

PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PAC)
Thursday, May 29, 2025
5:30 - 7:30 PM

FUSD Staff:

Chankeo Vang, Maiyer Vang

Officers:

Chris Dowdy (Chairperson), Christopher De La Cerda (Vice-Chairperson), Hugo Morales (Secretary)

Welcome

Maiyer Vang gave a short welcome to everyone in attendance, shared with parents how to utilize the new mics at each table, as well as introduced new additional staff members who will support those who are joining virtually, and went over PAC norms, attendance, and purpose.

Call to Order

Chair, Chris Dowdy brought the meeting to order at 5:44 PM

Roll Call

No Roll Call was done as there was a sign-in upon entering. Chair, Chris Dowdy, acknowledged everyone present at the meeting: parents, students, officers, FUSD staff, etc. With many topics on the agenda to cover, there was a quick move to approve the Agenda and the last PAC Meeting Minutes. It was also encouraged for parents to write down their concerns, questions, feedback, or input on the note-taking materials available at the tables. PAC Officers introduced themselves before moving on to the agenda.

Approval of Agenda

The agenda was briefly reviewed and put forth for motion to approve.

Motion to approve agenda, with correction: Eileen Girón, 2nded by Ingram Tate (Edison)

Agenda approved; motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Previous Minutes (February 20, 2025, Meeting Minutes)

Time was given for all to quickly look over minutes. Eileen Girón asked for her name spelling to be corrected.

Motion to approve minutes from February 20, 2025, with correction:: Eileen Girón, 2nded by Melissa Ilance.

Minutes approved; motion passed unanimously.

**Board Adopted Goals and Guardrails for the Future Direction of Fresno Unified
Misty Her, Superintendent, Fresno Unified School District**

Superintendent Misty Her took the floor and gave an overview of her role and shared her background. She then presented on the following main topics about goals and guardrails: guardrails include early literacy, literacy intervention, college & career readiness, and life and life skills development; guardrails include community engagement, equitable access, effective

staff, and staff, and health & wellness. All information was available on the materials provided online.

Parent/Participant Q&A/Feedback

- Trustee Genoveva Islas present: Asked that parents share their feedback and reinforced the idea that parents and guardians are extremely important to the commitments the Superintendent outlined in the goals and guardrails.
- Hugo Morales (Secretary): Expressed thankfulness and asked about the budget crisis with Fresno Unified and what is going to be cut?
 - Superintendent Misty: Affirmed that FUSD is in a budget crisis due to declining enrollment and emphasized the need for parents and guardians to encourage their students to go to school.
Projected that there is about a 1000-student decline every year, which equates to about 15 million a year in financial loss from the state, state funding is based on attendance. Forcing hard questions and decisions to be made, such as which programs will have to be cut since there is less money.
- Chris De La Cerda (Vice-Chairperson): Mentioned a conversation he had with previous FUSD students who are in college, noticed there is a drop in students who continue attending college, wanted to know what is being done for students who go to colleges outside of Fresno.
 - Superintendent Misty: Mentioned a need for stronger memorandums developed for tracking purposes beyond Fresno City College and Fresno State to UC systems, Ivy Leagues, etc.
- Chris Dowdy (Chairperson): Brought up looking at non-partisan data showing low numbers and declining scores for the past 10 years, would like to know if there is anything to be noted about why test scores were better years ago vs now.
 - Superintendent Misty: Stated that before the pandemic, we were very close to the 50% mark; some schools (pockets) seem to have great scores; so there is initiative currently to look at current good scores at “pocket” schools to replicate to other schools along with looking back at previous years before declination to understand declining test scores better.

Student Attendance and the Impact on the District’s Budget

Patrick Jensen, Chief Financial Officer, Business Services Administration

Patrick Jensen took the floor to present and started by sharing his contact information. Went over the following main points in his presentation: local control funding formula (LCFF), why attendance matters for budget, example scenario, enrollment projections with average daily attendance (ADA), ADA impact on funding, fall semester week by week change in ADA, spring semester week by week change in ADA, spring semester ADA by day of week, key attendance dips, how families can help in increasing attendance, and the opportunity.

