



Board of Education
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BOARD COMMUNICATIONS – JANUARY 08, 2021

TO: Members of the Board of Education
FROM: Superintendent, Robert G. Nelson, Ed.D.

SUPERINTENDENT – Robert G. Nelson, Ed.D.

S-1 Robert G. Nelson Superintendent Calendar Highlights

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES – Santino Danisi, Interim Chief Financial Officer

AS-1 Kim Kelstrom School Services Weekly Update Report for
December 18, 2020

AS-2 Tammy Townsend Update on Community Input for the Local Control
and Accountability Plan

EQUITY & ACCESS – Lindsay Sanders, Chief Equity & Access

EA-1 Kristi Imberi-Olivares and
Jeremy Ward College and Career Performance: College and
Career Indicator

OPERATIONAL SERVICES – Karin Temple, Chief Operations Officer

OS-1 Karin Temple Academic Return on Investment Services –
January 13, 2021 Recommendation

OS-2 Karin Temple Meal Distribution Program Update

OS-3 Karin Temple Citizens' Bond Oversight Committee Membership

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP – Kim Mecum, Chief Academic Officer

SL-1 Brian Beck Approve Addendum to Independent Contractor
Services Agreement with Advanced Medical Personnel
Inc.

SL-2 Catherine Aujero Fifth Grade Theatre Experience with Good Company
Players

SL-3 Brett Mar Various Supports for Athletics

TECHNOLOGY SERVICES – Kurt Madden, Chief Technology Officer

T-1 Ashley Aouate

The Joint Cybersecurity Advisory: Cyber Actors Target K-12 Distance Learning Education to Cause Disruptions and Steal Data

Fresno Unified School District
Board Communication

BC Number S-1

From the Office of the Superintendent
To the Members of the Board of Education
Prepared by: Robert G. Nelson, Superintendent
Cabinet Approval:

Date: January 08, 2021

Phone Number: 457-3884

Regarding: Superintendent Calendar Highlights

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

- Participated in weekly calls with Fresno County Superintendents
- Listened to Governor's press conference regarding phased reopening of schools plan
- Met with California Urban District Superintendents to discuss response to Governor's phased reopening of schools plan
- Met with California Urban District Superintendents to draft joint response to Governor's phased reopening of schools plan
- Met with Executive Cabinet
- Met with Leadership Associates to discuss job search for Deputy Superintendent and Chief Business Officer positions
- Gave interview with Brandon Johansen, ABC 30, regarding joint response to Governor's phased reopening of schools plan
- Gave interview with Wealthy Gener, KSEE 24, regarding joint response to Governor's phased reopening of schools plan
- Met with Fresno Teachers Association Leadership Team
- Gave interview with Korin Miller, Yahoo News, regarding joint response to Governor's phased reopening of schools plan
- Participated in briefing call regarding Governor Newsom's 2021-22 Budget

Approved by Superintendent
Robert G. Nelson Ed.D.



Date: 01/08/2021

Fresno Unified School District
Board Communication

BC Number AS-1

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

Date: January 08, 2021

Phone Number: 457-3907



Regarding: School Services Weekly Update Report for December 18, 2020

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

The SSC Weekly Update for December 18, 2020 is attached and includes the following articles:

- California Sets Teachers, First Responders for Next Vaccines – December 17, 2020
- Long Sought After 'Cradle to Career' Education Data System for California Comes With Hefty Price Tag – December 16, 2020
- CDE Releases the 2020 California School Dashboard – December 15, 2020

If you have any questions or require further information, please contact Kim Kelstrom at 457-3907.

Approved by Superintendent
Robert G. Nelson Ed.D.



Date: 01/08/2021



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www.sscal.com

DATE: December 18, 2020

TO: Robert G. Nelson
Superintendent

AT: Fresno Unified School District

FROM: Your SSC Governmental Relations Team

RE: *SSC's Sacramento Weekly Update*

COVID-19 Relief Package and Federal Spending Plan

A \$908 billion COVID-19 relief package is looking more promising as Democrat and Republican leadership are optimistic that they can finalize a deal over the weekend. However, without first approving a 2021 omnibus spending plan or a continuing resolution by the end of Friday night, then the federal government will go into a partial shutdown beginning at 12:01 a.m. Saturday morning.

In order to get to this point of negotiations, the bipartisan group of Senators that came up with the current relief framework have put their proposal into two bills, the [Emergency Coronavirus Relief Act of 2020](#) and the [Bipartisan State and Local Support and Small Business Protection Act](#).

The Emergency Coronavirus Relief Act of 2020 includes \$748 billion in funding for education, small businesses, and healthcare providers. \$82 billion of the bill is earmarked for education providers and would be allocated similar to the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act provisions in the following way:

- \$7.5 billion for the Governors Emergency Education Relief Fund
- \$54 billion for the Elementary and Secondary School (K–12) Emergency Relief Fund
- \$20 billion for the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund

The bill also includes \$10 billion for childcare, \$3 billion for E-rate/distance learning, and 55% coverage for operational costs related to lost school meals revenue from September through December.

The Bipartisan State and Local Support and Small Business Protection Act contains \$160 billion in state and local aid and a one-year liability protection for businesses, schools, higher education institutions, and nonprofit organizations.

The decision to divide the package into two bills was an intentional move as it put the two most controversial political sticking points—aid for state and local governments (pushed by Democrats, but opposed by Republicans) and liability protections for businesses (pushed by Republicans, but opposed by Democrats)—into a separate bill so that the \$748 billion in aid that is generally agreed upon can be the main focus of the negotiations.

As of right now, Congress is hoping to tie the Emergency Relief Act of 2020 to a \$1.4 trillion funding bill that would keep the government open through the end of September, which is the end of the federal fiscal year. While the relief package is generally agreed upon, the two key issues that are still being negotiated are the framework for how direct checks would go out to American citizens and the structure for how the Federal Emergency Management Agency will allocate emergency funding to state and local governments.

While negotiations are trending in a positive direction there is still a chance that discussions on Friday and over the weekend stall leading to a government shutdown or the approval of another continuing resolution that would likely keep the government funded until the new Congress is sworn-in in January.

Holiday Break

Like many of you, our office will be closed from December 24, 2020, through January 3, 2021. Unless there is breaking news, we will return to our regular *Sacramento Update* production schedule for the week ending January 8.

Happy holidays from School Services of California Inc.!

Leilani Aguinaldo

Note: Teachers were listed among the broad category of essential workers by the 16-member panel of medical experts who make recommendations of the next industry workers that should receive the COVID-19 vaccine after health care workers and those in long-term care facilities.

California Sets Teachers, First Responders for Next Vaccines

By Don Thompson
Associated Press
December 17, 2020

Teachers, first responders, and grocery and restaurant workers were among those recommended Wednesday to get the next round of scarce vaccines in California, as were florists and sawmill operators who fall into the same broad category of those deemed essential workers.

“We’ve got to figure who we’re going to prioritize,” said Dr. Oliver Brooks, co-chairman of a 16-member panel of medical experts recommending who makes the potential life-and-death cut after the first round of about 3 million vaccines began going this week to health care workers and those in long-term care facilities.

They’re divvying up the next round of about 8 million doses expected early next year, and settled on three broad sectors in no particular order:

— 1.4 million education and child care providers, a category that includes preschools, K-12, and higher education including trade schools.

— 1.1 million emergency services providers, including not only police and firefighters but those who provide child and youth services, shelters, social services for the elderly and those with disabilities, the criminal justice system, and businesses that provide goods used by the safety workers.

— 3.4 million food and agriculture workers, from farm to table including those working in food and drinking establishments as well as farmworkers and grocers, bakers and butchers. Plant nurseries, florists and sawmills all fall into that category, as do community food services and pharmacies.

The nearly 6 million in those sectors make up about half of all those deemed essential workers in California — and that roughly 12 million makes up nearly two-thirds of the state’s entire workforce.

“Two-thirds of us are essential. That’s nice to know,” said Brooks, who is immediate past president of the National Medical Association and heads the Watts Health Care Corporation.

In picking which groups go first, the panel prioritized what they termed the “societal impact” of the job; equity — making sure low-income workers and those working in vulnerable communities are included; the jobs’ impact on the economy; and the risk of each occupations’ exposure to the coronavirus, including workers’ risk of death and risk of spreading the virus in the community.

Yet there won’t be enough vaccine to protect even that narrower group of educators, first responders and food providers until next spring. Officials expect 2 million doses by year’s end, 4 million by the end of January and more than 20 million by the end of April.

So the experts are trying to further decide who goes first within those categories.

“We’ll be grappling with trying to determine criteria that can be used practically and efficiently to sort between worthy recipients of scarce vaccine, whether that’s using age or medical condition or other factors to ... let the highest-risk priority go first,” said Dr. Robert Schechter, co-chairman of the expert panel and chief of the California Department of Public Health’s Immunizations Branch.

