Total Reserves amount that includes money held to cover the Incurred But Not Reported (IBNR) liability as well as assets held in the OPEB Irrevocable Trust.

Unencumbered Reserves: A part of the Total Reserves amount and is money that is available to pay claims in excess of Encumbered Reserves. This reserve covers the claim fluctuation and unexpected contingencies and is available to cover future cost increases to the Plan.

Total Reserves: represents the combination of Encumbered and Unencumbered Reserves. This is the amount that represents the Plan's ability to meet future contingencies and obligations.

Encls.

Fresno Unified School District
Exhibit I: YTD Income and Expenditures with Projected Budget Period



	Current Period				Current + Projected Period				Budget		
	Jul-24 - Jun-25	Tenthly Cost per Active	Monthly Cost per Active	Difference from Budget ¹	Jul-24 - Jun-25	Tenthly Cost per Active	Monthly Cost per Active	Difference from Budget ¹	Jul-24 - Jun-25	Tenthly Cost per Active	Monthly Cost per Active
	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)	(H)	(I)	(J)	(K)
Number of Employees	Employees	Dependents	Members		Employees	Dependents	Members		Employees	Dependents	Members
1. Actives	9,221	13,936	23,157		9,221	13,936	23,157		8,820	13,348	22,168
2. Retirees	4,923	3,054	7,977		4,923	3,054	7,977		4,970	2,945	7,916
3. Monthly Average	14,144	16,989	31,134		14,144	16,989	31,134		13,790	16,293	30,084
INCOME											
4. Employer Contributions ¹	\$204,675,626	\$2,219,59	\$1,849,66	0.89%	\$204,675,626	\$2,219,59	\$1,849,66	0.89%	\$194,040,000	\$2,200.00	\$1,833.33
5. Employee Contributions	23,358,080	253.30	211.09	1.00%	23,358,080	253.30	211.09	1.00%	22,120,922	250.80	209.00
6. Retiree Contributions	5,599,641	60.72	50.60	26.47%	5,599,641	60.72	50.60	26.47%	4,234,985	48.02	40.01
7. COBRA Contributions	907,064	9.84	8.20	-19.06%	907,064	9.84	8.20	-19.06%	1,071,908	12.15	10.13
8. Insurance Revenue	1,570,462	17.03	14.19		1,570,462	17.03	14.19		0	0.00	0.00
9. Low Income Premium Subsidy	1,492,201	16.18	13.49	-25.36%	1,492,201	16.18	13.49	-25.36%	1,912,270	21.68	18.07
10. Other Income	123,193	1.34	1.11	-58.70%	123,193	1.34	1.11	-58.70%	285,285	3.23	2.70
11. Interest	3,851,552	41.77	34.81	64.68%	3,851,552	41.77	34.81	64.68%	2,236,966	25.36	21.14
12. Investment Increase/Decrease	0	0.00	0.00		0	0.00	0.00		0	0.00	0.00
13. Zelis Credit Rebates	129,230	1.40	1.17	33.48%	129,230	1.40	1.17	33.48%	92,605	1.05	0.87
14. Active Reserve Assessment ⁴	70	0.00	0.00		70	0.00	0.00		0	0.00	0.00
15. Retiree Reserve Assessment ⁶	0	0.00	0.00		0	0.00	0.00		0	0.00	0.00
16. Authorized Transfer to Reserves ²	0	0.00	0.00		0	0.00	0.00		0	0.00	0.00
17. Inter-District Transfer	0	0.00	0.00		0	0.00	0.00		0	0.00	0.00
18. Total Income	\$241,707,119	\$2,621.17	\$2,184.31	2.30%	\$241,707,119	\$2,621.17	\$2,184.31	2.30%	\$225,994,941	\$2,562.30	\$2,135.25
EXPENSES											
Benefits											
19. Active Medical Claims	\$118,341,961	\$1,283.35	\$1,069.46	23.07%	\$118,341,961	\$1,283.35	\$1,069.46	23.07%	\$91,974,143	\$1,042.79	\$868.99
20. Retiree Medical Claims	17,669,582	191.62	159.68	73.35%	17,669,582	191.62	159.68	73.35%	9,749,550	110.54	92.12
21. Kaiser Health Plan	23,919,919	259.40	216.16	0.31%	23,919,919	259.40	216.16	0.31%	22,807,428	258.59	215.49
22. Aetna MAPPO Premium	26,115,438	283.21	236.01	9.19%	26,115,438	283.21	236.01	9.19%	22,875,716	259.36	216.13
23. Active Prescription Drug	33,724,468	365.72	304.77	25.93%	33,724,468	365.72	304.77	25.93%	25,614,510	290.41	242.01
24. Retiree Prescription Drug	5,304,265	57.52	47.93	4.16%	5,304,265	57.52	47.93	4.16%	4,870,881	55.23	46.02
25. EGWP Premium	0	0.00	0.00		0	0.00	0.00		0	0.00	0.00
26. Prescription Drug Fee	101,647	1.10	0.92	8.14%	101,647	1.10	0.92	8.14%	89,903	1.02	0.85
27. Blue Cross/Aetna PPO Fee	2,190,816	23.76	19.80	51.45%	2,190,816	23.76	19.80	51.45%	1,383,632	15.89	13.07
28. Delta Health Admin	2,606,274	28.26	23.55	-8.64%	2,606,274	28.26	23.55	-8.64%	2,728,554	30.94	25.78
29. Claremont EAP	304,125	3.30	2.75	-15.19%	304,125	3.30	2.75	-15.19%	342,969	3.89	3.24
30. Halcyon Mental Health	943,085	10.23	8.52	-80.12%	943,085	10.23	8.52	-80.12%	4,538,323	51.45	42.88