Parent/Participant Q&A/Feedback

- Parent: Commented that she finds it unfair that daughter has been marked for 3 full absences for simple and short length tardiness due to instances such as: a dentist appointment, running late by a few minutes, tardiness due to an allergy, etc.
- Patrick Jensen: Unfortunately, that is a state regulation and can't be changed.
- Chris Dowdy (Chairperson): Mentioned hearing of potential cuts that will occur due to absences related to immigration fears; inquired if there will be knowledge soon of what will be cut.
 - Patrick Jensen: Brought up the FUSD board meeting coming up in June regarding reduction of 20-25 million dollars over the next few years; mentioned that potentially Special Ed transportation is safe, but there would most likely be cuts to central office staff and management, not behavioral staff, etc. Though as things get deeper, there are no guarantees.
- Eileen Girón (Greenberg Elementary): Inquired about what is being done to make sure that Special Ed needs are being met.
 - Patrick Jensen: Affirmed there is dedicated Special Ed funding from federal sources, and there are no talks that it will be cut, as well as the general budget, and the board recently approved other financial support.
- Chris De La Cerda (Vice-Chairperson): Sited enrollment declining; increase in homelessness, lack of housing, etc., inquired if the district is looking at this, what is being done, and how to partner to help address these issues.
 - Patrick: Aware that homelessness is on the rise, and mentioned it is difficult to track, but working closely with local nonprofits, along with governor-funded resources for any kind of social struggle need.
- Maricela (Fresno High): Concerned about enrollment decline being projected as 'case of the Mondays', sleeping late due to recreation, etc., by FUSD. States that the undertone for enrollment decline has more to do with internal issues, incompetent teachers, too much homework exhausting students, targeting by teachers, and immigration fears.
- Maria Gutierrez - Spanish Speaking (Anthony Elementary): Expressed concern about reception, demeanor, and negative attitude toward parents and students from school personnel toward the end of the semester. Sited incidents of disrespect and almost spiteful behavior without reason to parents and students.
 - Patrick Jensen: Apologized that she had this experience and shared her concern.
- **Silvia Hinojosa (Birney)** Parent (McLane High & Baird Middle): Shared that her students are always in school and schedules her kids' doctor's appointments after school and during time off. Inquired about Saturday school and other programs to help with enrollment, food access, and homelessness.
 - Patrick Jensen: Affirmed that the district is working closely with many programs to help students and families in need. Saturday school has been paused for now

due to inconsistent attendance and the state's changing rules for ADA recovery. Looking to revamp and bring back Saturday school soon.

Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) Update

Public Hearing 2024

Dr. Ashlee Chiarito, Executive Officer, State and Federal Programs

Dr. Chiarito took the floor and went over her presentation and covered the following items: LCAP overview/timeline, educational partner participation, district investments, what's new in the LCAP, proposed budget 2025/26, LCAP action budget outline, equity multiplier, access to proposed department budget presentations, draft LCAP document and resources, and next steps.

Parent/Participant Q&A/Feedback

- **Marisabel (Leavenworth)Parent:** Inquired about the location of the hearing.
 - Dr. Chiarito: Responded with the location and time of the hearing at the next FUSD board of trustees meeting is: 2309 Tulare St, Fresno, 93721, 2nd Floor at 6:30 pm.
- **Hugo Morales (Secretary):** Commented on immigration fears and stated being impressed with state dedicating more money to poorer schools. Before the pandemic, FUSD was making significant progress with English language learning students. Inquired where the district is with that currently, and with long-term English language learners?
 - Dr. Chiarito: Stated that although she doesn't have an exact number, English Learners, there is improvement. Long-term English Learners is a challenge.
- **Rosie Puentes (Yokomi Elementary):** Commented that truancy doesn't seem realistic, and schools are irresponsible with absences. Her child has a medical plan for her child's medically excused absences in place, despite that she has been required to attend meetings about being responsible for getting their students to school. Herself, along with other parents (athlete parents), most find out that administrative staff and teachers are not inputting absences properly, yet still instruct parents to get their students to school.
 - Dr. Chiarito: Apologized for her having had this experience and reiterated using "Let's Talk" and talking to the attendance team present.
- **Chris Dowdy (Chairperson):** Inquired where Rosie could go for further escalation.
 - Dr. Chiarito: Mentioned constituent services.
- **Maricela (Fresno High):** Brought up her experience with constituent services, utilizing them, but has yet to hear back regarding her complaints.
 - Dr. Chiarito: Asked how Marisela communicated with constituent services, phone call, VM, email, etc.
- **Maricela (Fresno High):** Elaborated that although she made it clear that her issue was important and grave, that it had the potential to become a liability, she was told no one was available for her concern, and she did not hear back after initial contact.

