BOARD COMMUNICATIONS – JUNE 11, 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, Chief Financial Officer
AS-1 Kim Kelstrom School Services Weekly Update Report for June 04, 2021

OPERATIONAL SERVICES – Karin Temple, Chief Operations Officer
OS-1 Karin Temple Summer Swim Program
OS-2 Karin Temple Recommendation to Reject Bid 21-43 on June 16, 2021 Board Meeting Agenda
OS-3 Amanda Harvey Nutrition Services Farm to Summer Celebration Week
OS-4 Karin Temple Agreement with City of Fresno Police Department
OS-5 Karin Temple City of Fresno FAX (Fresno Area Express) Transit System

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP – Kim Mecum, Chief Academic Officer
SL-1 Jeremy Ward Summer Home Communication
SL-2 Jeremy Ward Summer 2021 Graduation
SL-3 Edward Gomes Update on Student Academic Level Status and Aligning to Needs
SL-4 Ambra O’Connor Left on Bang Filmmaking Mentoring Program
SL-5 Raine Bumatay The 2021 Citizenship and Integration Grant Program Application
SL-6 Sean Virnig Approval for Special Education Annual Budget and Service Plans and Descriptions with the Local Plan for Fiscal Year 2021/2022
SL-7 Ambra O’Connor Community Justice Conference Center Partnership
From the Office of the Superintendent  Date: June 11, 2021
To the Members of the Board of Education
Prepared by:  Robert G. Nelson, Superintendent  Phone Number: 457-3884
Cabinet Approval:

Regarding:  Superintendent Calendar Highlights

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

- Site visits at Adult School, Department of Prevention and Intervention, Special Education and Storey
- Interview with Jacqueling McLean, ABC30, regarding the challenges and accomplishments of 2020-21 school year
- Attended the following graduation ceremonies:  Adult Transition Program, Bullard, Fresno, Roosevelt and Sunnyside
- Met with Executive Cabinet Team
- Attended Dailey Board Meeting
- Gave interview with Nancy Price, GVWire, regarding summer school and return to school 2021-22.
- Visited the Tulare County Dream Center in Tulare, CA
- Completed a site visit at Chandler Airport for a potential Fresno Unified Aviation Program

Approved by Superintendent  Date: 06/11/21
Robert G. Nelson Ed.D.
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 June 04, 2021 is attached and includes the following articles:

- Legislative Budget Committees Pass Major Budget Pieces – June 02, 2021
- Budget Proposal Would Ease Testing Requirements for California Teachers – June 03, 2021
- Schools Face Mental Health Crisis Among Students as Pandemic Trauma Remains – May 31, 2021

If you have any questions or require further information, please contact Kim Kelstrom at 457-3907.
DATE:  June 4, 2021  
TO:  Robert G. Nelson  
Superintendent  
AT:  Fresno Unified School District  
FROM:  Your SSC Governmental Relations Team  
RE:  SSC’s Sacramento Weekly Update

It was another very busy week in Sacramento as both legislative budget committees approved most of the 2021–22 State Budget package. Additionally, today, June 4, 2021, was the deadline for the Assembly and Senate to approve bills introduced in their respective houses and send them to the second house. However, the Legislature ended up finishing its work yesterday, allowing them to be in their districts, rather than in Sacramento, today.

**2021–22 State Budget Update**

On Wednesday, the Senate and Assembly Budget Committees approved some of the biggest pieces of the 2021–22 State Budget package, including most of the education provisions (see the *Fiscal Report* article “Legislative Budget Committees Pass Major Budget Pieces” below for the full details).

Earlier this week legislative leadership had announced that they had come to an agreement on the key elements of the State Budget that will allow them to forgo establishing a Joint Budget Conference Committee this year, which is the committee that is formed to reconcile the differences between the house budgets before the Legislature can approve a single budget and present it to the Governor by the June 15 deadline.

While the Legislature approved a number of Governor Gavin Newsom’s revised State Budget proposals, they also rejected several and included their own priorities, which we detailed in last week’s *Sacramento Update*. Some of the key differences between the Newsom Administration and the Legislature include:

- **Deferrals.** While the Governor’s May Revision proposes to buy down all but $2.6 billion of the K–12 deferrals, the Legislature proposes to retire all of the K-12 deferrals.

- **Concentration Grant Factor.** The May Revision proposes to provide $1.1 billion to increase the concentration grant factor from 50% to 65% to reduce the student-to-adult ratio in schools. However, the Legislature’s proposal is to use that $1.1 billion to increase the supplemental grant factor from 20% to 23.3%, thus allowing more local educational agencies (LEAs) access to those dollars.
• **CalPERS and CalSTRS Employer Relief.** While the Governor is not proposing any additional relief to reduce the California State Teachers’ Retirement System (CalSTRS) and California Public Employees’ Retirement System (CalPERS) employer rates, the Legislature proposes to allocate nearly $3 billion over the next four years for supplemental pension payments for schools and community colleges, including $400 million in 2021–22 to offset future costs.

