



BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING
2309 TULARE STREET
BOARD ROOM, SECOND FLOOR
FRESNO, CA 93721
fresnounified.org/board

MINUTES – BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING

Fresno, California

April 22, 2026

Fresno Unified School District, Education Center, 2309 Tulare Street, Fresno, CA 93721.

At the regular meeting of the Fresno Unified School District Board of Education, held April 22, 2026, there were present Board Members Cazares, Davis, Islas, Jonasson Rosas, Levine, Thomas, and Wittrup. Superintendent Her was also present as well as Student Members Mayes and Souksamlane.

Board President Islas CONVENED the Regular Board Meeting at 4:30 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Tami Lundberg led the Pledge of Allegiance.

OPPORTUNITY for Public Comment on Closed Session Items

For the record, the Board received eleven (11) public requests to address the Board on Closed Session items.

The individuals' name and a summary of topic are as follows:

1. Sienna Curtain, Clinical Social Worker at Fresno High and Fort Miller advocated specifically for academic counselors with the Project Access program and commented that the decision to cut these positions does not align with what is written in the district's Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) for the most vulnerable populations. Curtain asked if the district receives funding for Foster and Unhoused students and if the funding stays steady, why is the district proposing cuts to positions within the program.
2. Preston Villarreal referred to a self-written petition against the proposed budget cuts and signed by people at Fresno High School. Villarreal commented that the budget cuts place a burden directly on students with larger class sizes, less individual attention, lower engagement and weaker academic outcomes.

Villarreal commented that cutting support staff positions such as nurses and counselors shows not only a lack of basic care but also understanding as these supports are not luxuries but necessities to students. Preston urged the Board to reject the proposed position cuts.

3. Copper Williams shared that students need specific support to help them get through school, and without those supports students will lose knowledge needed to develop a successful future. Williams commented that if the budget cuts do not end then students will lose and that many students have signed a petition against the cuts and asked what the Board will do to help students in need.

Williams commented that counselors are the supporters of foster youth and help students that have things happening in their private lives that affect them emotionally, physically, and mentally that can often lead a student to not staying focused on school.

4. Jeniveve Segress commented that getting rid of school counselors would be a serious mistake, that school counselors not only help students pick classes and plan schedules but are often the first safe adult a student feels they can talk to when struggling; and for many students the removal of school counselors is the removal of the only trusted support system a student has at school; removing protection, guidance, and hope. Students face pressures and counselors help students manage these issues before they become overwhelming.

Segress commented that counselors help students stay organized, set goals, and prepare for college and careers, and help students believe they have a future worth working toward; and, counselors have training to recognize warning signs when students are struggling and connect students to resources before situations become dangerous. Segress commented that one conversation with a counselor can change a student's entire life.

5. Levi Cansino commented that counselors do more than help students fix schedules, in programs like Project Access they support students dealing with stress, with decision making, planning, guidance for college, and career opportunities; fewer counselors will cause problems for seniors that need guidance with applications for college, financial aid, scholarships, and career choices, without enough support, students may miss deadlines. Underclassmen need help from counselors as well, help adjusting to high school, choosing classes, and building confidence. Levi commented that without counselors many students early on will feel lost which will affect success later.
6. Priscilla Cansino ceded time to Preston Villarreal.
7. Preston Villarreal continued to strongly advocate for no cuts to counselor positions.

8. Miriam Rosales shared that counselors with Project Access are important to students because they provide support to students in foster care and facing homelessness. Miriam commented that counselors Silva and Zhang gave Miriam the opportunity to see Miriam's full potential and to realize a dream of attending UC Davis.

Miriam shared the experience of moving high schools three times and counselors helped through each move; helping Miriam understand what to do without Miriam needing to explain issues or situations repeatedly. Miriam commented that counselors are important to foster youth and students facing homelessness because counselors have knowledge of resources about scholarships or housing that help to ensure students are stable; counselors are there when foster youth and students facing homelessness are not able to depend on other people in their lives.

9. Jennifer Cabrera shared the experience of graduating from McLane and returning to McLane as a school counselor. Jennifer commented on receiving notice due to budget cuts. Jennifer commented that while upset at losing the position, they are more upset about the impact this will have on students as students will move to another counselor, must trust a new adult and reshare their story.
10. Nelson Vasquez shared examples of a student in crisis and of how counselors support students; commenting that reductions to counselors increase the distance between the student and the support the student needs. Behind every increased caseload is a student who waits longer for help and whose warning signs a counselor might miss. Across the district students are navigating more than academics such as mental health challenges, financial stress, family responsibilities, and questions about their futures and counselors have training to support these areas.
11. Shae Hill shared concerns about the current operations within Fresno Unified specifically related to cuts to Goal 2 funding and the loss of restorative practices counselors and social workers at the elementary level. Hill commented that the lack of background knowledge and behavior issues in the classroom are major roadblocks to success and budgetary decisions are to be made with the goal of minimal student impact but by removing counselors that connect to students and removing real life experiences for students does not seem to support that goal.

Hill asked why the district is paying outside consultants to hold listening sessions and staff are being asked to work with less, retirees are not being replaced, programs important to student success are being cut, yet the Board has a consultant on standby and upper management retirees are being replaced. Hill asked the Board not to cut essential student services that make a difference at the elementary level when there are other places that are less impactful to students.