31. PhysMetrics	660,508	7.16	5.97	21.16%	660,508	7.16	5.97	21.16%	521,417	5.91	4.93
32. Standard Life Insurance	577,728	6.27	5.22	-5.07%	577,728	6.27	5.22	-5.07%	582,098	6.60	5.50
33. Delta Dental Claims	12,821,508	139.04	115.87	10.94%	12,821,508	139.04	115.87	10.94%	11,053,752	125.33	104.44
34. Delta Dental Admin Fees	763,354	8.28	6.90	10.57%	763,354	8.28	6.90	10.57%	660,360	7.49	6.24
35. Pacific Union Dental	577,288	6.26	5.22	-15.99%	577,288	6.26	5.22	-15.99%	657,289	7.45	6.21
36. VSP Vision	2,330,167	25.27	21.06	0.72%	2,330,167	25.27	21.06	0.72%	2,212,807	25.09	20.91
37. Stop Loss Premium	905,331	9.82	8.18	-13.32%	905,331	9.82	8.18	-13.32%	998,946	11.33	9.44
38. Community Medical Provider	884,054	9.59	7.99	-0.31%	884,054	9.59	7.99	-0.31%	848,192	9.62	8.01
39. WellPATH	4,505	0.05	0.04	-98.81%	4,505	0.05	0.04	-98.81%	362,515	4.11	3.43
40. Transfer out to OPEB	3,000,000	32.53	27.11	43.47%	3,000,000	32.53	27.11	43.47%	2,000,000	22.68	18.90
41. Transfer out to IBNR	1,205,248	13.07	10.89	15.28%	1,205,248	13.07	10.89	15.28%	1,000,000	11.34	9.45
42. ACA PCORI Fee	146,338	1.59	1.32	111.08%	146,338	1.59	1.32	111.08%	66,311	0.75	0.63
43. Total Benefits, Premiums & Fees	\$255,097,611	\$2,766.39	\$2,305.32	17.34%	\$255,097,611	\$2,766.39	\$2,305.32	17.34%	\$207,939,296	\$2,357.59	\$1,964.66
Operating Expenses											
44. Salaries	\$689,681	\$7.48	\$6.23	11.27%	\$689,681	\$7.48	\$6.23	11.27%	\$592,838	\$6.72	\$5.60
45. Staff Benefits	423,818	4.60	3.83	7.24%	423,818	4.60	3.83	7.24%	378,010	4.29	3.57
46. Supplies	0	0.00	0.00	-100.00%	0	0.00	0.00	-100.00%	5,291	0.06	0.05
47. Auditor	26,000	0.28	0.23	-3.31%	26,000	0.28	0.23	-3.31%	25,719	0.29	0.24
48. Delta Fund Administrator Fees	330,111	3.58	2.98	-0.62%	330,111	3.58	2.98	-0.62%	317,729	3.60	3.00
49. MMA Consultant Fees	487,500	5.29	4.41	3.62%	487,500	5.29	4.41	3.62%	450,000	5.10	4.25
50. Delta Team Care Fees	203,321	2.20	1.84	6.48%	203,321	2.20	1.84	6.48%	182,637	2.07	1.73
51. Claremont Partners: General	481,117	5.22	4.35	-16.93%	481,117	5.22	4.35	-16.93%	567,610	6.44	5.36
52. Taylor English Duma Legal Fees	195,000	2.11	1.76	3.62%	195,000	2.11	1.76	3.62%	180,000	2.04	1.70
53. KHK Law: Outside Counsel	0	0.00	0.00	-100.00%	0	0.00	0.00	-100.00%	35,000	0.40	0.33
54. JHMB Training / Education Expenses	121,820	1.32	1.10	4.48%	121,820	1.32	1.10	4.48%	111,524	1.26	1.05
55. Other Operating Expenses	803,516	8.71	7.26	8.23%	803,516	8.71	7.26	8.23%	710,124	8.05	6.71
56. Communications	3,360	0.04	0.03	-91.52%	3,360	0.04	0.03	-91.52%	37,898	0.43	0.36
57. Total Operating Expenses	\$3,765,243	\$40.83	\$34.03	0.19%	\$3,765,243	\$40.83	\$34.03	0.19%	\$3,594,380	\$40.75	\$33.96
58. Total Expenses	\$258,862,854	\$2,807.22	\$2,339.35	17.05%	\$258,862,854	\$2,807.22	\$2,339.35	17.05%	\$211,533,676	\$2,398.34	\$1,998.62
59. Surplus / (Deficit) ⁴	(\$17,155,735)	(\$186.04)	(\$155.04)	107.10%	(\$17,155,735)	(\$186.04)	(\$155.04)	107.10%	\$14,461,265	\$163.96	\$136.63
Beginning Reserve Balance											
60. Encumbered Reserves											
61. OPEB Irrevocable Trust	\$79,155,107				\$79,155,107				\$79,155,107		
62. Reserve Liability for IBNR	\$28,412,315				\$28,412,315				\$28,412,315		
63. Total Encumbered Reserves	\$107,567,422				\$107,567,422				\$107,567,422		
64. Unencumbered Reserves	\$116,760,497				\$116,760,497				\$116,760,497		
65. Total Reserves	\$224,327,919				\$224,327,919				\$224,327,919		
66. Operating Surplus / (Deficit)	(\$17,155,735)				(\$17,155,735)				\$14,461,265		
67. Transfer In from Reserves	\$0				\$0				\$0		
68. Adjusted Unencumbered Reserves	\$99,604,762				\$99,604,762				\$131,221,762		
69. Target Unencumbered Reserves ⁵	\$43,143,809				\$43,143,809				\$35,255,613		
Ending Reserve Balance											
70. Encumbered Reserves											
71. OPEB Irrevocable Trust	\$91,205,193				\$91,205,193				\$76,772,872		
72. Reserve Liability for IBNR	\$29,618,563				\$29,618,563				\$26,157,409		
73. Total Encumbered Reserves	\$120,823,756				\$120,823,756				\$102,930,281		
74. Unencumbered Reserves	\$99,604,762				\$99,604,762				\$131,221,762		
75. Total Reserves	\$220,428,518				\$220,428,518				\$234,152,043		