• **School Employees Fund.** While the Governor does not proposes any funding to reduce the School Employees Fund historically high contribution rate of 1.23%, the Legislature’s package adopt trailer bill language to reduce the School Employees Fund contribution rate from 1.23% to 0.50% for 2021–22 and 2022–23.

• **Universal Transitional Kindergarten.** While both the Senate and Assembly adopted the May Revision’s proposal to achieve universal transitional kindergarten (TK), the Legislature extends the implementation timeline by expanding TK eligibility by two months, beginning in 2022–23, until all four-year-olds are eligible for the program. The Legislature also adopted language to reduce TK class size ratios of 1:10 and require TK programs to be full school day programs.

• **Universal School Meals.** While the Governor proposes to provide $150 million for school meals in 2021–22, the Legislature proposes to increase state meal reimbursement by $54 million in the 2021–22 fiscal year and $650 million ongoing beginning in 2022–23, to cover the costs of offering breakfast and lunch for all students.

Several of these legislative proposals will have to be negotiated with the Newsom Administration before the final State Budget package can be approved. Additionally, the Administration and the Legislature are still negotiating how to utilize (or perhaps alter) current independent study statute so parents who are hesitant about sending their children back to the classroom for in-person instruction can keep their children in a remote setting.

**House of Origin Deadline**

The Legislature met its house-of-origin deadline one day early as they wrapped up their businesses Thursday afternoon so they could be in their districts on Friday. With legislative leadership capping the number of bills that members can move the second house at 12, the bills that were approved by the respective houses are the member’s highest priority bills. Some of the significant bills that will be moving forward, include:

• Assembly Bill (AB) 22 (McCarty, D-Sacramento) would implement universal TK over time by expanding the eligibility criteria for four-year-olds who are eligible for TK programs, achieving universal TK eligibility by 2032–33

• AB 27 (Rivas, D-Arleta) would require an LEA to ensure that each of their schools identifies all homeless children and youths and unaccompanied youths, administer a housing questionnaire for purposes of identifying homeless children and youths and unaccompanied youths, and annually provide the housing questionnaire to all parents or guardians of pupils and unaccompanied youths of the LEA

• AB 75 (O’Donnell, D-Long Beach) would put a $12 billion K–14 school facilities bond before voters on the 2022 primary or General Election ballot

• AB 101 (Medina, D-Riverside) would require LEAs serving students in grades 9–12 to offer at least a one-semester course in ethnic studies commencing with the 2025–26 fiscal year and would add the
completion of a semester-long course in ethnic studies to the list of state high school graduation requirements beginning with the 2029–30 graduating class

- AB 367 (Garcia, D-Bell Gardens) would require all public schools serving a combination of grades 6–12 to stock an adequate supply of menstrual products in all women’s restrooms and all-gender restrooms, as well as in at least one men’s restroom

- AB 388 (Medina, D-Riverside) would make substantive changes regarding which credentialed employees can attain permanent employee status by requiring the following groups to attain permanent employee status after completing a probationary period: certificated employees at county offices of education, instructors at regional occupational centers and programs, and certificated employees at school districts with an average daily attendance of 250 or less

- AB 438 (Reyes, D-San Bernardino) would extend the existing layoff protocols granted to certificated employees to permanent classified employees

- Senate Bill (SB) 22 (Glazer, D-Contra Costa) would place a $15.5 billion preschool through higher education school facilities bond before voters on the 2022 primary or General Election ballot

- SB 545 (Wilk, R-Santa Clarita) would, for the 2021–22 school year (upon request by a parent to retain their student), require schools to offer specific interventions and supports, offer access to prior semester courses (or a form of credit recovery) in which the student received a D or F, and provide information from the California Department of Education about research on the effects of student retention

These bills will now move forward to the second house where the legislative process starts anew. The bills that did not meet the deadline are considered inactive for the rest of 2021, but can be revive during the 2022 legislative year.

Leilani Aguinaldo
Legislative Budget Committees Pass Major Budget Pieces

By Kyle Hyland, Michelle McKay Underwood, Patti F. Herrera, EdD, and Leilani Aguinaldo
School Services of California Inc.’s Fiscal Report
June 2, 2021

It does not happen often, but the Senate and Assembly Budget Committees have reached an agreement on some of the biggest pieces of the State Budget, including much of the K–12 and community college provisions. Consequently, they voted to approve their budget agreement on June 2, 2021, which enables them to avoid establishing the normal Joint Budget Conference Committee whose job is to reconcile the differences between the house budgets before the Legislature can approve a single budget and present it to Governor Gavin Newsom by the June 15 deadline.