12. Maria Nunez said that comments tonight are not about preserving a position but about preventing fragmentation across district core priorities and that the community liaison position functions as a catalyst across multiple guardrails. When the role exists those efforts align and without the role, they become siloed, duplicated, or lost altogether, creating inefficiencies that cost more time and resources.

A. RECEIVE INFORMATION & REPORTS

For the record, there are no items for this section of the agenda.

Board President Islas ADJOURNED the Regular Board Meeting to Closed Session at 5:01 p.m.

For the record, Closed Session extended to 7:15 p.m.

Board President Islas RECONVENED the meeting to Open Session at 7:16 p.m.

Reporting Out of Closed Session

Clerk Levine reported the following:

On a motion by Board Member Davis, seconded, by Board Member Wittrup, the Board took action in Closed Session to hire Janine Wilkinson to Principal of Gibson Elementary School, by a roll call vote of 7-0-0-0 as follows: AYES: Board Members: Cazares, Davis, Jonasson Rosas, Thomas, Wittrup, Clerk Levine, and President Islas.

On a motion by Board President Islas, seconded, by Board Clerk Levine, the Board took action in Closed Session to hire Nichole Horn to Principal of Cooper Middle School, by a roll call vote of 7-0-0-0 as follows: AYES: Board Members: Cazares, Davis, Jonasson Rosas, Thomas, Wittrup, Clerk Levine, and President Islas.

On a motion by Board Member Cazares, seconded, by Board Member Davis, the Board took action in Closed Session to hire Gina Thao to Principal of McCardle Elementary School, by a roll call vote of 7-0-0-0 as follows: AYES: Board Members: Cazares, Davis, Jonasson Rosas, Thomas, Wittrup, Clerk Levine, and President Islas.

On a motion by Board President Islas, seconded, by Board Member Wittrup, the Board took action in Closed Session to hire Veronica Valdez to Principal of Ericson Elementary School, by a roll call vote of 7-0-0-0 as follows: AYES: Board Members: Cazares, Davis, Jonasson Rosas, Thomas, Wittrup, Clerk Levine, and President Islas.

On a motion by Board President Islas, seconded, by Board Clerk Levine, the Board took action in Closed Session to hire Teresa Zamora to Principal of Rowell Elementary School, by a roll call vote of 7-0-0-0 as follows: AYES: Board Members: Cazares, Davis, Jonasson Rosas, Thomas, Wittrup, Clerk Levine, and President Islas.

On a motion by Board Member Davis, seconded, by Board Member Jonasson Rosas, the Board took action in Closed Session to hire Doua Vu to Principal of Balderas Elementary School, by a roll call vote of 7-0-0-0 as follows: AYES: Board Members: Cazares, Davis, Jonasson Rosas, Thomas, Wittrup, Clerk Levine, and President Islas.

On a motion by Board Member Jonasson Rosas, seconded, by Board Member Cazares, the Board took action in Closed Session to hire Tiffani Makely to Principal of Webster Elementary School, by a roll call vote of 7-0-0-0 as follows: AYES: Board Members: Cazares, Davis, Jonasson Rosas, Thomas, Wittrup, Clerk Levine, and President Islas.

On a motion by Board Member Jonasson Rosas, seconded, by Board Member Davis, the Board took action in Closed Session to hire Berenise Ceja to Principal of Winchell Elementary School, by a roll call vote of 7-0-0-0 as follows: AYES: Board Members: Cazares, Davis, Jonasson Rosas, Thomas, Wittrup, Clerk Levine, and President Islas.

For the record, Clerk Levine read the approved Board Shared Agreements as follows:

- **Respect and Civility** – Honor our shared agreements.
- **Be Honest and Honorable** – Honor my word and do not lie, deflect, or disparage others.
- **Honor the Process and any Time Limits**
- **Honor Confidentiality**
- **Be Prepared and On Time** – Be on time. Read materials or share questions ahead of time. Share as early as possible if I will be late or miss a commitment.
- **Represent All Students** - Do not represent solely my region/area.

B. CONFERENCE AND DISCUSSION AGENDA

B-1, DISCUSS and ACCEPT Student Outcomes Focused Governance Monitoring Report for April 2026

For the record, the Board received zero (0) public requests to speak on agenda item B-1, Discuss and Accept Student Outcomes Focused Governance Monitoring Report for April 2026.

For the record, Board Members provided comments and raised questions about agenda item B-1. A summary of Board Member feedback is below:

Member Cazares thanked Dr. Curtis for the presentation and work at Hoover High School. Expressed appreciation that Dr. Curtis involves teachers in the work as it is the teachers who will implement the work to help students meet goals. Expressed wonder that Dr. Curtis was able to get teenage students to come to school on a Saturday to study for state testing and commented this is an activity that needs to be studied and replicated.

Member Cazares asked Superintendent Her to provide three to five bullet points as to why the district missed the target by 5% and what will be done differently to meet it at the next monitoring report session.

Member Jonasson Rosas asked how the district is working across subject matters in middle school to meet the interim literacy goal. Asked how the English Language Arts scores year over year informs the district. Commented that the averages are different and a chart or graph would be helpful as we are not comparing apples to apples each year.

Member Jonasson Rosas observed that the online school seems to be doing quite well and asked what is done differently online that can be replicated. Jonasson Rosas asked if it seems to work well for a set of students that have self-identified that it works well for; is there then a reverse, are there students in traditional schools that can be asked to consider online school.