The panel and a broader committee of 60 community organizations’ representatives were lobbied by dozens of professions that want their members included in the next round of vaccines, including ride-hailing drivers and news reporters.

Of 142 written public comments to the committees, 131 were from groups hoping to be near the front of the line to get the first vaccines after health care workers.

Among them were the state’s chief justice seeking protections for court workers, public defenders wanting vaccines for themselves and their jailed clients, multiple groups representing the elderly, cemetery workers, public transit workers, nonemergency health care workers like dentists and podiatrists, NASA employees, dock workers, Amazon employees, solid waste workers, cleaning services, retailers, pharmacists and power grid workers.

By contrast, three people, each over age 78, wrote what the committee described as passionate letters urging that essential workers get the vaccines before them.

The discussion comes as the virus surges across California, straining the state’s health care system. State health officials on Wednesday reported 53,711 new coronavirus cases and 293 additional deaths, setting new records. The public meeting took place as other states are holding closed discussions about vaccine allocation and receiving criticism.

The massive surge led committee members to warn against allowing even the perception that some Californians can unfairly push to the front of the line, a process complicated by the difficulty in proving who belongs to which group.

“There’s a social solidarity here that we all say, ‘Yes, the health care workers go first,’” said Anthony Wright, executive director of the consumer advocacy group Health Access. “But once people think that other people are sort of cutting the line, that dissolves the social compact that we’re all in, and I’m really scared about that.”

Many eligible workers will get their vaccines at their work sites or through appointments with providers at which their employment can be verified.

But “there may be many settings that need to rely on the honor system rather than more sophisticated validation,” Schechter acknowledged.

Mitch Steiger, legislative advocate of the California Labor Federation, urged strict uniformity across California instead of allowing counties to make their own potentially conflicting decisions that could set up disparities within broad state and federal distribution guidelines.

“We also need to figure out what we do when angry people who can’t get the vaccine show up and you’ve got a pharmacy tech who ... has to deal with someone screaming at them, really angry that this lifesaving care isn’t going to be offered to them,” he said.



Note: According to a report approved this week by the Cradle-to-Career Data System Workgroup, it will take five years to fully implement the statewide longitudinal data system, at a cost of \$15 million to \$20 million for the first year alone.

Long Sought After ‘Cradle to Career’ Education Data System for California Comes With Hefty Price Tag

By Louis Freedberg
EdSource
December 16, 2020

One of the few notable areas where Gov. Gavin Newsom departed from his predecessor Gov. Jerry Brown on entering office was his support for establishing a longitudinal data system linking information from preschool into the workplace.

Despite the fact that most other states had created that system in some form, for years Brown resisted entreaties from researchers and advocates to allocate the funds to set one up.

But it was such a high priority for Newsom that, within days of taking office in 2019, he called for it in the second paragraph of his first budget as governor. He designated an initial \$10 million for “critical work” to create what he called “the California Cradle-to-Career Data System” in order to “to better track student outcomes and increase the alignment of our educational system to the state’s workforce needs.”

Newsom’s push resulted in 2019 legislation (Senate Bill 75) that kicked off a year of intense planning. It involved nearly 200 data experts and representatives of all key education institutions in the state, and has culminated in a report that will be sent to Newsom this week, after it gets final approval from the work group overseeing the project. Spearheading it is a work group made up of representatives of 16 different institutions and agencies involved with the establishing the data system.

All the work has been coordinated by WestEd, the consulting firm headquartered in San Francisco.

However, getting the data system off the ground will come with a hefty price tag. According to [a draft report](#) that will be finalized at a meeting of the work group today, it will take five years to fully implement the system, at a cost of \$15 million to \$20 million for the first year alone. The challenge is that the Legislature would have to approve those funds at time when the state is struggling financially, as a result of the pandemic-induced recession. Demands on the state’s general fund will be extreme for discretionary projects like this one.

Among other things, funds will be needed to cover the costs of creating the governing structure, the staff to support it and additional staff costs incurred by the California Department of Education, the Employment Development Department the University of California, the California State University and the community college who will have to provide the data to populate the system.

If the Legislature adopts its recommendation, the system will gather data on 160 different variables from multiple state agencies and education institutions — ranging from whether a child attended a half day or full day child care program to earnings of college graduates 10 years after they leave college. All the data will go into a system, which eventually will have over 400 million records.

It is not known what Newsom will recommend for the further development of the data system in the budget for the coming fiscal year he will propose on Jan. 10.

“This is not a flash in the pan priority” for Newsom, said Ben Chida, Newsom’s chief deputy cabinet secretary whom the governor appointed to be his point person on the project. “We want to look back on this in 5 to 10 years, and be proud of the foundation we have laid.”

Those working on the project have provided no estimates of the total cost of the data system beyond its projections for the first year.

They want it to be accessible and useful not only to researchers but to the larger public through dashboards, fact sheets, a research library and a “query builder” — a tool that would allow educators, advocates and policymakers to find out, for example, the proportion of students enrolled in various eighth-grade math courses, or the availability of transfer level math courses at community colleges, or the characteristics of students who major in STEM disciplines.

Students and their families would also have access to the database to help make decisions about colleges and careers, get access to their high school and college transcripts electronically and have access to financial aid and other services.

All this will add to the costs — and make it more expensive than what other states have had to spend on systems with far fewer records and data points. Washington State, for example, spent \$28.1 million over a 10-year period on its Education Research and Data Center, which contains 61.8 million records. California, by contrast, will have nearly seven times as many records, and, if all goes to plan, is intended to be far more accessible to the public.

“If the Legislature and the governor want this done correctly, it needs this kind of investment,” said Tom Vu, vice president for policy for the Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities, representing all private, nonprofit colleges in the state. He said California could “build something that just holds the data. That is what other states do, but California wants to do more.” Since California is building a new data system, he said, “we have the opportunity to do it more robustly, using the most advanced technology we can.”

Patrick Perry, the chief of policy, research and data for the California Student Aid Commission who is also a member of the work group, said that he thought the proposed first-year budget was “pretty reasonable, all things considered” and “pretty well tempered” within the overall scope of California’s \$100 billion plus budget.

John Rogers, a professor of education at UCLA, said that the \$15-to-\$20 million figure may seem like a lot, “unless we consider the alternatives.”

“While an imperfect comparison, it is noteworthy that the average private sector business spends more than 3% of annual budget on IT,” he said. “Using that metric here, we see that this investment is just a fraction of what might be expected from comparable efforts in the private sector.”

A dozen years ago, California developed and implemented the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System, called CALPADS for its K-12 school system. The state’s community colleges also developed a data system called Cal-PASS, and the California State University and University of California also have data systems to track student progress. But these systems haven’t been fully integrated with each other and

other state databases, and have had limited usefulness. A 2008 [EdSource report](#) noted, for example, that “without certain features and data elements, CALPADS’s ability to provide sophisticated information to policymakers will be limited, as will the opportunity for educators and researchers to use the information at the local level.”

Heather Hough, executive director of Policy Analysis for California Education, or PACE, a research and policy collaborative based at Stanford and several other leading universities, pointed out that the state has already made big investments in these systems. It would make no sense to walk away from those investments now, she said. “To a large extent, what this money (for the Cradle-to-Career Data System) will do is connect existing data sources and make them useful for educational improvement.”

Samantha Tran, who oversees policy and analysis for Children Now, a prominent child advocacy organization, was similarly supportive. “California is one of the few states that doesn’t have one of these systems in place and this is a modest investment, especially when you consider the return for kids, practitioners, policymakers and the broader public,” she said.

Not everyone is as enthusiastic. Bruce Fuller, a professor of education at UC Berkeley and a leading education researcher, expressed skepticism about the projected costs. “The state has a tortured history in building data systems that prove terribly expensive, then fail to inform on the most pressing questions,” he said. CALPADS is a case in point.

But, said PACE’s Hough said, “It is critical that we keep the momentum and move forward to building the data system, so we can use it as soon as possible to improve equity and outcomes for California students.”

As for the state’s current financial woes, the launch of the data system “has come up at a time when we thought the state would be flush with money, and now we are not,” said the student aid commission’s Perry. “So it does come down to a question of political will.”

CDE Releases the 2020 California School Dashboard

By Kyle Hyland
School Services of California Inc.’s *Fiscal Report*
December 15, 2020

On Tuesday, December 15, 2020, the California Department of Education (CDE) released the fourth year of the California School Dashboard (Dashboard), although the 2020 release is a slimmed down version from years past.

The Dashboard is the tool that the state uses to identify local educational agencies (LEAs) and individual schools for assistance based on state and federal accountability standards. However, due to COVID-19, the state pursued federal waivers and legislation this year in order to suspend state and local indicator data that is used to identify LEAs and schools for assistance.

In March 2020, the U.S. Department of Education approved California’s request to waive statewide accountability and reporting requirements for the 2019–20 school year, and subsequently, Governor Gavin Newsom signed Senate Bill 98 into law in June, which prohibits the CDE from reporting state and local indicator data and identifying LEAs for differentiated assistance and intensive intervention. As a result, LEAs

identified for differentiated assistance in 2019–20 remain eligible for support in 2020–21, and schools identified for Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) and Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (ATSI) in 2019–20 remain eligible through the current school year.

