

OCTOBER 21, 2020 Regular Board Meeting
Public Comment Items Appear in Order Received by Area.

OPPORTUNITY for Public Comment on Closed Session Agenda Items

No public comments were received for this portion of the agenda.

OPPORTUNITY for Public Comment on Consent Agenda Items

No public comments were received for this portion of the agenda.

UNSCHEDULED ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

1. Susan Wittrup

Dear Board Trustees and Supt. Nelson,

The real litmus test for instilling confidence in the decisions the district is making about returning students and staff to schools during the covid pandemic will be when all of our board trustees start attending board meetings in person again. If, as elected public servants, the trustees are not willing to show up for board meetings, how can they expect the rest of us to feel safe returning full time to school sites on Nov.2nd? This is not a rhetorical question. Parents do not have a choice. Students do not have a choice. FUSD management staff do not have a choice. Now, more than ever before, and with so much at stake, our school board should be setting the example. Respectfully, Susan Wittrup, School Psychologist, 559-999-1311.

2. Danielle Loucks

Dear Board Trustee's and Superintendent Nelson,

As schools are reopening for pods of students in need, teachers and staff are returning to campus, when will the Board of Trustees and Superintendent lead by example and attend their monthly board meetings at the district board room? It seems it is time to get back to work and work in place, as many of us families are doing so. If Board Trustees are able to shop at Target or the like, certainly they can attend their monthly board meeting at the district and not via zoom from their home. We're looking for leadership and it starts at the top. Thank you for your reply, Danielle Loucks.

3. Denise Simons

Lack of Leadership

FUSD teachers and students will begin returning to schools on November 2nd. Some teachers and high risk youth have ALREADY returned to campuses. Yet some of the FUSD board are refusing to meet in person to do their jobs. As a board member, you have the ability to wear a mask and easily "socially distance" in the boardroom. Yet in cowardly fashion, some of the board members refuse to meet in person. They have no problem sending students and teachers back to work, while hiding in their homes on a zoom meeting.. If it is safe to send kids & teachers back to school, it is certainly safe for all of you to get yourselves to an "in person" board meeting. You are NOT leading by example. Statements on your "Core

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beliefs & Commitments" from your website state :

"Leaders must perform courageously & ethically to accomplish stated goals" and

"We will provide clear expectations and support professional growth"

YOU expect the students & FUSD employees to be courageous in the face of a pandemic, yet you are weak-kneed.

YOU set clear expectations for students & teachers to return to class, yet you will not meet those expectations yourselves.

YOU are hypocrites.

My message to you? Get out of your pajamas, get off the zoom, and get yourselves to the boardroom and WORK as you were elected to do. Thank You, Denise Simons.

4. Cameron Simons

To the FUSD Board,

Why do FUSD Board members refuse to have in-person meetings? Students and teachers are going back to school Nov 2nd. Some of the "high risk" students in our community have ALREADY returned. Do you think you are "too special" to go back to in person meetings? You have the PRIVILEGE of a big room where you can spread, out and mask up. If you are fearful of your health & co-morbid conditions, I challenge you to think of all those working minimum wage jobs in fast food, and in the fields who go to work everyday in places where social distancing is difficult. So, I guess its "ok" for them to risk their health, but not you?

These board members are nothing but cowards and hypocrites for refusing to meet in person to do their elected duties. If its "too risky" to go to a board meeting, why are they saying its acceptable to send kids and employees back to school? The hypocrisy is unreal.

Again, If the board is waiting for a vaccine or a cure for COVID before THEY go back to a meeting, then why is it OK to send the kids & teachers back? Also, a cure or reliable vaccine may never come!

Get off of your "thrones" of privilege, you are not special.

You are expecting things from FUSD employees, students and families that YOU are unwilling to do yourselves. Thank You, Cameron Simons, Fresno Unified Alum.

5. Jennifer Johnstone

Dear Board Trustees:

Our board member from the Bullard Region voted "no" on the resolution declaring

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our district as an anti-racist institution which served as the perfect example of exactly why we need to adopt such a resolution. As a teacher, parent, resident and voter in the Bullard Region, Mr. Slatik does not speak for me.

6. Catherine and Jason Peters

Board Members:

I have been wondering when you all (read each and every one of you) will be back in person during your monthly Board meetings? If most teachers are back in classrooms, some with students, and FUSD is required to be at the Downtown location, in person, I believe it is more than appropriate for you all to be in session, in person. Don't you agree?

I also believe that leadership and accountability should take place from the top to the very bottom of FUSD and FUSD School Board Members. Please lead by example, stop turning your cameras off when a certain Board Member is speaking, and act like the leaders you portray yourselves to be. What you are doing is disrespectful, goes against what FUSD supposedly stands for with anti bullying, and frankly, is really rude. It's impossible to respect anyone who plays such juvenile games at your well seasoned ages. Again, don't you agree? Catherine Peters and Jason Peters, 709-6080.