Clerk Levine thanked the teams from Hoover and Tenaya for their inspiring presentation. Requested clarity to information presented on slide no. eleven; and commented it seems the 2024 fall to 2025 spring percentage increase, in all cases but one, is commensurate with the N increase with the exception of the N for our students experiencing homelessness numbers. Asked staff to explain in context or analysis what is going on; does this literally mean we had that significant increase in our students experiencing homelessness population or is there something else to the story.

Clerk Levine requested a board communication as follow-up.

Member Davis thanked Dr. Castillo for briefing the Board and commented that never before has the district had the focus and monitoring that it has now, and Member Davis commented on being proud of the work the district is doing.

Member Davis requested clarity from Principal Curtis as to how many Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) take place at Hoover High School and if progress monitoring is in addition to the PLCs. Davis requested clarity as to how many high schools are implementing practice Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) sessions and expressed appreciation for the intentional focus by staff.

Member Davis requested clarity from Principal Duff about every teacher having SMART goals and asked for an example of what it looks like when every classroom teacher has expectations. Asked how students were taught to want to look at and connect with their own SBAC.

Member Wittrup expressed excitement for this work and commented it is the beginning of something huge that has never been experienced before in Fresno Unified School District. Wittrup commented this trumps all the bad press the district has received and expressed hope that the Media is paying attention as this is really the story; there has been a lot of rough waters for the last years and we are facing budget cuts we have all the things that larger urban school districts grapple with and is often not pretty but this moment hearing from our schools, our principals, our students, our parents, and our teachers this makes it all worth it. Member Wittrup expressed being proud of all district leadership, school site leadership, teachers and students, and commented that the work is hard and did not come together easily and wanted those present to pause and just live the moment.

Member Wittrup asked if students with disabilities is one big group with the same disability, and if not, how do we figure out how to understand students with disabilities because our students with disabilities are so much more than students with disabilities, they learn differently and we want to make sure we do not leave any student behind by putting them all in one group. We need to dive down deep and figure out how to measure their growth and not leave them behind.

Member Thomas commended Dr. Curtis for the good work and requested it be on record that from 2023 to 2024 Hoover scores grew from 35% to 57% in English Language Arts and 9.5% to 15% in math. Thomas recognized the tremendous growth happening at Hoover and asked Dr. Curtis, as the leader of the Hoover region, how he is working with and leading the elementary and middle school leaders.

Member Thomas requested to see information by region in future presentations to the Board. Member Thomas asked Superintendent Her how Professional Learning attendance has impacted student outcomes. Member Thomas expressed appreciation that department chairs are able to take the lead for administrators and applauded staff for a job well done.

President Islas congratulated students and staff who are doing the work to be on track; showing up, being purposeful, intentional, getting the work done is a heavy lift. Congratulated staff present who have lifted up the successes so that we can have a new narrative about Fresno Unified. This is a historical moment, to begin to lay out how we are not an underperforming district, how we are successful in achieving and that we have great staff, teachers, students worthy of continuing investment.

President Islas referenced the goals presented tonight and asked how the district hopes to stay on track and meet the actions specified while facing the predicted budget cuts and asked staff to speak to what plans are in place that will allow the district to stay on this trajectory.

President Islas commented on wanting to push a little bit, as tonight the Board heard from Project Access counselors and of their worry about how the loss of counselors will impact the specific student populations being lifted up tonight.

President Islas requested Superintendent Her provide more detail of plans to address impacts due to budget cuts, how the district will compensate for the loss, how will the district backfill, how the district will make sure it is not losing traction with specific student populations.

For the record, Superintendent Her, Carlos Castillo, Ed.D., as well as Principal Ryan Duff and teacher Rachel Feagin from Tenaya, Principal Courtney Curtis, parent Megon Obrist and student Hailey Obrist from Hoover High School, were available to provide clarity.

On a motion by Board President Islas, seconded by Board Member Davis, the Board accepted the Student Outcomes Focused Governance Monitoring Report for April 2026, by a roll call vote of 7-0-0-0 as follows: AYES: Board Members Cazares, Davis, Jonasson Rosas, Thomas, Wittrup, Clerk Levine, and President Islas. Student Members Mayes and Souksamlane voted yes as well.

B2, CONDUCT and APPROVE the Board Quarterly Self-Evaluation

For the record, the Board received zero (0) public requests to speak on agenda item B-2, Discuss and Approve the Board Quarterly Self-.

For the record, Ambra O'Connor was available to provide clarity.

On a motion by Board Member Davis, seconded by Board Member Cazares, the Board approved the Board Quarterly Self-Evaluation, by a roll call vote of 7-0-0-0 as follows: AYES: Board Members Cazares, Davis, Jonasson Rosas, Thomas, Wittrup, Clerk Levine, and President Islas. Student Members Mayes and Souksamlane voted yes as well.

OPPORTUNITY for Public Comment on Consent Agenda Items

For the record, the Board received zero (0) public requests to speak on the Consent Agenda.

On a motion by Board Clerk Levine, seconded by Board Member Jonasson Rosas, the Board approved the Consent Agenda with the exception of agenda items C7, C8, C10, which were pulled for further discussion and C13 which was pulled for Board member recusal, by a roll call vote of 7-0-0-0 as follows: AYES: Board Members Cazares, Davis, Jonasson Rosas, Thomas, Wittrup, Clerk Levine, and President Islas. Student Member Souksamlane voted yes as well.

ALL CONSENT Agenda items are considered routine by the Board of Education and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of items unless a Board member requests, in which event, the item(s) will be considered following approval of the Consent Agenda. Pulled Consent Agenda items will be considered for approval after the Conference/Discussion Agenda.