Despite the suspension of the state and local indicators, the 2020 Dashboard contains updated contact information for schools and districts as well as updated enrollment data for the 2019–20 school year. Additionally, two new titles were added to the “School Details” section to indicate whether a school is a charter school or has Dashboard Alternative School Status (DASS).

Since state law still requires the CDE to publish data that would have been reported in the 2020 Dashboard, data for the graduation rate (combined and DASS rates) and the College/Career Indicator (CCI) will be posted on its School Dashboard Additional Reports and Data web page in January 2021, which can be found [here](#).

The Dashboard is available for viewing at <https://www.caschooldashboard.org/>. Additional information about the 2020 Dashboard is available through this [CDE flyer](#).

Fresno Unified School District
Board Communication

BC Number AS-2

From the Office of the Superintendent
To the Members of the Board of Education
Prepared by: Tammy Townsend, Interim Executive Officer
Cabinet Approval: 

Date: January 08, 2021
Phone Number: 457-6204

Regarding: Update on Community Input for the Local Control and Accountability Plan

The purpose of this communication is to provide the Board an update on community engagement around the development of the district's 2021/22 Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP).

At the December 16, 2020, Board of Education meeting, staff presented an overview and received feedback on the strategy for outreach and engagement with the Fresno Unified community in the development of the LCAP for the upcoming school year. Two key priorities were expressed by Trustees as that time. In response to this feedback, and in light of information regarding survey fatigue and the realities of a virtual environment, staff is seeking innovative approaches.

The first priority centered around connecting with families whose primary language is not English. In response to this feedback, four additional town hall events were planned to allow families multiple opportunities to participate. Three town hall events for Spanish native speakers will be held on January 19, January 25, and February 02 at 7:30 pm and a town hall for Hmong native speakers will be held on February 04 at 7:30 pm. The town halls will be conducted in the native language of participants and materials will be translated. Staff is also working on a series of LCAP videos that will be available in English, Spanish and Hmong and will highlight some key changes in programs because of the pandemic. A copy of the flyer invitation to the town halls is attached to this board communication.

The second priority outlined by the Board was about creating an engaging experience for participants. In response to this, staff researched several options, ultimately landing on utilizing a product called Thoughtexchange. This is a crowd sourcing platform that has multiple benefits. As opposed to traditional survey methods, which can be prescriptive, Thoughtexchange is an interactive experience that allows participants to generate thoughts, share them with others, and receive feedback on their ideas in a safe and anonymous manner. Based on initial demonstrations and feedback from several other school districts (some with large non-native speaking populations, and some large urban districts), staff believes this will be an excellent tool to engage with staff, focus groups, and parents in a virtual environment. To ensure the district has access to this tool, a contract for services is scheduled for approval on the January 13, 2021 Board agenda.

Thoughtexchange gives everyone the opportunity to share their thoughts/ideas and then rate the thoughts of others. The balanced rating system means the most popular ideas rise to the top, allowing us to gauge support before the district invests time and money in decisions. The goal would be that everyone shares, and everyone learns without bias.

For Trustees interested in additional information on the Thoughtexchange platform ahead of the community engagement workshops, staff has set aside time early next week. Additional information will be forthcoming in a separate email.

If you have questions or require further information, please do not hesitate to contact Tammy Townsend at 457-6204.

Approved by Superintendent
Robert G. Nelson Ed.D. 

Date: 01/08/2021

ATTENTION: PARENTS • TEACHERS • STUDENTS • STAFF • COMMUNITY MEMBERS



**We want
YOUR
feedback**

Please log in to the OPTIONS BELOW!

**1.
TAKE
OUR
SURVEY**



See the new district goals and weigh in on programs and services for students.



SCAN HERE

with camera phone or visit <https://tinyurl.com/yxmd3h3u>



**2.
ATTEND OUR
TOWN HALL
MEETINGS**



Learn about changes happening in the district and participate in an interactive community process online.

- JAN. 14** ● **Hoover High School**
January 14 @ 6:00 p.m.
<https://tinyurl.com/HooverLCAP>
- JAN. 19** ●● **McLane High School**
January 19 @ 6:00 p.m.
<https://tinyurl.com/McLanelCAP>
- JAN. 21** ● **Fresno High School**
January 21 @ 6:00 p.m.
<https://tinyurl.com/FresnoLCAP>
- JAN. 25** ●● **Roosevelt High School**
January 25 @ 6:00 p.m.
<https://tinyurl.com/RooseveltLCAP>
- JAN. 26** ● **Bullard High School**
January 26 @ 6:00 p.m.
<https://tinyurl.com/BullardHighLCAP>
- FEB. 2** ●● **Edison High School**
February 2 @ 6:00 p.m.
<https://tinyurl.com/EdisonLCAP>
- FEB. 4** ●● **Sunnyside High School**
February 4 @ 6:00 p.m.
<https://tinyurl.com/SunnysideLCAP>

Meeting Platforms:



● **SPANISH**

- January 19 @ 7:30 p.m.
<https://tinyurl.com/SpanishLCAP1>
- January 25 @ 7:30 p.m.
<https://tinyurl.com/SpanishLCAP2>
- February 2 @ 7:30 p.m.
<https://tinyurl.com/SpanishLCAP3>

● **HMONG**

- February 4 @ 7:30 p.m.
<https://tinyurl.com/HmongLCAP1>



Your opinions matter! Join us virtually online!

2309 Tulare St., Fresno, CA 93721 • (559) 457-3000 • fresnounified.org

Atención: **padres • maestros • estudiantes • personal • miembros de la comunidad**



Fresno Unified
School District



Queremos

**SU
opinión**

Por favor ingrese en una de las **SIGUIENTES OPCIONES**

1. TOME NUESTRA ENCUESTA



Conozca la nuevas metas del distrito y denos su opinión en programas y servicios para estudiantes



Escanee aquí

con la cámara de su teléfono o visite
<https://tinyurl.com/yxmd3h3u>



2. PARTICIPAR EN NUESTRAS REUNIONES COMUNITARIAS



Aprenda de los cambios que están ocurriendo en el distrito y participe en un proceso interactivo de comunidad en línea.

14 de enero

Preparatoria Hoover

14 de enero a las 6:00 p.m. (inglés)
<https://tinyurl.com/HooverLCAP>

19 de enero

Preparatoria McLane

19 de enero a las 6:00 p.m. (inglés)
<https://tinyurl.com/McLanelLCAP>

21 de enero

Preparatoria Fresno

21 de enero a las 6:00 p.m. (inglés)
<https://tinyurl.com/FresnoLCAP>

25 de enero

Preparatoria Roosevelt

25 de enero a las 6:00 p.m. (inglés)
<https://tinyurl.com/RooseveltLCAP>

26 de enero

Preparatoria Bullard

26 de enero a las 6:00 p.m. (inglés)
<https://tinyurl.com/BullardHighLCAP>

2 de febrero

Preparatoria Edison

2 de febrero a las 6:00 p.m. (inglés)
<https://tinyurl.com/EdisonLCAP>

4 de febrero

Preparatoria Sunnyside

4 de febrero a las 6:00 p.m. (inglés)
<https://tinyurl.com/SunnysideLCAP>

Plataformas para las reuniones:



En Español

19 de enero a las 7:30 p.m.
<https://tinyurl.com/SpanishLCAP1>
25 de enero a las 7:30 p.m.
<https://tinyurl.com/SpanishLCAP2>
2 de febrero a las 7:30 p.m.
<https://tinyurl.com/SpanishLCAP3>

En Hmong

4 de febrero a las 7:30 p.m.
<https://tinyurl.com/HmongLCAP1>



¡Sus opiniones cuentan! ¡Acompáñenos virtualmente en línea!

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Fresno Unified School District
Board Communication

BC Number EA-1

From the Office of the Superintendent
To the Members of the Board of Education
Prepared by: Kristi Imber-Olivares and Jeremy Ward
Cabinet Approval:

Date: January 08, 2021

Phone Number: 457-3896

Regarding: College and Career Performance: College and Career Indicator

The purpose of this communication is to provide the Board information regarding recently released 2019/20 end-of-year college and career indicator metrics for Fresno Unified. This communication also includes disproportionality of student performance in the College and Career Indicator (CCI) metrics.