¹ Current + Projected Period amount calculated based on tenthly budget amounts, not monthly

² District contribution subject to final negotiations

³ Difference from Budget percentages calculated based on Monthly Cost per Active

⁴ Surplus / (Deficit) percentage calculated as Total Expenses (row 58) divided by Total Budgeted Income (row 18)

⁵ Target Unencumbered Reserves calculated as 2.0 months of total annual expenses.

⁶ Active and Retiree Assessments were suspended beginning in May 2023

Fresno Unified School District
Board Communication

From the Office of the Superintendent
To the Members of the Board of Education
Prepared by: Kim Kelstrom, Chief Executive

Date: October 03, 2025
Phone Number: 457-3907

Regarding: School Services Weekly Update Reports for September 26, 2025

The purpose of this communication is to provide the Board a copy of School Services of California's (SSC) Weekly Updates. Each week SSC provides an update and commentary on different educational fiscal issues. In addition, they include different articles related to education issues. The SSC Weekly Updates for September 26, 2025 are attached and include the following articles:

- Finance Bulletin Shows Mixed Economic Signals – September 24, 2025
- Bill to Curb Sex Abuse Settlements Stalls, Likely to Return Next Year – September 25, 2025
- Gavin Newsom Signs Bills Limiting ICE Contact and Law Enforcement Masking in CA – September 20, 2025

If you have any questions pertaining to the information in this communication, or require additional information, please contact Kim Kelstrom at 457-3907

Cabinet Approval: 

Name and Title: Patrick Jensen, Chief Financial



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www.sscal.com

DATE: September 26, 2025

TO: Misty Her
Superintendent

AT: Fresno Unified School District

FROM: Your SSC Governmental Relations Team

RE: ***SSC's Sacramento Weekly Update***

Bill Signing Update

Governor Gavin Newsom has begun acting on bills from the close of the 2025 legislative session. Over the weekend, he signed two urgency measures addressing immigration enforcement at schools:

- **Assembly Bill 49 (Muratsuchi)—Prohibits** local educational agency (LEA) staff from granting immigration officers access to nonpublic areas of campuses without a valid judicial warrant, subpoena, or court order. Staff must request identification where possible and avoid disclosing student/family records without parental consent. The Attorney General must update model school policies by December 1, 2025, and LEAs must adopt aligned policies by March 1, 2026.
- **Senate Bill (SB) 98 (Pérez)—Requires** LEA governing boards to include procedures in school safety plans for notifying parents, guardians, teachers, and staff whenever immigration enforcement is confirmed on campus. Plans must be updated when next reviewed, but no later than March 1, 2026, and remain in effect through January 1, 2031. Notifications must prioritize student and staff safety and may include links to rights and support resources.

The Governor has until October 13, 2025, to sign or veto legislation. He still has a number of significant TK-12 bills sitting on his desk and we will continue to provide bill updates on his bill actions in subsequent weeks.

Government Shutdown Looming

The federal fiscal year begins on October 1, 2025, and Congress has not yet approved its 12 annual appropriations bills. Last week, the House narrowly passed a continuing resolution (H.R. 5371) to keep the government funded through November 21, 2025, while extending certain health programs and delaying cuts to Medicaid and hospital funding. However, the measure failed in the Senate by a 44-48 vote. Most Democrats opposed the bill due to concerns over health care provisions and program cuts, while a handful of Republicans

also withheld support, leaving it short of the 60 votes needed to advance. Without a new agreement, a government shutdown could begin on October 1.

Historically, short term shutdowns have not produced major, immediate fiscal hits for TK-12 districts because the significant TK-12 formula streams (Title I and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) are “forward-funded” on July 1 for the coming school year, with an additional “advance” tranche that becomes available on October 1. School meals generally have several months of funding cushion at the U.S. Department of Agriculture, so a short shutdown does not interrupt reimbursements.

However, districts that rely on Impact Aid can see delays because that funding is not forward-funded and first-quarter payments usually go out right at the start of the fiscal year. Additionally, new awards and most competitive grant work (application reviews, grantmaking) pause during a shutdown, which can ripple into planned initiatives later in the year. Head Start programs with funding already awarded keep operating, but new awards or grants that turn over during the lapse typically cannot be issued until appropriations resume—so grantees whose project periods start on/near October 1 face the near-term risk of temporary closures until funds are obligated.