C. CONSENT AGENDA

C-1, ADOPT Findings of Fact and Recommendations of District Administrative Board

ADOPTED as recommended, the Findings of Fact and Recommendations of District Administrative Panels resulting from Hearings on expulsion and readmittance cases conducted during the period since the regular meeting of the Board held April 08, 2026.

C-2, ADOPT Resolution No. 26-73, In Support of Financial Literacy as a Critical Component of Student Mental Health, Academic Success, and Long-Term Economic Well-Being

ADOPTED as recommended, Resolution No. 26-73.

C-3, ADOPT Resolution No. 26-79, Proclaiming April 2026 as School Library Month

ADOPTED as recommended, Resolution No. 26-79.

C-4, APPROVE Personnel List

APPROVED as recommended, the personnel List, Appendix A, as submitted.

C-5, APPROVE Meeting Minutes

APPROVED as recommended, draft minutes of the Fresno Unified School District Board of Education regular meeting held April 08, 2026.

C-6, APPROVE Board of Education Time Use Evaluation

APPROVED as recommended, the Board of Education Time Use Evaluation for January 2026 through March 2026.

C-7, APPROVE Proposed Revisions to Board Bylaws

APPROVED as recommended, the proposed revisions to Board Bylaws (BB) as follows: BB 9121 President; BB 9122 Secretary; BB 9123 Clerk; BB 9130 Board Committees; BB 9140 Board Representatives; and BB 9150, Student Board Members

For the record, Board Members provided comments and raised questions about agenda item C-7. A summary of Board Member feedback is below:

Student Member Souksamlane proposed friendly amendments for the Board to consider; specifically, to Board Bylaw 9150, Student Board Members.

1. Section titled, Roles and Responsibilities of Student Board Members, the proposed amendment is as follows: *When the student board member's preferential vote differs from the Board's final action, the student board member may provide a brief explanation addressing their vote.*
2. Section titled, Student Board Member Development the proposed amendment is as follows: leave the original language specific to the word shall as follows: *The Superintendent or designee shall, at district expense, provide learning opportunities to student Board members, through trainings, workshops, and conferences, to enhance their knowledge, understanding, and performance of their Board responsibilities.*
3. Strongly recommended language be strengthened to ensure that student board members are appointed to at least one standing subcommittee.

Student Member Souksamlane restated for the record education code in statutory form as follows: Education Code 35012 (D) (6) (b), *Each pupil member shall have the right to attend each and all meetings of the governing board of the school district except for closed sessions. Each pupil member shall be appointed to subcommittees of the governing board in the same manner as regular members. Each pupil member shall be made aware of the time commitment required to participate in subcommittee meetings and work and may decline an appointment to a subcommittee. Subcommittee meetings may be scheduled in accordance with the availability of all members including each pupil member.*

Board President Islas asked if Student Board Member Souksamlane was motioning for approval of the item with the amendments.

Member Jonasson Rosas motioned for approval of the bylaws with some amendments with the stipulation to pull Board Bylaw 9150 from consideration at this time to allow the Board Bylaw Subcommittee to consider how to incorporate Student Member Souksamlane's feedback and review with legal counsel.

Member Thomas seconded the motion.

Student Member Souksamlane proposed one last friendly amendment referencing Education 35012 (D) (5). Member Souksamlane restated Education Code 35012 (d) (5) in statutory form as follows: *The governing board of the school district may adopt a resolution authorizing a pupil member or members to make motions that may be acted upon by the governing board except on matters dealing with employer employee relations pursuant to chapter 10.7 commencing with section 3540 of division four of title one of the government code.*

Student Member Souksamlane expressed hope that the Board would approve the amendments before the conclusion of Souksamlane's term.

Clerk Levine invited Student Board Members Mayes and Souksamlane to the Board Bylaw Subcommittee in which the subcommittee will consider Student Member Souksamlane's suggested amendments to Board Bylaw 9150, Student Board Members.

Member Thomas asked if all Board members could collaborate on BB 9150 as each Board member may have a different idea of what the Bylaw should look like.

Member Jonasson Rosas offered amendments to Board Bylaw 9130, in addition to components of the original motion.

Member Jonasson Rosas read a partial excerpt from BB 9130 as follows: *The Budget and Audit Committees shall ensure district spending and financial practices are in alignment with Board adopted...*

Member Jonasson Rosas called to question the use of the word, *ensure* in BB 9130 as related to the Audit Committee commenting that the word ensure is too strong of a word. Member Jonasson Rosas proposed for consideration the words, shall oversee, shall provide input, just not the word ensure.

Member Jonasson Rosas read a partial excerpt from BB 9130 as follows: *The Legislative Committee shall advocate and support legislation that aligns and improves student outcomes, goals, and guardrails.*

Member Jonasson Rosas called to question the use of the words *shall advocate* and proposed for consideration the use of *shall recommend to the Board*. Member Jonasson Rosas commented that the authority lies with the Board as said in the document discussed, and it should be in the subject matter of the school district.

President Islas provided comments related to the last amendment offered stating that to say that it is limited to the purview when there are clear examples of city, county, and state that would impact the operation and budget of the school district, commenting it should not be optional, and limiting it to the purview of education prevents us from doing one of the primary functions of the Board and that is to ensure the fiscal solvency of the district.