The CCI metrics included in this report are as follows:

- 2019/20 graduation rate compared to 2018/19 graduation rate
- Graduates meeting UC/CSU requirements (A-G completion rate) - 12th grade students only
- Seal of Biliteracy recipients - 12th grade students only
- International Baccalaureate (IB) diplomas awarded - 12th grade students at Fresno High School only
 - Please note that IB diplomas awarded are based on the number of students who declare as seeking an IB diploma, not all students in the IB program.
- Number and percent of students who received a qualifying score on 2 or more AP (score 3 or higher) or IB exams (score of 4 or higher) – 12th grade students only who passed an AP exam at any time during high school

Metrics from the California Dashboard are used by the state to determine which districts will receive differentiated assistance. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, state law (Senate Bill (SB) 98) has suspended the reporting of state and local indicators on the 2020 Dashboard. However, available data that would have been included in the Dashboard are reported on the Department's web site if they were determined to be valid and reliable. The 2020 Dashboard only reports local educational agency (LEA) and school details, student population data (e.g. enrollment data), and a link to DataQuest that reports the 2019/20 data collected in the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data Systems (CALPADS) (e.g. graduation data). Information regarding the reporting status of data is available at [COVID-19 and Data Reporting](#). To access the California Dashboard go to <https://www.caschooldashboard.org/#/Home>. As a general rule, change in the Dashboard is calculated using current and prior year data. However, with the passage of the SB 98, the California Department of Education (CDE) is required – for the 2021 Dashboard – to calculate change based on 2019 data to identify LEAs for differentiated assistance. Therefore, for the 2021 Dashboard, status will be based on 2021 data and change will be calculated using 2019 Dashboard data (e.g. 2021 data minus 2019 data). To access SB 98, please visit the California Legislative Information web page: http://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=201920200SB98.

Included with this communication is a school-level and student group reports for these metrics. Please note that disproportionality represents a particular student group's representation in a specific metric (e.g. Seal of Biliteracy) that differs from the representation of all other students not identified in that

particular student group. Please note that data is suppressed for schools with a 12th grade student population size of less than 11 to comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

If you have further questions or require additional information, please contact Lindsay Sanders at 457-3471 or Jeremy Ward at (559) 248-7465.

Approved by Superintendent
Robert G. Nelson Ed.D.

Handwritten signature of Robert G. Nelson in blue ink, written over a horizontal line.

Date: 01/08/2021

College and Career Performance

Graduation Rate

Percent and Count of Graduates

85.8%
(3,736)
2018-19

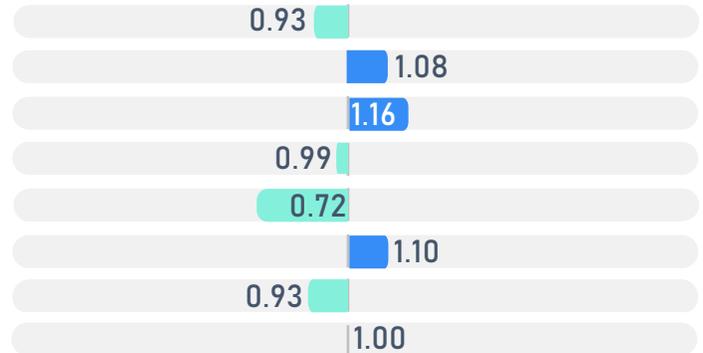
86.5%
(3,825)
2019-20

Disproportionality of Students by Race/Ethnicity

African American/Black
Asian
Filipino
Hispanic/Latino
Native American/Alaskan
Pacific Islander
Two or More Races
White

Students **LESS** likely to Graduate

Students **MORE** likely to Graduate

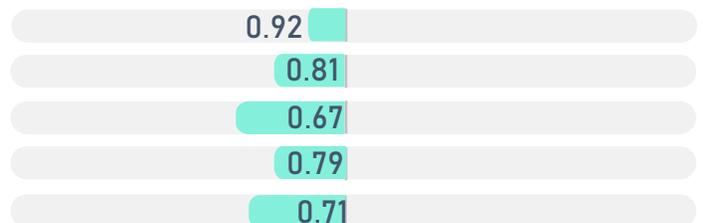


Disproportionality of Students by Student Group

Economically Disadvantaged
English Learners
Foster Youth
Homeless
Students With Disabilities

Students **LESS** likely to Graduate

Students **MORE** likely to Graduate



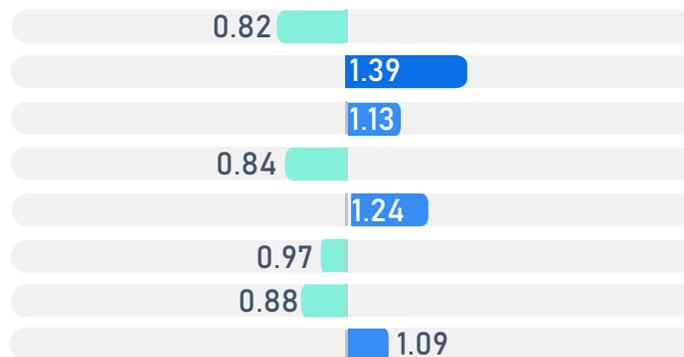
A-G Completion Rate*

Disproportionality of Students by Race/Ethnicity

African American/Black
Asian
Filipino
Hispanic/Latino
Native American/Alaskan
Pacific Islander
Two or More Races
White

Students **LESS** likely to meet A-G Requirements

Students **MORE** likely to meet A-G Requirements



Percent and Count of Students who met A-G Requirements

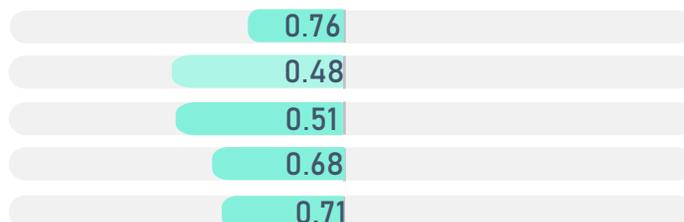
50.2%
(1,877)
2018-19

Disproportionality of Students by Student Group

Economically Disadvantaged
English Learners
Foster Youth
Homeless
Students With Disabilities

Students **LESS** likely to meet A-G Requirements

Students **MORE** likely to meet A-G Requirements



54.0%
(2,065)
2019-20

*A-G Completion Rate refers to students meeting UC/CSU requirements.

Seal of Biliteracy Rate

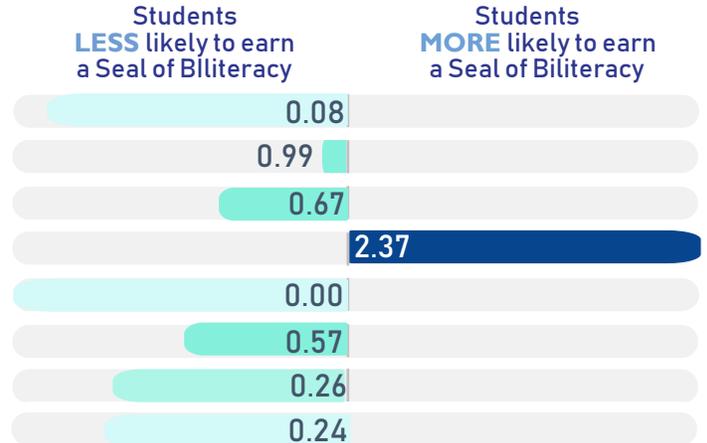
Percent and Count of Students who received a Seal of Biliteracy

17.1%
(639)
2018-19

16.6%
(635)
2019-20

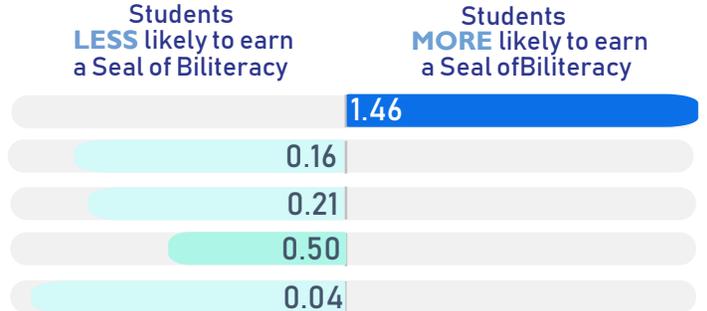
Disproportionality of Students by Race/Ethnicity

African American/Black
Asian
Filipino
Hispanic/Latino
Native American/Alaskan
Pacific Islander
Two or More Races
White



Disproportionality of Students by Student Group

Economically Disadvantaged
English Learners
Foster Youth
Homeless
Students With Disabilities



IB Diplomas Awarded

2.9%
(1)
2018-19

4.0%
(1)
2019-20

IB Diplomas awarded are based on the number of students who are seeking an IB Diploma.