B. CONFERENCE/DISCUSSION AGENDA

B-12, PRESENT and DISCUSS the Student Voice Collaborative for the 2020/21 School Year

No public comments were received for Agenda Item B-12.

B-13, DISCUSS and ADOPT Fresno Unified School District's Strategic Plan

No public comments were received for Agenda Item B-13.

B-14, PRESENT and DISCUSS an Update on Career Technical Education Facilities, Career Technical Education Pathways & Alignment to Local Workforce Development Needs

No public comments were received for Agenda Item B-14.

B-15, DISCUSS and APPROVE the Amendments to the 2020/21 Academic Calendar

No public comments were received for Agenda Item B-15.

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B-16, DISCUSS and APPROVE the Renaming Early Learning Center, Fresno and A Street

1. Rosemary R. Wanis

Please rename your Early Learning Center in honor of LaVera Ethridge-Williams. So deserving of this honor. Our district needs this so that Black children, staff, teachers, and administrators have representation that elevates their own experiences as Black individuals in FUSD. Sincerely, Rosemary.

2. Lisa Haynes-Scott

To FUSD School Board,

LaVera Ethridge-Williams in 1968 she became the FIRST PRIVATE OWNED INFANT CHILD CARE CENTER for children six weeks to twenty-four months old. With her vision was the beginning of a chain of family owned and operated childcare centers throughout the Fresno city and metropolitan areas. The last of the facilities to be built was on Fresno and A Street, which was originally called the LaVera's Educational Center. This center was built in December of 2005. She built this facility with her own private monies after being a victim of West Fresno redlining discrimination. LaVera's Educational Center was the first state of the art early education center ever built in West Fresno. In July of 2013, LaVera sold the building to the Fresno Unified School District. The center is now run by one of her former employees Laura Mitchell, Program Manager.

LaVera Ethridge-Williams who always had a focus on caring for children and making sure parent had quality care care. Mrs. Williams is a gentle giant, warm, loving, dedicated, giving, role model for ALL AGES, opportunist to others, self-starter, trainer, and permanent resident of West Fresno for almost 75 years. At the age of 93 she continues to volunteer her time to work on issues affecting the quality of life of West Fresno residents.

I am requesting FUSD School Board support on October 21st to move forward with a motion to make this a reality. Lisa Haynes-Scott, CEO GriefZone.

3. Mae Kidd - Voice Message (Transcribed)

My name is Mae Kidd. I live in the Los Angeles area, Los Angeles, California, and I'm calling in regard to the LaVera Ethridge-Williams, uh to rename the Fresno, uh she built the Fresno daycare center there at Fresno and "A" Street and at that time it was called LaVera's Educational Center and she built it in 2005 it was sold in 2013 to Unified School District and I'm calling to rename it to LaVera's Williams Daycare Center. You can reach me at area code 951-741-1810. Thank you.

4. Ovonder Tatum - Voice Message Transcribed

I'm calling in regards to congratulate LaVera Etheridge-Williams for the many outstanding accomplishments she has received and endowed in childcare. I think

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this is the most deserving for the name change of the learning center into her name, LaVera Etheridge-Williams. My name is Ovonder Tatum, phone number, 559-266-1423.

5. **Rob Harris**

Greetings, I wanted to submit this written support for the renaming of the above mentioned facility after Lavera Williams.

She has been a staple for several decades in West Fresno for all in the youth educational system. She and those in her charge have contributed greatly to countless children, young adults and adults success in the West Fresno community and the greater Fresno area. She was a pioneer in the daycare industry for West Fresno and expanded her influence throughout the city and county. This also led to being involved in state legislation that greatly benefited child care centers in the entire state of California.

No other individual has contributed more to the childcare and daycare arena in West Fresno and the greater Fresno area than Lavera Williams. It is only fitting that her sacrifices and accomplishments be memorialized by renaming this center after her.

West Fresno is a better place after receiving her lifelong service to the community. She has helped countless members of the community that desired to be educators and entrepreneurs to pursue their dreams and for those dreams to come to fruition.

Again, this honor should be bestowed upon Lavera Williams for the sacrificial Pioneer she truly is. Thank you for your consideration. Rob Harris.

6. **Wanda Emmett - Voice Message (Transcribed)**

Hi, my name is Wanda Emmett. I'm calling for Mrs. LaVera Williams, Ethridge-Williams, in regards to a learning center that should be named after her. I worked with Mrs. Williams for a lot a lot of years she's a hard worker she's given so much more to the community. She's trained up young people and um, educated them and she still lives in the community. So, I just wanted to share that uh, you couldn't have a better person's name on the learning center than LaVera Etheridge-Williams. Again, my name is Wanda Emmett. Thank you.