We will provide more information on the negotiations between Congress and the White House in next week’s *Update*.

Leilani Aguinaldo

Finance Bulletin Shows Mixed Economic Signals

By Wendi McCaskill
School Services of California Inc.'s *Fiscal Report*
September 24, 2025

Today, September 24, 2025, the Department of Finance (DOF) issued its September 2025 *Finance Bulletin*, indicating that state General Fund revenues for 2025-26 are exceeding projections included in the June Enacted Budget.

In August, total revenues exceeded Budget Act estimates by \$1.7 billion (12.8%). This is primarily the result of higher-than-projected August personal income tax (+\$1.1 billion), other revenues (+\$326 million), and corporation tax (+\$286 million) receipts. Increases in these revenues were offset by lower-than-expected Pooled Money Investment Account Interest revenues (-\$55 million) and sales and use tax revenues (-\$27 million). As displayed below, since the beginning of the fiscal year (July), revenues from the "Big Three" taxes, which are responsible for the bulk of the state's resources for government program funding, came in \$1.15 billion above Budget Act estimates.

2025-26 Fiscal Year-to-Date "Big Three" Tax Revenues (In millions)

	Forecast	Actual	Difference
Personal Income Tax	\$16,064	\$17,431	\$1,367
Corporation Tax	\$1,443	\$1,303	-\$140
Sales and Use Tax	\$5,504	\$5,427	-\$77
Total	\$23,011	\$24,161	\$1,150

Source: DOF

Second quarter economic growth is up, with U.S. real gross domestic product (GDP) growing at a 3.3% seasonally adjusted annual rate in the second quarter of 2025, an improvement over the 0.5% first quarter contraction. In contrast to last year at this time, when personal consumption contributed heavily to GDP growth, growth in the second quarter of 2025 was driven primarily by net exports, according to the DOF. U.S. headline inflation increased to 2.9% in August. Core inflation remained steady at 3.1%. According to the DOF, the August acceleration in inflation was attributed to a broad-based increase in consumer prices.

The August U.S. unemployment rate increased by 0.1% to 4.3%, with the U.S. adding 22,000 jobs, while most U.S. employment sectors lost jobs. California's unemployment rate remained at 5.5%, which is currently the second-highest unemployment rate in the nation. The state added 3,800 jobs in August, and July's figures were revised to show a loss of 300 jobs. In contrast to the nation, California had more sectors gaining than losing jobs in August. Those California sectors experiencing job losses include government; professional and business services; construction; manufacturing; and trade, transportation, and utilities. Private education and health services, leisure and hospitality, information, other services, mining and logging, and financial activities experienced job gains in California.

Building activity has decreased 1.2% since June 2025 and 6.6% compared to July 2024. At \$884,050, the median sales price of existing single-family homes is down 0.3% since July 2024. Existing single-family home sales in July decreased 1.0% month over month and have declined 4.1% since July 2024.

As we look ahead, the upcoming October 15, 2025, extended deadline for Los Angeles County taxpayers will provide further tax receipts to compare against forecasted revenues.

Note: SB 577 (Laird, D-Santa Cruz) would revise several provisions of existing law related to the civil procedures governing claims for childhood sexual assault claims against public entities and modifies the procedures for local agencies that issue public debt obligation.

Bill to Curb Sex Abuse Settlements Stalls, Likely to Return Next Year

By Thomas Peele
EdSource
September 25, 2025

California school leaders will have to wait until next year — if then — to see any relief from a surge of sexual abuse lawsuits that are costing them fat settlements and rising legal bills and insurance costs.

Lawmakers and others said they are frustrated by the collapse of legislation aimed at relieving a problem vexing school districts, cities and counties across the state. Meanwhile, advocates for victims said the rights of those abused as children by public employees to seek justice must come before fiscal concerns.

Senate Bill 577 by Sen. John Laird, D-Santa Cruz, would have reinstated a statute of limitations on sex abuse claims involving public agencies that lawmakers repealed in 2020. The passage of Assembly Bill 218 has resulted in lawsuits alleging abuse dating back to as far as 1965, public records show.

The bill stalled at a time when research shows the costs of such suits are rising sharply. The state Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team, known as FCMAT, which helps school districts with financial issues, estimated in January that the impact on schools could be \$2 billion to \$3 billion or higher.

A recent report by the California Association of Joint Powers Authorities, which includes authorities formed by school districts to pool insurance costs, estimates that the costs could soar far higher because an unknown number of cases with multiple clients against districts are expected to be settled in the years ahead.

School districts' pooled insurance costs are also rising as districts scramble for additional protections. A survey of agencies, including schools, seeking additional insurance shows such costs have risen 216% between 2020 and fiscal year 2024-25.

The fiscal effect on schools is real, Laird said in an interview. "It's not fair to the students or the teachers now to absorb major cuts in education in classrooms from actions that were way before them that they had nothing to do with."

But trying to balance the interests of public agencies swamped with claims while also allowing victims a path to justice for suffering life-altering sexual attacks proved fruitless as Laird's support in the Assembly collapsed. He pulled the bill back from a vote to enable him to push it again next year.