AP/IB Exams

Percent and count of graduates who earned a qualifying score on 2 or more AP exams or 2 or more IB exams

10.0%
(366)
2018-19

8.8%
(335)
2019-20

College and Career Performance: By School Site

| School Site | Graduation Rate | | A-G Completion Rate | | Seal of Biliteracy Rate | | Passed 2 or more AP Exams or 2 or more IB Exams | |
|------------------------------|-----------------|---------|---------------------|---------|-------------------------|---------|---|---------|
| | 2018/19 | 2019/20 | 2018/19 | 2019/20 | 2018/19 | 2019/20 | 2018/19 | 2019/20 |
| Bullard High | 92.4% | 93.7% | 50.9% | 51.6% | 5.4% | 5.1% | 9.8% | 7.4% |
| Cambridge High | 38.1% | 25.5% | 0.0% | 1.3% | 0.0% | 1.3% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Design Science High | 100.0% | 100.0% | 96.8% | 100.0% | 22.6% | 34.3% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Dewolf High | 46.7% | 60.2% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Duncan Polytechnical High | 98.5% | 100.0% | 61.9% | 49.4% | 29.2% | 23.5% | 3.4% | 5.6% |
| Edison High | 94.9% | 95.6% | 63.8% | 70.6% | 31.3% | 29.1% | 29.5% | 27.5% |
| Fresno High | 92.1% | 90.9% | 46.6% | 50.6% | 20.4% | 19.2% | 11.7% | 6.4% |
| Hoover High | 86.2% | 88.1% | 44.8% | 52.0% | 9.8% | 10.7% | 8.5% | 7.8% |
| JE Young Academic High | 76.5% | 83.0% | 0.8% | 5.1% | 1.6% | 2.2% | 0.0% | 1.0% |
| McLane High | 87.8% | 89.0% | 57.4% | 60.8% | 18.2% | 15.9% | 7.0% | 6.9% |
| Patino Entrepreneurship High | 92.9% | 98.0% | 69.2% | 87.5% | 4.6% | 12.5% | 10.0% | 4.0% |
| Roosevelt High | 86.8% | 89.1% | 42.1% | 49.9% | 17.5% | 16.6% | 3.3% | 4.1% |
| Sunnyside High | 93.4% | 93.0% | 58.4% | 60.6% | 19.8% | 20.7% | 6.0% | 6.4% |

To protect student privacy, data was suppressed for Fulton, Phoenix Secondary and Rata due to the fact that the population size within each school was 10 or less.

Created By: Equity & Access

Data Source: CDE

Date: January 8, 2021

College and Career Performance: By Student Group

| | Graduation Rate | | A-G Completion Rate | | Seal of Biliteracy Rate | | Earned a Qualifying Score on 2 or more AP Exams or 2 or more IB Exams | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|---------|---------------------|---------|-------------------------|---------|---|---------|
| | 2018/19 | 2019/20 | 2018/19 | 2019/20 | 2018/19 | 2019/20 | 2018/19 | 2019/20 |
| Race/Ethnicity | | | | | | | | |
| African American/Black | 78.3% | 80.9% | 34.5% | 45.1% | 3.4% | 1.4% | 3.2% | 4.9% |
| Asian | 90.7% | 92.2% | 71.8% | 71.4% | 18.6% | 16.4% | 9.5% | 6.9% |
| Filipino | 94.7% | 100.0% | 77.8% | 61.1% | 16.7% | 11.1% | 16.7% | 11.8% |
| Hispanic | 85.9% | 86.3% | 46.4% | 50.9% | 20.2% | 20.5% | 9.1% | 8.7% |
| Native American/Alaskan | 92.6% | 62.5% | 32.0% | 66.7% | 8.0% | 0.0% | 12.5% | 0.0% |
| Pacific Islander | 80.0% | 95.5% | 43.8% | 52.4% | 6.3% | 9.5% | 12.5% | 0.0% |
| Two or More Races | 81.4% | 80.7% | 54.2% | 47.8% | 12.5% | 4.3% | 11.1% | 8.9% |
| White | 86.0% | 86.4% | 58.1% | 58.5% | 6.6% | 4.2% | 21.2% | 16.5% |
| Student Group | | | | | | | | |
| English Learner | 72.6% | 72.4% | 28.4% | 27.9% | 7.2% | 3.1% | 2.7% | 3.8% |
| Foster Youth | 62.0% | 58.6% | 24.6% | 27.6% | 1.8% | 3.4% | 2.8% | 0.0% |
| Homeless | 68.1% | 69.2% | 23.4% | 37.0% | 3.9% | 8.4% | 0.0% | 10.5% |
| Socioeconomically Disadvantaged | 85.5% | 85.9% | 47.7% | 52.4% | 17.4% | 17.1% | 7.8% | 7.4% |
| Student w/ Disability | 63.0% | 63.4% | 15.9% | 17.0% | 2.0% | 0.7% | 0.7% | 0.0% |

To protect student privacy, data was suppressed for Fulton, Phoenix Secondary and Rata due to the fact that the population size within each school was 10 or less.

Created By: Equity & Access
Data Source: CDE/ATLAS
Date: January 8, 2021

Fresno Unified School District
Board Communication

BC Number OS-1

From the Office of the Superintendent
To the Members of the Board of Education
Prepared by: Karin Temple, Chief Operating Officer
Cabinet Approval: 

Date: January 08, 2021

Phone Number: 457-3134

Regarding: Academic Return on Investment Services – January 13, 2021 Recommendation

The purpose of this communication is to provide the Board additional information regarding the recommendation on the January 13, 2021 Board meeting agenda to approve the award of Request for Information (RFI) 21-22, Academic Return on Investment (A-ROI) Services. The Government Finance Officers Association defines A-ROI as “the practice of scientifically evaluating the cost-effectiveness of academic programs and then deciding where to allocate resources accordingly.” The evaluation involves comparing student achievement data related to a program against the cost of the program.

The district conducted a RFI process to identify a firm to provide A-ROI services, and the upcoming Board meeting agenda includes a recommendation to award the RFI to District Management Group (DMGroup). DMGroup is led by John J-H Kim, senior lecturer at Harvard Business School, who has experience working with K-12 superintendents to develop and implement system-wide efforts that lead to higher student achievement while improving operations and reducing costs. The \$485,000 proposed cost of the A-ROI services includes three phases of work:

- Phase I – Take an A-ROI lens on all initiatives through an initiatives inventory (\$275,000)
- Phase II – A-ROI analysis of three prioritized initiatives (\$150,000)
- Phase III – Training and ongoing capacity building via a customized A-ROI institute (\$60,000)

The work is planned to be completed by the end of 2021. The investment in A-ROI is anticipated to yield important results for the district by identifying programs that are not meeting expectations relative to cost, and by aligning programmatic priorities with the district’s recently adopted strategic plan.

A-ROI deliverables include a report summarizing the cost-effectiveness of key district initiatives, and training for the district’s senior staff to enable future A-ROI analysis. DMGroup has been in business 17 years and has provided A-ROI services to Austin Independent School District, Los Angeles Unified School District, and Orange County (FL) Public Schools.

If you have questions or need further information, please contact Superintendent Nelson at 457-3882 or Karin Temple at 457-3134.

Approved by Superintendent
Robert G. Nelson Ed.D.



Date: 01/08/2021

Fresno Unified School District
Board Communication

BC Number OS-2

From the Office of the Superintendent
To the Members of the Board of Education
Prepared by: Karin Temple, Chief Operating Officer
Cabinet Approval: 

Date: January 08, 2021

Phone Number: 457-3134

Regarding: Meal Distribution Program Update

The purpose of this communication is to provide the Board information regarding the district's meal distribution program during distance learning. Since March 16, 2020, eight million nutritious meals (breakfast and lunch at the same time) have been served at schools throughout the district, with approximately 12% of the meals provided to adults. Over winter break, which is non-contracted time for Food Services staff, a week's worth of meals have been provided on Mondays. Daily meal distribution at 63 schools will resume on January 11, 2021, with weekend meals provided on Fridays.

The cost of meals provided to children is reimbursed through the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs, while adult meals must be supported from general district resources. During the period August 17-December 31, 2020, the City of Fresno funded meals for adults at 47 sites in the central, southeast and southwest regions of the district through a grant from its CARES Act allocation. There was initial indication from the City that funding may be extended to cover adult meals in January and February, however we were informed that the City Council subcommittee overseeing the grant program rejected the proposal. District staff has requested reconsideration of that decision, and suggested the City and district split the approximate \$200,000 monthly cost of providing meals to adults in our community. Given the Board's previous support of the adult meal program and current local conditions with regard to the pandemic, it is staff's intention to continue the service at least while the stay-at-home order is in place.

When small cohorts of students return to campuses for services, the number of serving sites will likely be reduced to align staffing with service delivery needs. Information will be provided in advance of program modifications.

If you have questions or need further information, please contact Karin Temple at 457-3134.

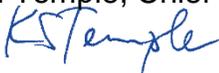
Approved by Superintendent
Robert G. Nelson Ed.D.