The actions of the budget committees set negotiations between the Governor, the Assembly, and the Senate in full swing, and there are some significant differences between Governor Newsom’s May Revision proposals and the legislative budget package. Key among those differences is the revenue assumption used to fund the legislative package, where the Legislature relies on assumptions by the Legislative Analyst’s Office (LAO), which over the three-year budget window is $4 billion higher than the Administration’s. Moreover, the LAO’s forecasts through 2024–25 project $20 billion more in revenue than the Governor’s May Revision estimates.

For K–14 Proposition 98 funding, the legislative budget package uses the following assumptions compared to the May Revision.

Table 1. K–14 Proposition 98 Funding—May Revision v. Legislative Package

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May Revision*</td>
<td>$79.3 billion</td>
<td>$92.8 billion</td>
<td>$93.7 billion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Legislature’s Package*</td>
<td>$79.2 billion</td>
<td>$93.1 billion</td>
<td>$96.1 billion</td>
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</table>

*Includes Proposition 98 Reserve deposit

Major Provisions

The Legislature’s budget package adopts Governor Newsom’s proposed 5.07% cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) and the compounded 4.05% COLA for special education and all categorical programs.

The legislative budget agreement also retains but reduces funding for many of the Governor’s education initiatives, particularly programs to address the state’s teacher shortage crisis. In a significant departure to the May Revision, the Legislature rejects the Governor’s proposal to increase the LCFF’s concentration grant from 50% to 65% of the adjusted base grant with the requirement for local educational agencies (LEAs) to use the funds to reduce staff-to-student ratios in schools in high-needs communities. Instead, the Legislature voted to increase the supplemental grant from 20.0% to 23.3% of the adjusted base grant while applying the May Revision’s proposed restrictions for use of the funds.
Table 2. Legislature’s Supplemental Grant Proposal—2021–22 per Average Daily Attendance Amounts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>K–3</th>
<th>4–6</th>
<th>7–8</th>
<th>9–12</th>
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<tr>
<td>Adjusted Base Grant</td>
<td>$8,934</td>
<td>$8,214</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supplemental Grant (20.0%)</td>
<td>$1,787</td>
<td>$1,643</td>
<td>$1,692</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supplemental Grant (23.3%)</td>
<td>$2,082</td>
<td>$1,914</td>
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<td>Increase</td>
<td>$295</td>
<td>$271</td>
<td>$279</td>
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Additionally, while both the Senate and Assembly adopt the May Revision’s proposal to achieve universal transitional kindergarten (TK), the legislature extends the implementation timeline by expanding TK eligibility by two months, beginning in 2022–23, until all four-year-olds are eligible for the program. Additionally, the legislative budget adopts TK class size ratios of 1:10 and requires TK programs to be full school day programs.

Finally, the Legislature proposes $2.8 billion in Proposition 2, non-Proposition 98 funding through 2024–25 to help reduce pension obligations for K–14 public education agencies.

To help synthesize the key similarities and differences between the Governor’s May Revision proposals and the actions of the legislative budget committees, we provide the following Proposition 98 breakdown.

Table 3. Proposition 98 Spending by Fiscal Year (in millions)