“This is a really hard needle to thread,” he said. “I was talking to victim groups. I was talking to local governments. I was talking to attorneys.”

Securing relief for local agencies ran headlong into protecting the rights of victims to bring additional lawsuits, Laird said. “They just blew up the bill. They didn’t recognize how delicately this was balanced.”

One of the biggest fights involved claims not against school districts but against Los Angeles County, which earlier this year agreed to a \$4 billion settlement with roughly 7,000 victims of abuse in its juvenile facilities, believed to be the largest such settlement in history, dwarfing sexual abuse settlements with the Catholic Church and the Boy Scouts of America.

Many involved children who were housed at the MacLaren Children’s Center in El Monte, a notorious foster care facility that closed in 2003, which multiple news outlets have described as “a hellhole.”

SB 577 would have cut off lawsuits involving MacLaren after Jan. 1. But, Assemblymember Dawn Addis, D-Morro-Bay, said she and others balked at stopping future MacLaren abuse claims.

“The right to seek justice is one of the only things that survivors have in many cases,” she said, noting that more than half of abuse survivors don’t come forward until their 50s.

Cutting off MacLaren lawsuits means that victims now as young as 27 would have lost the ability to sue. “These are people who have survived, in many cases, the worst of crimes, child sex, molestation, rape of a child,” Addis said. She and others “just couldn’t stomach voting for something that’s going to hurt people like that.”

Without naming individual lawmakers, his fellow Democrats, Laird blamed “Assembly leadership” for stopping the bill.

An Irvine law firm, Manly, Stewart & Finaldi, one of the country’s top firms representing sexual abuse victims, ran two online ads about the bill earlier this month, targeting Assembly Speaker Robert Rivas, D-Hollister.

Video: Above is the online advertisement that the Irvine law firm, Manly, Stewart & Finaldi, is targeting Assembly Speaker Robert Rivas, D-Hollister.

The firm was not part of Los Angeles County’s \$4 billion settlement but has 150 other cases pending against the county, according to news reports. It is also suing the Los Angeles Unified School District, which in June approved \$500 million in judgment-obligation bonds to fund an undisclosed number of settlements. The bonds and interest will be repaid from the district’s general fund, meaning the money will be drawn from funds originally meant for classroom instruction.

One of the ads shows a photo of the speaker next to the words “stop the predator protection law.” In the other, a young woman says a Los Angeles teacher molested her when “I was eight years old. Tell speaker Rivas that predators should be punished, not protected.”

Rivas’ spokesman, Nick Miller, declined to discuss the ads. In a statement, Miller said Rivas “aims to make progress (on the bill) next year.”

The law firm's managing partner, John Manly, said in an interview that he published the ad to make sure that the bill, in the hectic final days of the session, didn't slip through. The message to lawmakers was, "This is radioactive, and if you insist on pursuing this, you're going to pay a political price."

Faith Borges, a lobbyist for the California Association of Joint Powers Authorities, which supported SB 577, told EdSource the ads "were targeted to kill the bill." She said they were intended to tell supporters, "If you are willing to have this conversation, you will be portrayed as somebody who is among the worst of society."

Dorothy Johnson, a legislative advocate for the Association of California School Administrators, said that the end-of-the-session "chaos" and loud opposition from the survivor group killed the bill's momentum. The association had lobbied for tightening districts' liability exposure and for establishing standards of evidence for decades-old cases.

The impact of the claims on school districts across the state is real and costly, public records show.

The settlements

The San Francisco Unified School District paid two former students \$4.5 million in 2023 to settle allegations documented in court filings that a high school athletic director, Lawrence Young-Yet Chan, began sexually assaulting them in 2012. The San Francisco Standard reported Chan resigned from the district in 2017.

In Orange County, the Irvine Unified School District settled with a former student for \$4.7 million for sexual abuse he claimed in court that he suffered from a sixth grade teacher starting in 1978. The teacher, Louis Byron Cann, was later convicted of sex crimes and sentenced to eight years in state prison, records show.

The Union School District in San Jose took an abuse lawsuit by two former students to a jury trial in 2022. A Santa Clara County jury awarded the victims \$102 million for abuses suffered when they were in middle school at the hands of a music teacher, who is now in state prison.

Still, getting details on settled cases can be difficult, even for the California School Boards Association, its spokesman said.

"We can't get a lot of information from a lot of districts because their lawyers tell them it's not advisable to speak on this," said spokesman Troy Flint. "And, obviously, districts are wary of sharing information that could be used to paint them as a district where sexual abuse is an issue."

There's no official count of abuse suits that school districts across the state are facing or have settled, or how much those settlements total. The education budget bill passed earlier in the legislative session requires districts to report settlements to the state Department of Education starting next year.

But there is no effort to total the settlements already approved. FCMAT's chief executive officer, Michael H. Fine, said there is no workable way to track the details of past settled cases. "It's almost impossible," Fine said.

But Fine pointed to one legislative achievement that could eventually provide relief by stopping sexual abuse in schools before it starts. SB 488 by Sen. Sasha Renée Pérez, D-Alhambra, is awaiting Gov. Gavin Newsom's signature. It incorporated recommendations by FCMAT to combat abuse long before it results in a broken life and costly litigation.

It would require a statewide database of egregious school employee misconduct, deeper background checks of job applicants, and training for teachers, administrators and students on how to recognize signs of grooming students for potential abuse. It would also require stricter background checks for non-educational employees, such as custodians, coaches and bus drivers.