Date: 01/08/2021

Fresno Unified School District
Board Communication

BC Number OS-3

From the Office of the Superintendent
To the Members of the Board of Education
Prepared by: Karin Temple, Chief Operating Officer
Cabinet Approval: 

Date: January 08, 2021

Phone Number: 457-3134

Regarding: Citizens' Bond Oversight Committee Membership

The purpose of this communication is to provide the Board information regarding Citizens' Bond Oversight Committee (CBOC) membership. CBOC members are required to live within Fresno Unified boundaries; be at least 18 years old; and not be a vendor, contractor, consultant, employee or official of the district. They may serve six years. Each Trustee is provided two nominations for Board approval, and the Committee Chair is nominated by the Superintendent. Current members of the CBOC and the Trustee (or former Trustee) by whom they were nominated are listed below:

- Brian Andritch – Trustee Mills
- Venancio Gaona – Trustee Davis
- Inez Hill – former Trustee Johnson
- Clint Horwitz – Trustee Mills
- Arthur Koster – Trustee Jonasson Rosas
- Michael Lopez – Trustee Jonasson Rosas
- Jose Mejia – former Trustee De La Cerda
- Jim Nau – Trustee Davis
- Bruce O'Neal – former Trustee Ryan
- Dominic Papagni – former Trustee Ryan
- Barbara Steck (Chair)
- Timothy Mudge – Trustee Islas
- Cal Johnson – Trustee Thomas

As reported in a December 11, 2020 Board Communication, below are current/upcoming vacancies:

- Trustee Islas (1) – Jose Mejia's term expiring in February 2021
- Trustee Jonasson Rosas (1) – Michael Lopez's term expiring in May 2021
- Trustee Major Slatic (2) – Mike Karbassi and Michael Kelly resigned

The CBOC nomination form is available on the district's website and can be provided by email or mail.

For assistance facilitating a CBOC nomination, or if you have questions or need further information, please contact Karin Temple at 457-3134.

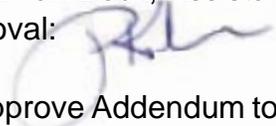
Approved by Superintendent
Robert G. Nelson Ed.D.



Date: 01/08/2021

Fresno Unified School District
Board Communication

BC Number SL-1

From the Office of the Superintendent
To the Members of the Board of Education
Prepared by: Brian Beck, Assistant Superintendent
Cabinet Approval: 

Date: January 08, 2021

Phone Number: 457-3226

Regarding: Approve Addendum to Independent Contractor Services Agreement with Advanced Medical Personnel Inc.

The purpose of this communication is to provide the Board information regarding a contract addendum with Advanced Medical Personnel Inc. which is being submitted to the Board for approval at the upcoming board meeting on January 13, 2021.

The Special Education Department currently contracts with outside vendors to provide speech therapy services as outlined in student individualized education programs (IEPs). The need for contracted services results from vacant positions (currently 47 vacancies), staff on leaves of absence, the need for speech assessments, and the provision of compensatory speech services for some students.

The need for this addendum is due to a shift in the number of speech/language pathologists (SLPs). Advanced Medical Personnel Inc. is able to provide in-person services once students return to campus. As a result, there will be a decrease in contracts with other vendors who provide only remote speech services.

The addendum is in the amount of \$2,015,579 and will be funded through decreases with other contracted vendors. The addendum will increase the number of SLPs provided by Advanced Medical Personnel Inc. from 10 to 21. There are no budgetary implications as funds will be shifted from other contracted providers.

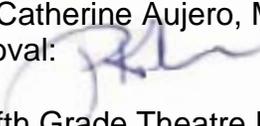
If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Brian Beck at 457-3226.

Approved by Superintendent
Robert G. Nelson Ed.D. 

Date: 01/08/2021

Fresno Unified School District
Board Communication

BC Number SL-2

From the Office of the Superintendent
To the Members of the Board of Education
Prepared by: Catherine Aujero, Manager III
Cabinet Approval: 

Date: January 08, 2021

Phone Number: 248-7172

Regarding: Fifth Grade Theatre Experience with Good Company Players

The purpose of this communication is to provide the Board an overview of the virtual theatre experience for fifth grade.

As part of the Any Given Child initiative, The Good Company Players professional theatre company created a script aligned with fifth grade, Arts and History-Social Science standards in 2017. The show is "Founding Fathers and Mothers" written by Laurie Pessano. Each spring semester all fifth-grade students have traveled to Roosevelt School of the Arts to watch this professional production. Classroom teachers receive theatre lessons to teach students prior to the show and following the performance.

This theatre experience will now shift to a virtual experience for 2021 with a professionally, edited video of the performance to be shared with all fifth-grade classes and a follow-up question and answer session broadcast to all fifth-grade classes. Included in this contract are video editing and production, actor time for the question and answer session, and production for the broadcast.

Students will watch the performance the last week in February and submit questions for the playwright, production team, and actors. The Good Company Players production team will then produce and moderate a question and answer session based upon specific Fresno Unified student questions. This will be broadcast for all fifth-grade classes as part of the complete Arts learning experience. It will be recorded to be used as an added post-production experience for future years when students can return for the live performance at Roosevelt.

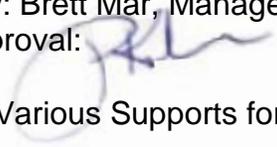
If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Catherine Aujero at 248-7172.

Approved by Superintendent
Robert G. Nelson Ed.D. 

Date: 01/08/2021

Fresno Unified School District
Board Communication

BC Number SL-3

From the Office of the Superintendent
To the Members of the Board of Education
Prepared by: Brett Mar, Manager III
Cabinet Approval: 

Date: January 08, 2021

Phone Number: 457-3655

Regarding: Various Supports for Athletics

The purpose of this communication is to provide the Board information regarding various supports for athletics.

Ambulance Services

Fresno Unified School District has used American Ambulance to provide required services at all Fresno Unified High School (HS) varsity football games and HS cross country meets. The ambulance driver and assistant are stationed at the game to assist in any health-related emergencies that may arise during the game. If the ambulance must leave at any time, a back-up unit will be sent to the stadium for coverage. HS athletics are scheduled to begin January 25, 2021, at which time we will utilize the services of American Ambulance.

Football Equipment Reconditioning

It is recommended by the National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment (NOCSAE) that all tackle football helmets, and shoulder pads are reconditioned and recertified annually. Fresno Unified has used Riddell Football for reconditioning and recertification of this equipment after every football season. All equipment is inspected, cleaned, and helmets painted before being delivered back to the school sites. Any equipment damaged beyond repair or outdated (10-year life span) is red-tagged, returned to the site as unusable, and disposed by the site.

Athletic Officials

Fresno Unified is provided officiating services by the San Joaquin Valley Officials Association and by the Central California Amateur Arbiters for elementary, middle school, and high school sporting events. Funding will cover the cost of officials for all grade levels. Goal 2 Athletics is anticipating the use of officials at games beginning January 25, 2021, pending approval by Fresno Unified Health Services Department and the Central Section California Interscholastic Federation.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Brett Mar or Pat Riddlesprigger at 457-3655.

Approved by Superintendent
Robert G. Nelson Ed.D. 

Date: 01/08/2021

Fresno Unified School District
Board Communication

BC Number T-1

From the Office of the Superintendent
To the Members of the Board of Education
Prepared by: Ashley Aouate, Coordinator II
Cabinet Approval: 

Date: January 08, 2021

Phone Number: 457-3868

Regarding: The Joint Cybersecurity Advisory: Cyber Actors Target K-12 Distance Learning Education to Cause Disruptions and Steal Data

The purpose of this communication is to provide the Board with information on the Joint Cybersecurity Advisory and the District's continuing efforts to reduce the chances of a major cyberattack.

Although school districts have always been a target of cybercriminals, when we moved to distance learning, districts have become even more valuable targets and the attack rate has increased. The attached Joint Cybersecurity Advisory issued by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), details the increased challenges facing school districts along with some best practices to reduce the attack surface. With the support of the Board and the Superintendent, we have continued to increase our cybersecurity and data privacy efforts for several years. As the District transitioned to 1:1 environment where every student has a device, we have placed an even greater emphasis on our security strategies.

There are several ways that hackers can attack districts to cause harm to digital resources, exfiltrate sensitive data, or make online resources unavailable. These attacks include malware, ransomware, application/server vulnerabilities, and social engineering (most often perpetrated as email phishing).

The District has deployed numerous technologies and strategies to prevent or mitigate attacks, including:

- Regular data backups and recovery plans
- Server and endpoint update schedule (to apply patches timely)
- Split-Tunnel VPN on district-owned assets
- Continuous vulnerability scanning of public-facing IT assets
- Upgraded our Next-Generation Firewall
- End Point Protection and Monitoring
- Phishing assessments & end-user education
- Purchased Email and Office 365 Advanced Threat Protection
- Microsoft Teams – which provides an authenticated collaboration space
- Created a Digital Integrations team to evaluate new ed-tech tools that use student data

If you have any questions or require further information, please contact Kurt Madden at 457-3868.

Approved by Superintendent
Robert G. Nelson Ed.D. 