Islas commented on not wanting to see the Board's ability to weigh in on issues limited solely to education and if you are a member of the Legislative Committee you understand there are a number of legislation that are reviewed and weighed in on that relate to personnel issues, benefits, environment, areas not seen as exclusively educational but have direct ties back to the Board's ability to operate in education.

Clerk Levine commented on not agreeing with a specific subject matter but would support the idea that the Board should advocate and weigh in on matters that have a direct implication and positive or negative impact on the district and students.

Clerk Levine commented in terms of state legislation, the Board has weighed in on bills related to immigration enforcement that are not related to educational subject matter but have a direct threat and impact on students and schools. So, if the amendment is broadened to include language specific to legislation that is local, state, or national that has direct consequences for Fresno Unified students and the district itself Levine could support that.

Member Jonasson Rosas expressed appreciation for comments provided and commented that what the Board heard earlier today was that the Board has deviated from their focus of Student Outcomes Focused Governance. Jonasson Rosas's intent is to refocus the Board as well as pointing out it is not an advocating role but rather a role of making recommendations to the Board, and the authority lies with the Board and not with a subcommittee.

Jonasson Rosas commented that the proposed amendments are for both components, to limit purview to the subject matter, and to put up guardrails so the Board is working on things within the Board's purview that focus on the district's Student Outcomes Focused Governance, goals and guardrails.

President Islas asked if the Board could vote for each amendment separately as Islas is in favor of the proposed amendments related to the Audit Committee but has reservations with the proposed amendments related to the Legislative Committee.

Member Cazares asked if Member Jonasson Rosas would consider a friendly amendment to Jonasson Rosas's amendment such as inserting language identifying state and federal legislation commenting that state and federal legislation is what the Legislation Committee oversees.

President Islas commented that the Board has discussed several topics during the Board meeting that relate specifically to local decisions and does not want the Board put into a position where the Board is not allowed to speak on issues impacting student safety, health, welfare, or the fiscal solvency of the district, and it feels that is the intention of the proposed amendment, to undercut the ability of the Board to weigh in on issues that impact the district.

Member Jonasson Rosas and President Islas discussed the intent of the offered amendments and what could result from accepting the proposed amendments.

Member Davis proposed as it related to Fresno Unified period, as we are a Unified School District within a city and county, state and country. How it affects our children, our families, our employees, our community, and finances, period.

Member Jonasson Rosas commented that Davis's proposed amendment to the amendment is the same thing.

Member Davis commented that she is not spelling out city, county, or state.

Member Jonasson Rosas restated suggested language proposed for amendment as follows: I will recommend to the Board support for legislation that aligns with and improves Student Outcomes Focused goals and guardrails within the subject matter of Fresno Unified.

Member Cazares seconded Member Jonasson Rosas's motion.

Clerk Levine commented that he reads the proposed amendment as limiting the Board to only weigh in on educational or academic policies done within the district and it prevents the Board from weighing in on legislation that may not be educational or academic but may have a direct impact in various other ways positively or negatively to student and the district. Levine is hesitant to support anything that would limit the Board's ability to support students and the district.

Student Member Souksamlane commented on understanding Member Jonasson Rosas's intent is not to limit the Board's ability but there are outlying factors. Souksamlane referenced SEDA and commented SEDA would be detrimental to the district and commented on wanting the Board to understand that.

Member Jonasson Rosas commented that the Board still retains all rights and abilities to weigh in and place things on the agenda.

Student Member Souksamlane asked if the amendment might come from a place of political interest due to three of the governing board running for city council.

Member Jonasson Rosas commented that the purpose of the amendments is not due to political interest and the Board has the choice of removing suggested edits represented in Peach font. Jonasson Rosas explained for the public's benefit that information presented in Peach font is language recommended above and beyond language recommended by legal counsel or any required change.

President Islas shared that the purpose of the Board Bylaw Subcommittee in reviewing bylaws is to align them with Student Outcomes Focused Governance goals and that is the purpose of the recommended added language. Islas shared that while on the Legislative Committee there are legislations whether state, federal, or city that relate to the Board's interests in improving student outcomes, student safety, well-being and access to medical care, sex education and a variety of topics that are not necessarily just about academics and education that do relate back, and that is the purpose of adding the language, to give more clarity about aligning the activities of the committees with Student Outcomes Focused Governance goals and guardrails as the Board adopts them, not limiting them to things some people may consider outside the purview of education.

Member Jonasson Rosas and President Islas discussed topics that are within the Board's purview.

Member Davis reiterated, as it relates to Fresno Unified, commenting that we are a School District within a city and county, state and nation, and everything impacts our children, the air they breathe, the water that falls on them, everything impacts our children and community. Member Davis commented that it is not limiting when you say Fresno Unified.

Chief of Staff O'Connor confirmed the motion on the table is a change that would reflect the following: the legislative committee shall recommend support for legislation that aligns and improves student outcomes goals and guardrails and is also under the subject matter of Fresno Unified, recognizing the ultimate authority lies with the Board.

President Islas reiterated concerns as to what the term under the subject matter of Fresno Unified means.

Clerk Levine commented it is not a legal definition and is up for the Board's definition and interpretation. Levine registered support for the rest of the motion but does not support the use of *under the Board's subject matter* because Levine reads that as tied specifically to the Board's work in Fresno Unified.

Member Davis asked legal counsel to provide a definition for the term subject matter.