“There are some costs to it, and so that doesn’t make the bill a slam dunk for the governor,” Fine said. They include building a database and possible investigations of employees. Prevention measures, he said, “are a priority.”

Editor-at-Large John Fensterwald and data journalist Daniel J. Willis contributed to this story.

Note: The Governor signed legislation last Saturday limiting federal immigration officials’ operations at California schools and hospitals and banning law enforcement agents from hiding their identities, including by using masks.

Gavin Newsom Signs Bills Limiting ICE Contact and Law Enforcement Masking in CA

By Lia Russell and Kate Wolffe
The Sacramento Bee
September 20, 2025

Gov. Gavin Newsom signed legislation Saturday limiting federal immigration officials’ operations at California schools and hospitals and banning law enforcement agents from hiding their identities including by using masks.

For months, California has been at the center of the White House’s escalated immigration agenda as agents from Immigration and Customs Enforcement and U.S. Customs and Border Protection have stormed job sites, Home Depot parking lots, courtrooms, and a campaign rally throughout the state in a show of force to deport suspected immigrants.

Speaking from a high school in Los Angeles, Newsom said he was signing five bills into law that will limit schools and daycare facilities from admitting ICE officials; restrict hospitals and health care facilities from sharing sensitive information and ban agents from entering emergency rooms without a warrant; require family notification when agents appear on school campuses; and require law enforcement officials to display their badge numbers or names for identification.

“It’s like a dystopian sci-fi movie,” Newsom said. “Unmarked cars, people in masks, people quite literally disappearing. No due process, no rights.”

ICE has drawn criticism for allowing agents to don face-concealing masks and plain clothes, citing claims of increased threats to officers and their families.

In an emailed statement, Assistant Secretary of Homeland Security Tricia McLaughlin called the legislation signed into law by Newsom “despicable” and “a flagrant attempt to endanger our officers.”

“The men and women at CBP, ICE, and all of our federal law enforcement agencies put their lives on the line every day to arrest violent criminal illegal aliens to protect and defend the lives of American citizens,” McLaughlin’s statement continued, in part. “Make no mistake, this type of rhetoric is contributing to the surge in assaults of officers through their repeated vilification and demonization.”

In a separate statement released Tuesday, the Department of Homeland Security had encouraged Newsom to veto the bill, authored by state Sen. Scott Wiener, D-San Francisco.

“When our heroic law enforcement officers conduct operations,” the Department of Homeland Security statement read, in part, “they clearly identify themselves as law enforcement while wearing masks to protect themselves from being targeted by highly sophisticated gangs like Tren de Aragua and MS-13, criminal rings, murderers, and rapists.”

During Saturday’s news conference, Newsom said the masking is “unnecessary” and encouraged the Department of Homeland Security to legislate a solution if doxing is a concern.

“There’s an assertion that somehow there’s exponential increase in assaults on officers,” said Newsom. “But they will not provide the data.”

California is the first state to pass a law banning masks, which will make it a crime for law enforcement officers to conceal their identities unless they are undercover or wearing personal protective gear beginning in January 2026. That includes local, state and federal officials operating in California.

Newsom cited support from the Legislature’s Latino and Asian-American Pacific Islander caucuses, as well as former ICE chief of staff Jason Houser, for the legislation, which he said was aimed at stopping President Donald Trump and federal immigration czar Stephen Miller’s “secret police tactics.”

Addressing ICE agents, Newsom said: “You’re going to do enforcement? Provide an ID. Tell us which agency you represent. Provide us basic information that all local law enforcement is required to provide.”

Since June, California has been in a protracted legal battle with the White House after the Pentagon seized control of the National Guard and sent Marines to quell anti-deportation protests in Southern California.

Earlier this month, a judge ruled that Trump’s seizure of the California National Guard was illegal, which the administration has appealed. The same week, the Supreme Court overturned a ruling that had barred immigration agents from detaining people based on their perceived ethnicity, language and job site, allowing them to continue their enforcement actions.

Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass on Saturday praised California state lawmakers for spearheading the “legislative resistance.”

“Unfortunately, our federal government is trying to get us to normalize and accept military intervention and the hunting of Latinos,” she said. “I look forward to the day that we no longer have to protect ourselves and fight our own government.”

Fresno Unified School District
Board Communication

From the Office of the Superintendent
To the Members of the Board of Education
Prepared by Ashlee Chiarito, Ed.D., Executive Officer

Date: October 03, 2025
Phone Number: 457-3934

Regarding: Federal Program Monitoring

The purpose of this communication is to inform the Board of the upcoming Federal Program Monitoring (FPM) Review. The purpose of the review is to ensure compliance with statutory regulations that accompany the receipt of federal funding. The review is facilitated by the California Department of Education (CDE). Districts that receive a large portion of federal funding, such as Fresno Unified, are reviewed every two years. This year's review is for Fiscal Monitoring and Adult Education. The Fiscal Monitoring review is online and will take place January 12 - 23, 2026. The Adult Education review is on-site and will take place January 20 - 23, 2026.

Training is provided by the CDE to assist school districts to prepare for the review. The Office of State and Federal Programs coordinates all communication and documentation collection with the CDE.

Staff will update the Board closer to the time of review and at the conclusion. In addition, staff will update the Board on any findings, recommendations, or resolutions required as a result of the review.