Date: 01/08/2021

JOINT CYBERSECURITY ADVISORY

TLP:WHITE

Product ID: AA20-345A

Co-Authored by:

December 10, 2020



Cyber Actors Target K-12 Distance Learning Education to Cause Disruptions and Steal Data

SUMMARY

This Joint Cybersecurity Advisory was coauthored by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), and the Multi-State Information Sharing and Analysis Center (MS-ISAC).

The FBI, CISA, and MS-ISAC assess malicious cyber actors are targeting kindergarten through twelfth grade (K-12) educational institutions, leading to ransomware attacks, the theft of data, and the disruption of distance learning services. Cyber actors likely view schools as targets of opportunity, and these types of attacks are expected to continue through the 2020/2021 academic year. These issues will be particularly challenging for K-12 schools that face resource limitations; therefore, educational leadership, information technology personnel, and security personnel will need to balance this risk when determining their cybersecurity investments.

THREAT DETAILS

As of December 2020, the FBI, CISA, and MS-ISAC continue to receive reports from K-12 educational institutions about the disruption of distance learning efforts by cyber actors.

Ransomware

The FBI, CISA, and MS-ISAC have received numerous reports of ransomware attacks against K-12 educational institutions. In these attacks, malicious cyber actors target school computer systems, slowing access, and—in some instances—rendering the systems inaccessible for basic functions, including distance learning. Adopting tactics previously leveraged against business and industry, ransomware actors have also stolen—and threatened to leak—confidential student data to the public unless institutions pay a ransom.

According to MS-ISAC data, the percentage of reported ransomware incidents against K-12 schools increased at the beginning of the 2020 school year. In August and September, 57% of ransomware incidents reported to the MS-ISAC involved K-12 schools, compared to 28% of all reported ransomware incidents from January through July.

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TLP: WHITE

The five most common ransomware variants identified in incidents targeting K-12 schools between January and September 2020—based on open source information as well as victim and third-party incident reports made to MS-ISAC—are Ryuk, Maze, Nefilim, AKO, and Sodinokibi/REvil.

Malware

Figure 1 identifies the top 10 malware strains that have affected state, local, tribal, and territorial (SLTT) educational institutions over the past year (up to and including September 2020). *Note:* These malware variants are purely opportunistic as they not only affect educational institutions but other organizations as well.

Zeus and Shlayer are among the most prevalent malware affecting K-12 schools.

- Zeus is a Trojan with several variants that targets Microsoft Windows operating systems. Cyber actors use Zeus to infect target machines and send stolen information to command-and-control servers.
- Shlayer is a Trojan downloader and dropper for MacOS malware.¹ It is primarily distributed through malicious websites, hijacked domains, and malicious advertising posing as a fake Adobe Flash updater.

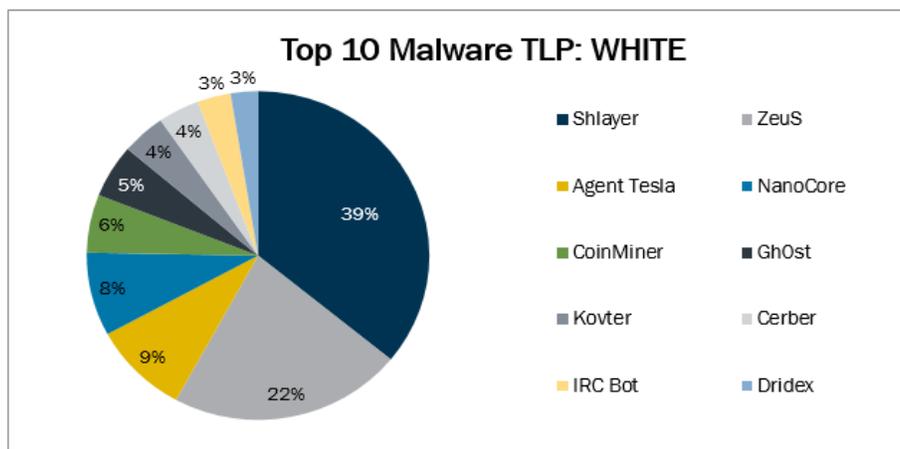


Figure 1: Top 10 malware affecting SLTT educational institutions

Distributed Denial-of-Service Attacks

Cyber actors are causing disruptions to K-12 educational institutions—including third-party services supporting distance learning—with distributed denial-of-service (DDoS) attacks,² which temporarily limit or prevent users from conducting daily operations. The availability of DDoS-for-hire services provides opportunities for any motivated malicious cyber actor to conduct disruptive attacks regardless of experience level.

¹ Shlayer is the only malware of the top 10 that targets MacOS; the other 9 affect Microsoft Windows operating systems.

² DDoS attacks overwhelm servers with a high level of internet traffic originating from many different sources, making it impossible to mitigate at a single source.

Video Conference Disruptions

Numerous reports received by the FBI, CISA, and MS-ISAC since March 2020 indicate uninvited users have disrupted live video-conferenced classroom sessions. These disruptions have included verbally harassing students and teachers, displaying pornography and/or violent images, and doxing³ meeting attendees. To enter classroom sessions, uninvited users have been observed:

- Using student names to trick hosts into accepting them into class sessions, and
- Accessing meetings from either publicly available links or links shared with outside users (e.g., students sharing links and/or passwords with friends).

Video conference sessions without proper control measures risk disruption or compromise of classroom conversations and exposure of sensitive information.

ADDITIONAL RISKS AND VULNERABILITIES

In addition to the recent reporting of distance learning disruptions received by the FBI, CISA, and MS-ISAC, malicious cyber actors are expected to continue seeking opportunities to exploit the evolving remote learning environment.

Social Engineering

Cyber actors could apply social engineering methods against students, parents, faculty, IT personnel, or other individuals involved in distance learning. Tactics, such as phishing, trick victims into revealing personal information (e.g., password or bank account information) or performing a task (e.g., clicking on a link). In such scenarios, a victim could receive what appears to be legitimate email that:

- Requests personally identifiable information (PII) (e.g., full name, birthdate, student ID),
- Directs the user to confirm a password or personal identification number (PIN),
- Instructs the recipient to visit a website that is compromised by the cyber actor, or
- Contains an attachment with malware.

Cyber actors also register web domains that are similar to legitimate websites in an attempt to capture individuals who mistype URLs or click on similar looking URLs. These types of attacks are referred to as Domain Spoofing or Homograph attacks. For example, a user wanting to access *www.cottoncandyschool.edu* could mistakenly click on *www.cottencandyschool.edu* (changed “o” to an “e”) or *www.cottoncandyschoo1.edu* (changed letter “l” to a number “1”).⁴ Victims believe they are on a legitimate website when, in reality, they are visiting a site controlled by a cyber actor.

³ Doxing is the act of compiling or publishing personal information about an individual on the internet, typically with malicious intent.

⁴ This is a fictitious example to demonstrate how a user can mistakenly click and access a website without noticing subtle changes in website URLs.

Technology Vulnerabilities and Student Data

Whether as collateral for ransomware attacks or to sell on the dark web, cyber actors may seek to exploit the data-rich environment of student information in schools and education technology (edtech) services. The need for schools to rapidly transition to distance learning likely contributed to cybersecurity gaps, leaving schools vulnerable to attack. In addition, educational institutions that have outsourced their distance learning tools may have lost visibility into data security measures. Cyber actors could view the increased reliance on—and sharp usership growth in—these distance learning services and student data as lucrative targets.

Open/Exposed Ports

The FBI, CISA, and MS-ISAC frequently see malicious cyber actors exploiting exposed Remote Desktop Protocol (RDP) services to gain initial access to a network and, often, to manually deploy ransomware. For example, cyber actors will attack ports 445 (Server Message Block [SMB]) and 3389 (RDP) to gain network access. They are then positioned to move laterally throughout a network (often using SMB), escalate privileges, access and exfiltrate sensitive information, harvest credentials, or deploy a wide variety of malware. This popular attack vector allows cyber actors to maintain a low profile, as they are using a legitimate network service that provides them with the same functionality as any other remote user.

End-of-Life Software

End-of-Life (EOL) software is regularly exploited by cyber actors—often to gain initial access, deface websites, or further their reach in a network. Once a product reaches EOL, customers no longer receive security updates, technical support, or bug fixes. Unpatched and vulnerable servers are likely to be exploited by cyber actors, hindering an organization's operational capacity.

MITIGATIONS

Plans and Policies

The FBI and CISA encourage educational providers to maintain business continuity plans—the practice of executing essential functions through emergencies (e.g., cyberattacks)—to minimize service interruptions. Without planning, provision, and implementation of continuity principles, institutions may be unable to continue teaching and administrative operations. Evaluating continuity and capability will help identify potential operational gaps. Through identifying and addressing these gaps, institutions can establish a viable continuity program that will help keep them functioning during cyberattacks or other emergencies. The FBI and CISA suggest K-12 educational institutions review or establish patching plans, security policies, user agreements, and business continuity plans to ensure they address current threats posed by cyber actors.

Network Best Practices

- Patch operating systems, software, and firmware as soon as manufacturers release updates.