Additionally, she felt discouraged as a parent that the trustees do not seem to care about parents' feedback or concerns at board meetings. Public comments were moved to the end of the meeting making it difficult to express concern due to time constraints.

- Maiyer: Took the floor to express intent to take information down and personally connect with constituent services, offered the same to anyone else who has reached out to constituent services but had not received a call or feedback in return to their complaints.

Unscheduled Public Comments

- Rosie Puentes (Yokomi Elementary): Wants to understand guardrails better. Feels that there is a lot of gray area and wants to know exactly what the steps are to improve. Parents are fed up with board members and expressed that it seems like each Superintendent that comes in just ends up taking the blame, but nothing gets resolved.
 - Superintendent Misty: Explained that tonight's meeting was a broad overview and would like to come back later and explain in detail what each item addresses the parents' concerns. Would also like to explain how and when things will be addressed.
- Parent: Veronica: Seconded Rosie's experience by sharing her struggles with her own student's terrible experience with teachers. Her child's ear was pulled in 2nd grade, has struggled ever since with moving from school to school, and finally landed in homeschool. As she contemplates putting her child back in the district, she fears that it may not be a good decision, but would like to trust the district. She is still seeking answers and advocating for her son.
- Hugo Morales (Secretary): Thanked the superintendent for coming to the PAC Meeting and for her willingness to take on the responsibilities with the school district.
- Marisabel Corona (Leavenworth Elementary): When will everything take place with the goals, guardrails, budget, etc., would like to see the specific breakdown, and would like to submit ideas.
 - Superintendent Misty: Encouraged the submission of ideas and would like to be able to coordinate better. Described the process as being resource-rich but coordination-poor. There will be a cycle down from the board to school sites to teachers to parents, and as that starts to happen, feedback is encouraged and can be shared with Misty and/or Maiyer directly.
- Marisabel Corona (Leavenworth Elementary): Expressed concern about schools not trying to incorporate parental support. She tries to support her student's school, but notices that the school doesn't seem to want parental support or involvement.
- Nora Rios (Manchester GATE Elementary): Understands that work is immense for the superintendent and that magic is not possible, but also knows that the parental role is the most important, in her experience many, if not all, of the meetings she has attended various, multiple, parents that have issues and have tried to bring attention to them. Her

recommendation at every meeting, including this one, is to invite principals to these meetings to listen to the parents. Manchester's principal has done so, attended the meetings, feels that his presence helps with implementing a plan. Feels that principals should be present alongside the superintendent to listen and be part of the process and discussion.

- Superintendent Misty: Accepts feedback and will be taking it back and addressing it with principals, as she is in front of many of them all the time.
- Eileen Girón (Greenberg Elementary): Inquired if schools that are designated are going to continue being designated.
- Superintendent Misty: This year has \$30 million in cuts. Looking at designated schools, there seem to be inconsistencies with data not matching, and in hard budget times, hard decisions have to be made about designated schools. Working with FTA partners to allocate funds as best as possible to fill in the gaps.
- Eileen Girón (Greenberg Elementary): Inquired how teachers will be supported if designation is removed.
 - Superintendent Misty: 40 schools are designated; they would revert to follow the same ruling as undesignated schools. Clarified that the extra time is not prep time; it is an extension of teaching.
- Angela Villa (Ewing Elementary): Added that designated schools (dual immersion) having designation removed would really affect students, as dual immersion is not an easy curriculum as it is. Also, brought up that substitutes are usually not prepared and are not able to prepare.

Due to time constraints, the meeting was brought to a conclusion.

The next hybrid PAC Meetings for 2025/2026, as shown on presentation materials:

- **Thursday, October 16, 2025**
- **Thursday, December 18, 2025**
- **Thursday, February 19, 2026**
- **Thursday, May 28, 2026**

Adjournment

Chair, Chris Dowdy, confirmed there was no further input, questions, and/or concerns, so adjournment was initiated.

*Motion to adjourn the PAC Meeting: Rosie Puentes, 2nded by Eileen Girón
Adjournment of the meeting approved; motion passed unanimously.*

Parent Advisory Meeting adjourned at 8:11 PM.