If you have any questions pertaining to the information in this communication, or require additional information, please contact Ashlee Chiarito at 457-3934.

Cabinet Approval: 
Name and Title: Patrick Jensen, Chief Financial Officer

Fresno Unified School District
Board Communication

From the Office of the Superintendent
To the Members of the Board of Education
Prepared by: Amy Idsvoog, Executive Officer

Date: October 03, 2025

Phone Number: (559) 457-3498

Regarding: New Employee Orientation (NEO) Experience Data for July-September 2025

The purpose of this communication is to provide the Board data regarding New Hire Orientation (NEO) for the months of July - September 2025. This data supports the District's Effective Staff guardrail.

Since July 28, Human Resources has facilitated seven NEO sessions, with attendance ranging from 12 attendees to our largest with 217 new teachers. Creating a welcoming and engaging environment is vital to NEO and serves as the new hire's first phase of onboarding. The newest members of our Fresno Unified family learn about district goals and guardrails, demographics, board policies, and employee resources. Additionally, various departments provide information on topics such as employee payroll, district benefits, school culture, safety practices, customer service, cyber security, and cultural proficiency. Time is also dedicated to facilitating mandated trainings such as mandated reporting, sexual harassment prevention, and workplace violence prevention. Labor partners are invited to connect with new hires and share information regarding our partnership and support.

Attached, you will find data reflecting attendee feedback from the July, August and September NEO sessions. NEO attendees complete a brief survey at the end of their experience identifying the content subjects they found most relevant and rank broad experience categories such as overall orientation experience (4.74), engaging delivery (4.66), helpful content (4.73), and if they felt welcomed (4.78). Those are ranked on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the highest.

Human Resources plans to provide quarterly data to the Board. If you have any questions pertaining to the information in this communication, or require additional information, please contact Amy Idsvoog at (559) 457-3498.

Cabinet Approval:

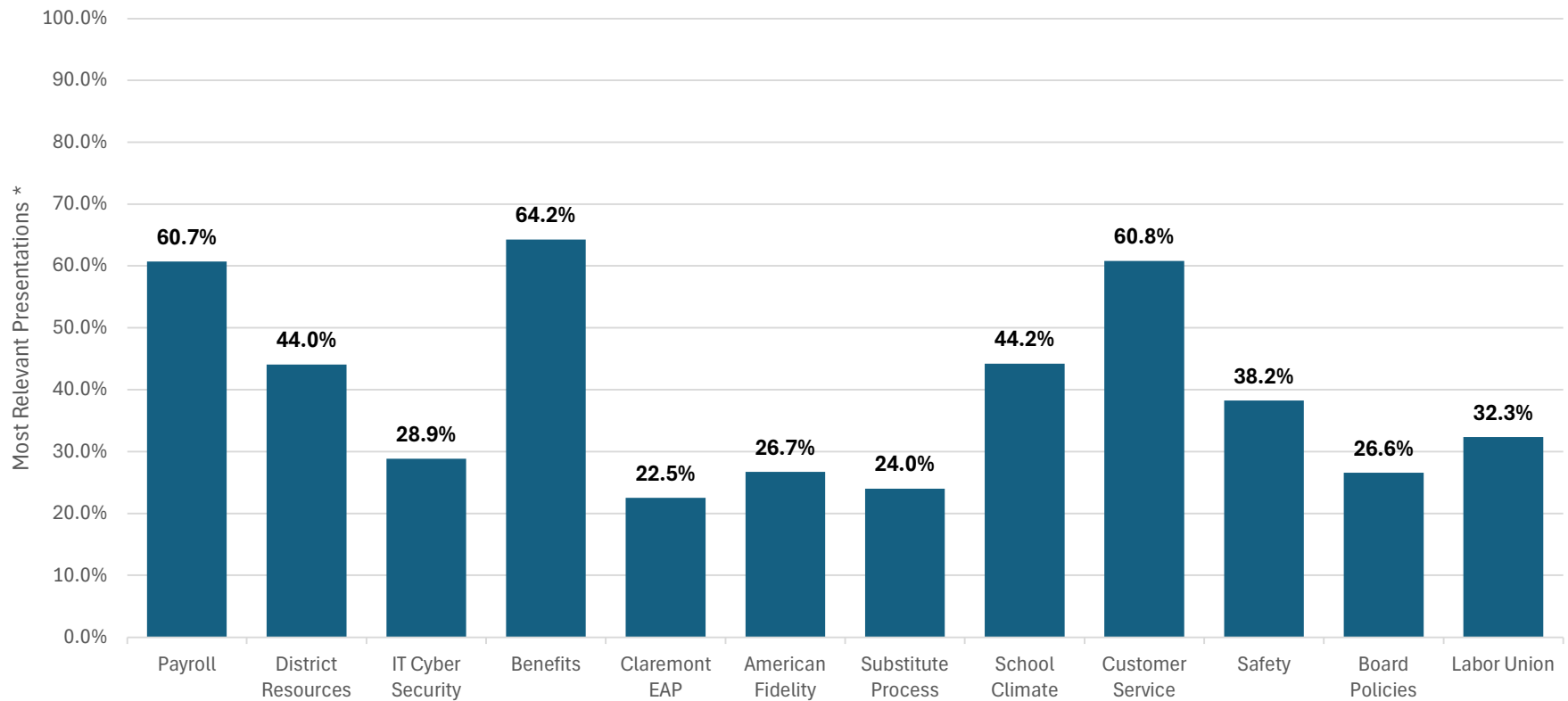


Name and Title: David Chavez, Chief of Human Resources/Labor Relations

NEO Attendee Feedback

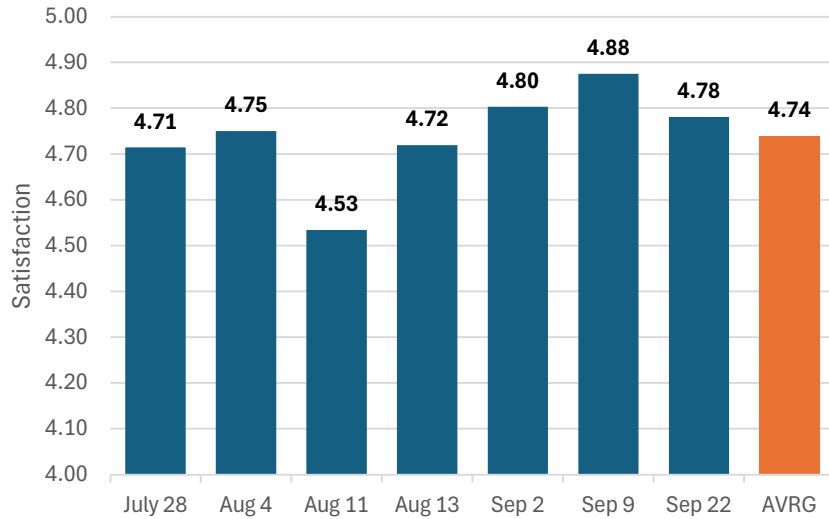
NEO PRESENTATION ATTENDANCE														TOTAL	429
July 28	13	Aug 13	63	Sep 22	43	Nov 3	0	Jan 12	0	Feb 17	0	Apr 7	0	May 18	0
Aug 4	11	Sep 2	64	Oct 6	0	Nov 17	0	Jan 26	0	Mar 2	0	Apr 20	0	Jun 1	0
Aug 11	217	Sep 8	18	Oct 20	0	Dec 8	0	Feb 2	0	Mar 16	0	May 4	0	Jun 15	0

All Presentation Averages

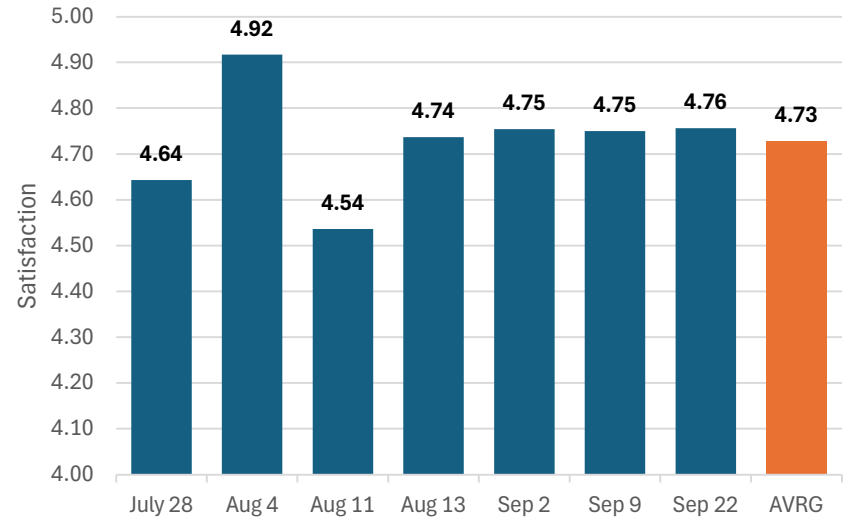


* Attendees asked to "Identify most relevant presentations (check all that apply)"

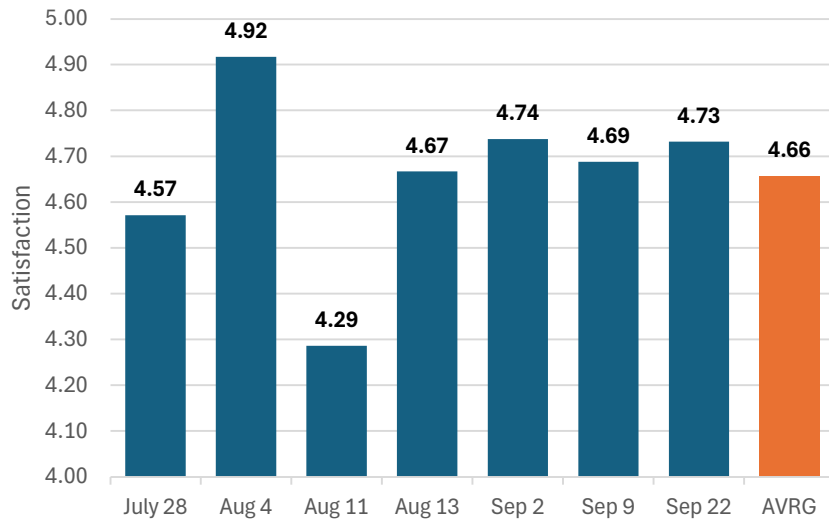
Overall Orientation Experience



Helpful Content



Engaging Delivery



Feel Welcomed

