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**May 27, 2026, Board Meeting
Trustee Agenda Item Questions & Answers**

Early Literacy Goal**Q: Are we on track to meet the kindergarten literacy goal?**

A: The district expects to improve again this year, but current projections suggest the district may still fall slightly below the target of 62.5%. Winter results indicate continued growth, though likely not enough to fully meet the interim benchmark.

Q: Do kindergarten students entering from preschool and TK demonstrate expected readiness levels?

A: District leaders expressed concern that many students are still entering kindergarten significantly below expected readiness levels despite participating in preschool and TK programs. The district is continuing to analyze alignment between preschool, TK, and kindergarten instruction.

Q: Why isn't kindergarten growth stronger despite all the investments and instructional changes?

A: District leaders acknowledged concerns about the pace of growth. They noted that many students enter kindergarten still significantly behind academically, even after TK or preschool. Staff also recognized that instructional practices have not changed consistently across classrooms.

Q: What instructional practices are observed in the highest-performing kindergarten classrooms?

A: In stronger classrooms, students are actively engaged in:

- Writing words and sentences
- Practicing literacy skills daily
- Participating in differentiated instruction aligned to their individual learning levels

District leaders acknowledged these practices are not yet consistently implemented systemwide.

Q: What instructional issues are limiting student growth?

A: Several concerns were identified: Too much whole-group instruction, insufficient differentiation for individual student needs, low student engagement in some classrooms and students below grade level not receiving targeted instruction consistently.

Q: Which literacy skill area is the biggest challenge for students?

A: Students struggle most with high-frequency sight words because many cannot be decoded phonetically and instead require memorization and repeated exposure.

Q: Are current instructional strategies strong enough to create systemwide improvement?

A: District leadership acknowledged that existing efforts may not yet be sufficient and agreed that stronger strategies and deeper implementation are needed moving forward.

Q: What evidence do we have that coaching and professional learning are actually changing teacher practice?

A: Leaders explained that:

- Kindergarten teachers participated in at least one coaching cycle
- Site leaders received professional learning
- Instructional coaches are supporting teachers

However, leaders admitted the district needs better measures of coaching effectiveness and stronger evidence of classroom implementation.

Q: How are principals and instructional leaders monitoring classroom instruction?

A: Site leaders are expected to:

- Conduct classroom walkthroughs
- Provide teacher feedback
- Support PLCs and coaching cycles
- Monitor implementation of instructional strategies

Trustees expressed concern that monitoring must move beyond materials usage and focus more directly on instructional quality and student engagement.

Q: Why aren't stronger accountability systems in place for instruction?

A: District leaders stated that coaching is largely optional unless connected to administrator evaluation processes. They acknowledged the need for more rigorous evaluation systems and stronger accountability measures moving forward.

Q: Why do some classrooms show strong results while others do not?

A: Leadership acknowledged that effective classrooms do exist across the district, proving success is possible. The challenge is scaling those practices systemwide and ensuring consistent implementation.

Q: How can the district better measure the quality of coaching?

A: Leadership stated they are revising output metrics for next year to better evaluate: Coaching quality, teacher implementation, and the impact on student outcomes.

Q: How many teachers are declining instructional coaching support?

A: District leaders acknowledged that teacher participation in coaching can be optional and stated they need better systems for tracking coaching participation and implementation fidelity moving forward.

Q: Will coaching systems change next year?

A: Yes. Leadership stated the district plans to redesign coaching approaches next year by:

- Increasing coaching cycles
- Improving implementation monitoring
- Strengthening evidence of behavior change in classrooms
- Revising coaching output metrics

Q: How can principals and evaluators play a larger role in improving instruction?

A: District staff stated that stronger evaluation systems and clearer accountability expectations may help reinforce instructional improvements and implementation fidelity.

Q: Are there examples showing that improvement is possible?

A: Yes. District leaders highlighted schools like Roeding Elementary that demonstrated strong growth, increasing from approximately 42% proficiency after previously being identified as significantly underperforming.

Q: Should the district study successful districts and internal case studies to accelerate literacy growth?

A: Trustees encouraged district leadership to:

- Examine successful schools within Fresno Unified
- Analyze high-performing classrooms
- Study other districts nationally that have demonstrated strong literacy growth

Examples mentioned included Mississippi and Charlotte-Mecklenburg.

Q: How does the district balance urgency, accountability, and staff wellness?

A: District leaders acknowledged the tension between maintaining urgency around student achievement while also supporting healthy workplace culture and staff morale during systemwide change efforts.

Q: Will students present directly to the Board?

A: Because of late meeting hours, student presentations will be shared through video recordings rather than live presentations.

Q: Can stronger pressure improve system performance?

A: District leadership agreed that urgency and pressure often drive action but noted leaders must still maintain healthy working environments while implementing change.