7. **Lynette Sanders**

Good Afternoon,

I have gotten to know LaVera Williams upon my return to the Central Valley 10yrs ago. She has been a beacon of knowledge and support to this community. I was astounded to see the breadth of involvement she continues to have in support of the less fortunate and the youth. I am inspired to do more as I see this woman of

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such a grand age continue to strive to bring wellness and care to those in need. I fully support these efforts to have the learning center named in her honor. Kindest Regards, Lynette Sanders, PharmD. Central Valley Resident.

8. **Linda Reaves – Voice Message (Transcribed)**

Hi, my name is Linda Reaves. I'm calling on behalf of LaVera Etheridge-Williams, regarding the renaming of the early learning center on Fresno Street. I think LaVera Williams name should be on the building because she was the original owner, in fact she had the building built. She also has lived on the Westside for over 75 years, she's a pillar of the community, she has done wonderful things throughout her life in the community. She has raised more than half of the children and adults and women and children and their kids for over the last 30 years. She is well-known and well liked. She would do anything for anybody that asks, even if they don't ask. She's always there to give a helping hand, give advice, and to help people establish their own businesses if they want to go into childcare or a group home she's there to help because she is a mentor and a person of great faith and she recognized that childcare for the Westside has always been a need. Again, she was the first African American woman that opened a privately owned daycare with her own money did not get money from the bank, she did it all her own self and she has always and will be a pillar in the community for Fresno and the Westside. Thank you.

9. **Todd Etheridge – Voice Message (Transcribed)**

Hi, yes, my name is Todd. I'm calling uh, in regards to supporting renaming or naming the early learning center to LaVera Williams. I think she's an outstanding and has been an outstanding citizen of the community in Fresno and I would just like to call and support her. Saying, I think it would be a great, great idea to uh, name the uh early learning center after her, for the great accomplishment she's been to the community and helping everyone and we really appreciate it. Thank you.

10. **Arnold McIntosh – Voice Message (Transcribed)**

I'm calling in regards to LaVera Williams, Fresno, California. She's been the pioneer for the daycare centers in Fresno, California. She was the first woman, black woman, to open a daycare center for young babies so their moms could go to work. I think she's an excellent candidate because she's one of the first to start her own business. Please give her every consideration because she's worth it. Not only that, but she's a leader in the community. Thank you.

11. **Trina Dixon – Voice Message (Transcribed)**

Hi, my name is Trina Dixon and I'm calling in regards to the renaming the early learning center after LaVera Etheridge-Williams. I am in support of renaming the center LaVera Etheridge-Williams because of her dedication and commitment to the West Fresno area. And because of her commitment she has been recognized

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by several committees in the Fresno area, such as: The City of Fresno honoring her with the minority business enterprise award; The Portrait of Success award from KSEE 24; Woman of the Year from the 16th District of California by Senator Jim Costa; The Martin Luther King, Jr. award for community service. Mrs. Williams, uhm, has been in daycare business for many years and she has visited the prisons weekly, her desire to do good deeds and to share spiritual teachings which led her to be a mentor , not only a mentor in the prison system, but Mrs. Williams is also a mentor throughout the West Fresno Community. Mrs. Williams is part of the membership with the LINK, Fresno Corporated LINK, she provides, which provides scholarships to students in the community. She is a leader of the West Fresno who organized the Annual Holiday Tea which provides an opportunity for African American women across the community. Most recently, Mrs Williams received the 2018 Legacy Trailblazer award presented by Fresno County Superintendent of Schools from Jim Yovino at the African American Student Leadership Conference and after four years of struggle and rejection, racial unrest, no public financial help, and **(250-word limit reached)**.

12. Phillip Cowings

Hello All,

LaVera Ethridge-Williams is a woman of vision, an entrepreneur, dream maker, child care and community advocate who believes that a balanced life supports and sustains personal and business success. Her hard work and her vision have not gone unnoticed. Mrs. Ethridge-Williams' love for the community and her business success has been cited on the local and national level. She was recognized by the Gamma Eta Chapter of the Iota Phi Lambda Society as the Outstanding Black Woman of the Year. The City of Fresno honored her with the Minority Business Enterprise Award for outstanding contributions to the Fresno economy. She received the Portrait of Success Award from KSEE-24; the Woman of the Year for the 16th Senate District of California by Senator Jim Costa; the Martin Luther King, Jr. Award for community service recognized by the Fresno Unified School District for being a leader in education for the children of the community. She also is involved with the Fellowship Missionary Baptist Church Homeless Ministries which she has been a part of since conception. She began feeding and clothing the homeless 35 years ago and continues to feed every 1st Saturday of the month. She was also a mentor for inmates at the Women's Prison in Chowchilla for over 15 years. She visited the prison weekly. Her desire was to do good deeds and to share spiritual teaching which led her to be a mentor. LaVera has tirelessly worked to bring about neighborhood centers, shopping opportunities and better housing **(250-word limit reached)**.