Legal Counsel Mark Harris commented that subject matter is a term that does not have a great set of definitions associated with it, you could replace with purview, but you still come back to the same place. Mr. Harris commented on disliking the term subject matter because to him, it is a limiting term that does not have a clear definitional connection. That is just a public policy person saying that you can use any of this language, purview is broader, the debate is clear as to where people stand in relation to how far your reach should go or how narrow you should interpret your reach. That is the question before you relative to these friendly amendments.

Member Davis called for the use of the word purview.

Member Jonasson Rosas commented that the goal is for the Board to meet their benchmarks and focus on what the Board has committed to as a Board. Commenting it is undeniable that everything affects students, every decision made at any level of government and even within the household affects students, and so, what and where the Board chooses as a body to put their effort is the question. Jonasson Rosas commented on not viewing it as controversial to say very explicitly that that is our focus.

President Islas commented on seeing it as controversial and that Student Member Souksamlane was astute to bring up SEDA because in the long run that is the intent of changing what the committee can bring forward for discussion, it is to tie the Board's hands around things that some members of this Board do not want to vote or take action on; and if the spirit is to bring us together, we can agree that we all are working to improve and align with student outcomes focused guardrails and goals. To put in a limiting factor that restricts the Legislative Committee at a time when there is a potential thought to bring back up a resolution that would allow us to oppose it publicly is a blatant strategy. Again, if the worry is about the advocacy of the Legislative Committee acting without the consent of the Board President Islas is fine with adjusting but restricting in any way what the Board can discuss or advocate for or bring forward for the broader Board support should not be restricted in any way.

Chief of Staff O'Connor requested confirmation that Member Jonasson Rosas would like to leave the motion as stands.

Member Jonasson Rosas commented that if people feel strongly about the word purview she accepts.

Member Cazares commented that her second to the motion still stands with the word purview.

Chief of Staff O'Connor confirmed the motion on the table is a change that would reflect the following: the legislative committee shall recommend support for legislation that aligns and improves student outcomes goals and guardrails under the purview of Fresno Unified School District, recognizing the ultimate authority lies with the Board.

On a motion by Board Member Jonasson Rosas, seconded by Board Member Cazares, the Board approved agenda item C-7, Proposed Revisions to Board Bylaws with the stipulation that Board Bylaw 9150 pulled from tonight's vote to allow time for the Board Bylaw Committee to meet and review Student Member Souksamlane's friendly amendments, and amendments proposed by Board Member Jonasson Rosas, by a roll call vote of 0-0-0-0 as follows: AYES: Board Members: Cazares, Davis, Jonasson Rosas, Thomas, Wittrup, and Student Member Mayes. NOES: Clerk Levine, President Islas, and Student Member Souksamlane.

C-8, APPROVE Employment Agreement for Patrick Jensen, Chief Financial Officer

APPROVED as recommended, the employment agreement for Patrick Jensen, Chief Financial Officer.

For the record, Board Members provided comments and raised questions about agenda item C-8. A summary of Board Member feedback is below:

Member Davis pulled the agenda item for discussion and amendments to the employment agreement for Patrick Jensen, Chief Financial Officer.

Member Jonasson Rosas motioned to approve the agreement with amendments as follows:

Under the heading Salary Increases, subheading Adjustments to Annual Salary, the suggested amendment is as follows: salary increases will be foregone for the next three years (2026/27, 2027/28, and 2028/29).

Under the heading Fringe Benefits and Work Year, subheading (d) Vacation, the suggested amendment is as follows: shall notify the Superintendent in advance of his vacation plans per district guidelines versus the three days.

Under the heading Fringe Benefits and Work Year, subheading (e) Work Year, last sentence, the suggested amendment is as follows: not compensated activities may be done with approval.

Under the heading Tax Deferred Compensation Plans, the suggested amendment is as follows: pertaining to the contributions listed make it clear that they are prorated for the year versus the entire year amounts; particularly for this year.

Under the heading Termination of Agreement, subheading (b) resignation, the suggested amendment is as follows: the Superintendent shall notify the Board at a minimum of 60 days versus 45 days.

For the record, Superintendent Her read the report as follows:

Government Code section 54953 (c)(3) of the Brown Act requires that this Board make an oral report in open session before taking final action on an employment agreement for a local agency executive such as the Chief Financial Officer. The oral report must summarize any recommended compensation including salary and/or fringe benefits.

Consistent with this requirement, the district is providing an oral summary of the salary and fringe benefits set forth in the proposed Employment Agreement between the Fresno Unified School District and Patrick Jensen, Chief Financial Officer.

- Contract Term July 01, 2026, through June 30, 2029.
- Effective July 01, 2026 the Chief Financial Officer's base annual salary will be Two Hundred Sixty-Three Thousand Eight Hundred Forty-Five Dollars and Forty-Five Cents (\$263,848.45), plus a 7.5% career increment in accordance with the annual career increment of 0.75% from the 11th to 20th year of service, for a total annual salary of Two Hundred Eighty-Three Thousand Six Hundred Thirty-Seven Dollars and Five Cents (\$283,637.05).
- During the term of this Agreement, the Chief Financial Officer's annual salary shall be increased or decreased by a percentage equal to the percentage increase or decrease applied to the salary schedules for management employees generally but shall NOT be inclusive of any one-time payments.
- Given the current financial pressures on the district, there will be no increase in the Chief Financial Officer's annual salary for the 2026/27 fiscal year, or the 2027/28, or the 2028/29 fiscal year, unless otherwise ordered by the Board.
- The District shall contribute monthly, an amount equal to the maximum annual employee elective deferral allowed under the Internal Revenue Code for a 403(b) Tax Sheltered Annuity, currently \$24,500 for 2026: including any catch-up contribution for employees age 50 or older.