- Check configurations for every operating system version for educational institution-owned assets to prevent issues from arising that local users are unable to fix due to having local administration disabled.
- Regularly change passwords to network systems and accounts and avoid reusing passwords for different accounts.
- Use multi-factor authentication where possible.
- Disable unused remote access/RDP ports and monitor remote access/RDP logs.
- Implement application and remote access allow listing to only allow systems to execute programs known and permitted by the established security policy.
- Audit user accounts with administrative privileges and configure access controls with least privilege in mind.
- Audit logs to ensure new accounts are legitimate.
- Scan for open or listening ports and mediate those that are not needed.
- Identify critical assets such as student database servers and distance learning infrastructure; create backups of these systems and house the backups offline from the network.
- Implement network segmentation. Sensitive data should not reside on the same server and network segment as the email environment.
- Set antivirus and anti-malware solutions to automatically update; conduct regular scans.

User Awareness Best Practices

- Focus on awareness and training. Because end users are targeted, make employees and students aware of the threats—such as ransomware and phishing scams—and how they are delivered. Additionally, provide users training on information security principles and techniques as well as overall emerging cybersecurity risks and vulnerabilities.
- Ensure employees know who to contact when they see suspicious activity or when they believe they have been a victim of a cyberattack. This will ensure that the proper established mitigation strategy can be employed quickly and efficiently.
- Monitor privacy settings and information available on social networking sites.

Ransomware Best Practices

The FBI and CISA do not recommend paying ransoms. Payment does not guarantee files will be recovered. It may also embolden adversaries to target additional organizations, encourage other criminal actors to engage in the distribution of ransomware, and/or fund illicit activities. However, regardless of whether your organization decided to pay the ransom, the FBI urges you to report ransomware incidents to your local FBI field office. Doing so provides the FBI with the critical information they need to prevent future attacks by identifying and tracking ransomware attackers and holding them accountable under U.S. law.

In addition to implementing the above network best practices, the FBI and CISA also recommend the following:

- Regularly back up data, air gap, and password protect backup copies offline.
- Implement a recovery plan to maintain and retain multiple copies of sensitive or proprietary data and servers in a physically separate, secure location.

Denial-of-Service Best Practices

- Consider enrolling in a denial-of-service mitigation service that detects abnormal traffic flows and redirects traffic away from your network.
- Create a partnership with your local internet service provider (ISP) prior to an event and work with your ISP to control network traffic attacking your network during an event.
- Configure network firewalls to block unauthorized IP addresses and disable port forwarding.

Video-Conferencing Best Practices

- Ensure participants use the most updated version of remote access/meeting applications.
- Require passwords for session access.
- Encourage students to avoid sharing passwords or meeting codes.
- Establish a vetting process to identify participants as they arrive, such as a waiting room.
- Establish policies to require participants to sign in using true names rather than aliases.
- Ensure only the host controls screensharing privileges.
- Implement a policy to prevent participants from entering rooms prior to host arrival and to prevent the host from exiting prior to the departure of all participants.

Edtech Implementation Considerations

When partnering with third-party and edtech services to support distance learning, educational institutions should consider the following:

- The service provider's cybersecurity policies and response plan in the event of a breach and their remediation practices:
 - How did the service provider resolve past cyber incidents? How did their cybersecurity practices change after these incidents?
- The provider's data security practices for their products and services (e.g., data encryption in transit and at rest, security audits, security training of staff, audit logs);
- The provider's data maintenance and storage practices (e.g., use of company servers, cloud storage, or third-party services);
- Types of student data the provider collects and tracks (e.g., PII, academic, disciplinary, medical, biometric, IP addresses);
- Entities to whom the provider will grant access to the student data (e.g., vendors);
- How the provider will use student data (e.g., will they sell it to—or share it with—third parties for service enhancement, new product development, studies, marketing/advertising?);

- The provider’s de-identification practices for student data; and
- The provider’s policies on data retention and deletion.

Malware Defense

Table 1 identifies CISA-created Snort signatures, which have been successfully used to detect and defend against related attacks, for the malware variants listed below. *Note:* The listing is not fully comprehensive and should not be used at the exclusion of other detection methods.

Table 1: Malware signatures

| Malware | Signature |
|-----------------|---|
| NanoCore | <pre> alert tcp any any -> any \$HTTP_PORTS (msg:"NANOCORE:HTTP GET URI contains 'FAD00979338'"; sid:00000000; rev:1; flow:established,to_server; content:"GET"; http_method; content:"getPluginName.php?PluginID=FAD00979338"; fast_pattern; http_uri; classtype:http-uri; metadata:service http;) </pre> |
| Cerber | <pre> alert tcp any any -> any \$HTTP_PORTS (msg:"HTTP Client Header contains 'host 3a 20 polkiuj.top'"; sid:00000000; rev:1; flow:established,to_server; flowbits:isnotset,<unique_ID>.tagged; content:"host 3a 20 polkiuj.top 0d 0a "; http_header; fast_pattern:only; flowbits:set,<unique_ID>.tagged; tag:session,10,packets; classtype:http-header; metadata:service http;) </pre> |
| Kovter | <pre> alert tcp any any -> any \$HTTP_PORTS (msg:"Kovter:HTTP URI POST to CnC Server"; sid:00000000; rev:1; flow:established,to_server; flowbits:isnotset,<unique_ID>.tagged; content:"POST / HTTP/1.1"; depth:15; content:"Content-Type 3a 20 application/x-www-form- urlencoded"; http_header; depth:47; fast_pattern; content:"User- Agent 3a 20 Mozilla/"; http_header; content:"!LOADCURRENCY"; nocase; content:"!Accept"; http_header; content:"!Referer 3a "; http_header; content:"!Cookie 3a "; nocase; http_header; pcre:"/^(?:[A-Za-z0- 9+\\/] {4})*(?:[A-Za-z0-9+\\/] {2}== [A-Za-z0-9+\\/] {3}= [A-Za-z0- 9+\\/] {4})\$/P"; pcre:"/User- Agent\\x3a[^\\r\\n]+\\r\\nHost\\x3a\\x20(?:\\d{1,3}\\.) {3}\\d{1,3}\\r\\nContent- Length\\x3a\\x20[1-5][0-9]{2,3}\\r\\n(?:Cache- Control Pragma)\\x3a[^\\r\\n]+\\r\\n(?:\\r\\n)?\$/H"; flowbits:set,<unique_ID>.tagged; tag:session,10,packets; classtype:nonstd-tcp; metadata:service http;) </pre> |

| | |
|---------------|---|
| Dridex | <pre>alert tcp any any -> any \$HTTP_PORTS (msg:"HTTP URI GET contains 'invoice_#####.doc' (DRIDEX)"; sid:00000000; rev:1; flow:established,to_server; content:"invoice_"; http_uri; fast_pattern:only; content:".doc"; nocase; distance:8; within:4; content:"GET"; nocase; http_method; classtype:http-uri; metadata:service http;) alert tcp any any -> any \$HTTP_PORTS (msg:"HTTP Client Header contains 'Host 3a 20 tanevengledrep ru' (DRIDEX)"; sid:00000000; rev:1; flow:established,to_server; flowbits:isnotset,<unique_ID>.tagged; content:"Host 3a 20 tanevengledrep 2e ru 0d 0a "; http_header; fast_pattern:only; flowbits:set,<unique_ID>.tagged; tag:session,10,packets; classtype:http-header; metadata:service http;)</pre> |
|---------------|---|

CONTACT INFORMATION

To report suspicious or criminal activity related to information found in this Joint Cybersecurity Advisory, contact your local FBI field office at www.fbi.gov/contact-us/field. When available, please include the following information regarding the incident: date, time, and location of the incident; type of activity; number of people affected; type of equipment used for the activity; the name of the submitting organization; and a designated point of contact.

To request incident response resources or technical assistance related to these threats, contact CISA at Central@cisa.gov.

RESOURCES

MS-ISAC membership is open to employees or representatives from all public K-12 education entities in the United States. The MS-ISAC provides multiple cybersecurity services and benefits to help K-12 education entities increase their cybersecurity posture. To join, visit <https://learn.cisecurity.org/ms-isac-registration>.

[CISA Telework Guidance and Resources](#)

[CISA Cybersecurity Recommendations and Tips for Schools Using Video Conferencing](#)

[CISA Ransomware Publications](#)

[CISA Emergency Services Sector Continuity Planning Suite](#)

[CISA-MS-ISAC Joint Ransomware Guide](#)

[CISA Tip: Avoiding Social Engineering and Phishing Attacks](#)

[CISA Tip: Understanding Patches](#)

[CISA and CYBER.ORG “Cyber Safety Video Series” for K-12 students and educators](#)

[FBI PSA: “High-Impact Ransomware Attacks Threaten U.S. Businesses and Organizations](#)

Note: Contact your local FBI field office (www.fbi.gov/contact-us/field) for additional FBI products on ransomware, edtech, and cybersecurity for educational institutions.