13. Eileen Muro

Hello,

LaVera Ethridge-Williams is a woman of vision, an entrepreneur, dream maker, child care and community advocate who believes that a balanced life supports and

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sustains personal and business success. Her hard work and her vision have not gone unnoticed. Mrs. Ethridge-Williams' love for the community and her business success has been cited on the local and national level. She was recognized by the Gamma Eta Chapter of the Iota Phi Lambda Society as the Outstanding Black Woman of the Year. The City of Fresno honored her with the Minority Business Enterprise Award for outstanding contributions to the Fresno economy. She received the Portrait of Success Award from KSEE-24; the Woman of the Year for the 16th Senate District of California by Senator Jim Costa; the Martin Luther King, Jr. Award for community service recognized by the Fresno Unified School District for being a leader in education for the children of the community. She also is involved with the Fellowship Missionary Baptist Church Homeless Ministries which she has been a part of since conception. She began feeding and clothing the homeless 35 years ago and continues to feed every 1st Saturday of the month. She was also a mentor for inmates at the Women's Prison in Chowchilla for over 15 years. She visited the prison weekly. Her desire was to do good deeds and to share spiritual teaching which led her to be a mentor. LaVera has tirelessly worked to bring about neighborhood centers, shopping opportunities and better housing to **(250-word limit reached)**.

14. Shirley Harris – Voice Message (Transcribed)

My name is Shirley Harris, my telephone number is 352-0073. I am calling in to support the renaming of the existing Fresno Unified Learning Center on Fresno Street and "A" Street, to be renamed in honor of the person who built that center that Unified is currently using on an active basis for LaVera Williams. She is a long-time resident of Fresno and has never wavered from the roots from which she came a dedicated educator and all who know her know that she is a wonderful person, forth coming and ambitious for everyone when it comes down to our children. She has never left the Westside and has always had children of all nationalities and diversities welcome, with her attentive to family and family needs. I again, nominate the renaming of the existing center to LaVera's Educational Center, LaVera's whatever you want to call it as long as we can have it named in her honor. Thank you in her recognition for devotion to the field of education. Thank you.

15. Anonymous – Voice Message (Not Transcribed)

16. Alex Smith – Voice Message (Transcribed)

Yes, my name is Alexander Smith I am calling on uhm, renaming the early learning center in honor of LaVera Williams. I think that is a great idea uhm, I think she is more than deserving of this honor. Thank you.

17. Barbara Daniel

I Barbara Daniel support the renaming of the Early Learning Center to LaVera Williams. LaVera is a pillar in Early Care and Education Community who opened

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the first infant child care center in Fresno County which payed the foundation for all infant care programs that followed.

She is not only a business woman but she is mentor and a leader in the community who made it her life's mission to be a voice for the community including our youngest learners and families who voices often go unheard as she has supported homeless people, mentored prison inmates, advocated for quality child care programs, and many other community wide efforts.

LaVera Williams whole heartily deserves all the recognition she has received and continues to receive in the community. She has not only been a mentor to me for the past 20 year but she has become apart of my family. She inspired me to become the woman and leader that I am today, who continues to support our youngest learners and advocate for the community voices that go unheard.

LaVera has earned the privilege to have a school renamed after her.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to email me at bdaniel810@icloud.com or call me at (559)970- 4464. Sincerely, Barbara Daniel.

18. Daniel R. Fitzpatrick and M. Prudence Hutton

Dear Board of Trustees,

We would like to comment on Agenda ITEM B-16, Renaming the Early Learning Center and support the name of La Vera Etheridge Williams.

Naming the facility for La Vera Etheridge Williams is most appropriate. We've always said that "LaVera is Early Learning." LaVera has deep roots in Fresno. She taught countless children though generations how to love learning, to learn and to behave. She taught parents how to value education, participate and teach their children themselves. LaVera reflects the values of hard work, energy and drive education.

La Vera not only taught children "How To Work Well With Others," but practiced what she preached as an effective activist in working with the community and local government to build her vision. I know this first hand as the Fresno County Administrative Officer in the 1980s and later as Fresno City Redevelopment Agency at the turn of the century. La Vera was a major force driving the Kearney Palms Shopping Center because she could get along with others. Children truly matter to her. La Vera is why and how things get done to improve education and the community.

The Early Learning Center deserves to be named after the true legacy of Fresno Early Education – La Vera Etheridge Williams.

Thank you for your consideration.

Daniel R. Fitzpatrick

M. Prudence Hutton