- The District shall contribute monthly, an amount equal to the maximum annual employee elective deferral allowed under the Internal Revenue Code for a 457(b) Tax Sheltered Account, currently \$24,500 for 2026.
- Travel and Auto Allowance of \$500 per month.
- The same paid medical, dental and vision insurance coverage as other classified District management employees.

That concluded the Board's report pursuant to Government Code section 54953(c)(3). Superintendent Her opened the item for discussion and action.

On a motion by Board Member Jonasson Rosas, seconded by Board Member Thomas, the Board approved agenda item C-8, Approve Employment Agreement for Patrick Jensen, Chief Financial Officer by a vote of 7-0-0-0 as follows: AYES: Board Members Cazares, Davis, Jonasson Rosas, Thomas, Wittrup, Clerk Levine, and President Islas. Student Member Mayes voted yes as well. ABSTENTIONS: Student Member Souksamlane.

C-9, APPROVE Agreement with Enterprise Fleet Management Services

APPROVED as recommended, the agreement with Enterprise Fleet Management to replace vehicles beginning with the oldest Maintenance Department vehicles. The agreement is expected to reduce fuel and maintenance costs, and lower liability through newer vehicles with updated safety features. The agreement term will begin April 23, 2026, for a five-year period ending April 23, 2031. The agreement is expected to generate approximately \$680,000 in cost savings over the five-year period.

C-10, APPROVE Amendment to Agreement with M. Arthur Gensler & Associates Inc.

APPROVED as recommended, an amendment to the agreement with M. Arthur Gensler & Associates Inc. in the amount of \$23,500 to provide professional strategic planning services to support the development of the Fresno Unified School District strategic plan. Services include project planning and coordination, facilitation of multiple strategy team workshops, synthesis of stakeholder input, development of draft and final strategic plan documents.

For the record, Board Members provided comments and raised questions about agenda item C-10. A summary of Board Member feedback is below:

Member Jonasson Rosas commented on understanding the strategic planning process; however, Jonasson Rosas noted the district could potentially complete this work in-house. Member Jonasson Rosas agrees it is a good idea to hold another workshop, and the work needs to continue but cannot support spending an added \$23,000 to do so.

Member Thomas requested clarity as to the purpose of the added funds.

Member Jonasson Rosas requested clarity as to whether work has begun under the proposed added scope of work.

Member Cazares requested clarity as to whether funds for this contract are through a grant from another source.

Member Davis commented that the request came from teachers for more time with the strategic plan. Member Davis requested staff to confirm that this added scope of work would lay the foundation for staff to adjust as needed during the life of the plan.

Member Thomas requested confirmation that the purpose of the work is to train district staff in how to do the work.

On a motion by Board Member Thomas, seconded by Board Member Davis, the Board approved agenda item C-10, Approve Amendment to Agreement with M. Arthur Gensler & Associates Inc. by a roll call vote of 4-3-0-0 as follows: AYES: Board Members Davis, Thomas, Clerk Levine, President Islas, and Student Member Souksamlane. NOES: Board Members Cazares, Jonasson Rosas, and Wittrup. ABSTENTIONS: Student Board Member Mayes.

C-11, APPROVE Renewal Agreement with the Council of the Great City Schools
APPROVED as recommended, a two-year renewal agreement with the Council of the Great City Schools to continue professional services and coaching support to the district's governing team and other district staff as needed.

C-12, APPROVE Award of Bid 26-37, Bullard Talent K-8 School Classrooms Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning Replacement
APPROVED as recommended, information on Bid No. 26-37, Bullard Talent K-8 School Classrooms Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning Replacement. This project will replace existing classroom air handlers.

C-13, RATIFY Change Orders
RATIFIED as recommended, information on Change Orders for the projects as follows: Bid 23-33, Del Mar Elementary School New Multi-Purpose Building; Bid 24-35, Roosevelt High School Administration Building, Library, West Hall, and Theater Modernization; Bid 24-72, McLane High School New Gymnasium; Bid 25-08, Starr Elementary School Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning and Energy Management System Replacement; Bid 25-21, Baird Middle School Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning and Energy Management System Replacements; Bid 25-40, Edison High School Locker Room Modernization; Bid 25-48, Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning Improvement at Various Sites; Bid 25-60, Aynesworth and Calwa Elementary Schools Unit Ventilation, Energy Management Systems, and Central Plant Equipment Replacement; and Bid 26-18, Columbia Elementary School Recycled Water Conversion.

For the record, Board Member Jonasson Rosas read the statement as follows:

Agenda Item C-13 on tonight's Consent Agenda is to ratify change orders, one of which is Bid 24-35, Roosevelt High School Administration Building, Library, West Hall, and Theater Modernization.

My residence is located within 500 feet of the southwest edge of the property comprising the Roosevelt High School campus. Despite this proximity, ratifying change orders associated with Bid 24-35 will have no measurable fiscal impact on my property.

Moreover, the impact of ratifying change orders associated with Bid 24-35 is indistinguishable from its effect on the majority of the residential properties within my trustee area that are part of Roosevelt High School's attendance area.

Notwithstanding the absence of any fiscal impact on my property, I am abstaining from the vote to Ratify Change Orders, pursuant to Board Bylaw 9270 for the express purpose of avoiding the appearance of any conflict.

On a motion by Board Clerk Levine, seconded by Board Member Davis, the Board ratified agenda item C13 by a vote of 6-0-1-0 as follows: AYES: Board Members Cazares, Davis, Thomas, Wittrup, Clerk Levine, and President Islas. Student Members Mayes and Souksamlane voted yes as well. ABSTENTIONS: Board Member Jonasson Rosas.

C-14, RATIFY the Filing of Notices of Completion

RATIFIED as recommended, Notices of Completion for projects which have been completed according to plans and specifications. The projects are as follows: Bid 25-48, Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning Improvement at Various Sites.

OPPORTUNITY FOR UNSCHEDULED ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

For the record, the Board received two (2) public requests to address the Board during Unscheduled Oral Communications. The individual's name and a summary of topic are as follows:

1. Dominic Holland spoke about a policy against hate speech and referenced a concern of a student writing the "N" word and a swastika in the Edison High School quad. Dominic commented that the Black Student Union (BSU) and the Advancing Academic Acceleration and Achievement (A4) Department gathered to discuss this matter as well as creating an informal policy as students were not sure if the district had an actual policy about hate speech.

Dominic shared of learning the district does have a policy but was confused and shocked because it is not easily accessible or visible.

Dominic commented on how frustrating it is when singled out as an African American student and that outside discussions of slavery and reading, *"To Kill a Mockingbird"* discussions of race and discrimination do not seem to take place.

Dominic said it is frustrating to see the policy is there to protect people from hate speech, but it is empty and not complete.

2. Tajhan McComas spoke as a representative of Edison High School and the President of the Edison High School Black Student Union. Tajhan urged the Board to create or redefine an already existing policy on harmful language that will explicitly prohibit the use of the "N" word and other derogatory terms and slurs within schools.

Tajhan commented that the current policies are lacking in definition and do not acknowledge the slurs and specific consequences for such language as well as do not respect the safety and dignity of the student body.

Tajhan emphasized that because a policy exists does not mean it works; specifically, referring to Board Policy 5145.9, Hate Motivated Behavior; commenting this policy is incredibly broad and leaves room to ignore specific derogatory language and is the reason for the request for a policy that defines what harmful language is and says on paper that the use of specific slurs like the "N" word is prohibited, that restorative and educational consequences will be implemented, not meaning only by suspensions.

Tajhan communicated information shared by a student who responded to a request on the BSU webpage to share experiences on racism and harmful language and commented that this is just one example and the usual response by people is to report or ignore the person and when incidents get reported there is no response by the administration.

Tajhan commented that the lack of implementation within schools must be addressed to uphold promises made to not only students but staff and parents as well.

Member Thomas commented to Tajhan that staff are supposed to deal with these issues and asked if Tajhan had been in any meetings with staff.

President Islas commended the students who spoke during Unscheduled Oral Communications, and acknowledged the students had to wait a long time to make their comments. Islas expressed appreciation to the students for sharing the issues and commented that the Board will be sure to address.

INVITATION for Board Members to Shared Reflections on the Board Shared Agreements

Member Jonasson Rosas reported that the Board did great with their goal monitoring process this session and thanked staff for how staff captured questions making it easier for Jonasson Rosas to review and score.

Member Jonasson Rosas reported that both earlier and current questions earned a score of 84%, with all Board members taking part in discussion and providing their questions.

Student Member Mayes commented that the Black Student Union at Edison High School invited Member Mayes to listen to student concerns. The concerns stayed with Member Mayes as students spoke honestly about their experiences clearly communicating one message, students did not feel respected on their own campus.

Member Mayes shared a growing concern about the culture on the campus; specifically tied to language and how students treat one another. Member Mayes shared that the use of the “N” word is derogatory and inappropriate and carries a history of pain, disrespect and should have no place in district schools.

Member Mayes referenced quotes by Kamala Harris and Martin Luther King, Jr. and commented that what happens on district campuses reflects on all of us. Currently, students feel that consequences are inconsistent and that not enough is being done when the word is used and that rules and expectations are everywhere but there.

Member Mayes pointed out that when visiting a restaurant, a person knows they have to wear shoes, because it is a standard. Member Mayes asked why we are not setting or enforcing any standards to respect our campuses. Students are asking for change, to feel safe, respected and valued. Member Mayes was clear when sharing he knows what it feels like to be called that word and not only is it offensive, but it is also dehumanizing. Member Mayes asked everyone present if they would want to be called something that makes them feel less than who they are.

Member Mayes commented that something needs to be done now and student voices should influence decisions, student input should matter, student experiences should matter. Member Mayes shared that it is time for action and accountability is important

Member Cazares commented that in September 2024 the Board unanimously decided to focus their time and effort on programs and activities that are exclusively student focused but for the last two months the Board has decided to forego those efforts surrounding student focused goals and guardrails and shared agreements.

Member Cazares commented that there were divisive words used today that directly contradict the Student Outcomes Focused Governance and Member Cazares considers it irresponsible and more importantly personally disrespectful.

Member Cazares implored fellow Board members to rethink their words and their attacks and to refocus on the students because that is the purpose of the Board.

Member Thomas shared that Karen Major was a large part of the school district and educational system. Member Thomas expressed condolences to the family and staff, commenting that Karen will thoroughly be missed but look at the footprint Karen left in Fresno Unified.

D. ADJOURNMENT

Board President Islas ADJOURNED the meeting at 10:00 p.m.