Source: Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee

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<tr>
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<th>May Revision</th>
<th>Legislature</th>
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<tr>
<td>2019–20 at 2020–21 State Budget Act</td>
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<td>77,678</td>
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<td>Technical Adjustments</td>
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<td>K–12 Education (one-time)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Extended Learning and Academic Support (Assembly Bill [AB] 86)</td>
<td>1,364.9</td>
<td>1,364.9</td>
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<td>Health and Safety for Career Technical Education Joint Powers of Authority</td>
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<td>86.4</td>
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<td>Open Educational Resources</td>
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<tr>
<td>California Community Colleges (one-time)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2020–21 Deferral Paydown</td>
<td>144.6</td>
<td>144.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deferred Maintenance</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.8</td>
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<table>
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<td>State School Reserve</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reserve Deposit</td>
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<td>K–12 Education (one time)</td>
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<td>Deferral Paydown</td>
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<td>Program</td>
<td>2020–21 Spending</td>
<td>2020–21 Revised Spending</td>
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<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>Extended Learning and Academic Support (AB 86)</td>
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<td>Community Schools Grant Program</td>
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<td>In-Person Instruction Grants (AB 86)</td>
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<td>School Health and Safety</td>
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<td>Educator Effectiveness Block Grant</td>
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<td>Targeted Interventions</td>
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<td>Teacher Residency Grant Program</td>
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<td>TK Expansion Planning</td>
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<td>National Board Certification Incentive Grant Program</td>
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<td>Classified Teacher Credential Program</td>
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<td>School Kitchen Upgrades and Training for Nutrition Staff</td>
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<td>Early Math Initiative</td>
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<td>Statewide Strategy to Diversify Teacher Workforce</td>
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<td>Classified School Employee Summer Assistance Program</td>
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<td>Training for TK Teachers</td>
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<td>Educator Professional Development for Social-Emotional Learning</td>
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<td>21st Century School Leadership Academies</td>
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<td>Computer Science Incentive Grant</td>
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<td>Professional Development for Reading Instruction</td>
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<td>Medi-Cal Billing Professional Learning Networks</td>
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<td>Ethnic Studies Professional Development</td>
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<td>California Collaborative for Educational Excellence (CCEE)</td>
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<td>Maximizing Student Outcomes (AB 86)</td>
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<td>California Newcomer Education and Wellbeing (CalNEW)</td>
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<td>Preschool Family Fees Extension to August 30th</td>
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<td>Special Education Technical Adjustment</td>
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<td>Ethnic Studies Block Grant</td>
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<td>Expanded Learning Grants</td>
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<td>California Community Colleges (one-time)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2020–21 Revised Spending</strong></td>
<td><strong>92822.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>93141.0</strong></td>
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## 2021–22 Proposition 98

### Technical Adjustments

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<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>2021</th>
<th>2022</th>
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<tr>
<td>Back Out Prior Year One-Time Spending</td>
<td>(12,611.5)</td>
<td>(12,930.7)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Technical Adjustments</td>
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### State School Reserve

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<tr>
<th>Description</th>
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<th>2022</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reserve Deposit</td>
<td>2,617.2</td>
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### K–12 Education

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>2022</th>
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<tr>
<td>Deferral Paydown (one-time)</td>
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<td>3,928.7</td>
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<td>LCFF Growth, COLA, and Base Increase</td>
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<td>Concentration Grant Increase</td>
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<td>Expanded Learning Grants</td>
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<td>Preschool-Aged Children with Disabilities</td>
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<td>COLA for Select Categorical Programs</td>
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<td>Child Nutrition Reimbursement Rate Increase for Certain Schools</td>
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<td>County Offices of Education Growth and COLA</td>
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<td>Feminine Hygiene Products Mandate</td>
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<td>Growth for Select Categorical Programs</td>
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<td>Special Education Base Increase</td>
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<td>State Preschool Slots</td>
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<td>State Preschool Rate Reform</td>
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<td>Career Technical Education Incentive Grant</td>
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<td>Additional COLA for Categoricals (including After School Education &amp; Safety [ASES] and California State Preschool Program [CSPPI])</td>
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<td>Dual Language Immersion Grant</td>
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### 2021–22 Spending

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Independent Study/Virtual Learning Negotiations Persist

Although the Legislature’s agreement is a significant accomplishment given the tens of billions of dollars in education funding, the Senate, Assembly, and Newsom Administration continue to negotiate on changes to California independent study statutes that will govern virtual learning options for the 2021–22 school year and beyond. The parties appear to agree that current law needs to be buttressed with program quality guardrails, but continue to discuss what they should be and how to ensure that LEAs comply with them.

In that independent study programs have been longstanding and have served a small population of California students who thrive in nontraditional instructional and learning programs, LEAs are anxious for the outcome of the State Budget negotiations.

We will continue to monitor the State Budget discussions and report any significant developments, including the final deal the Legislature reaches with Governor Newsom.

Note: The Legislature’s budget committees are recommending that legislators approve a proposal in Governor Newsom’s 2021–22 State Budget that would allow candidates to earn a teaching credential without taking the two tests currently required.

Budget Proposal Would Ease Testing Requirements for California Teachers

By Diana Lambert
EdSource
June 3, 2021

California teachers may soon have more flexibility when it comes to the tests they are required to take to earn a credential.

The state’s Assembly and Senate budget subcommittees on education are recommending that legislators approve a proposal in Gov. Gavin Newsom’s 2021-22 state budget that would allow candidates to earn a teaching credential without taking two tests currently required.

If it is approved, candidates wouldn’t have to take the California Basic Educational Skills Test, or CBEST, or the California Subject Examinations for Teachers, or CSET, if they have earned a grade of B or better in qualifying coursework or tests that apply toward requirements for a degree.

Currently, a teacher candidate is required to prove proficiency in basic reading, writing and math by passing the CBEST or other approved exams. The test is usually taken before a student is accepted into a teacher preparation program.

The education trailer bill released May 14 outlines the types of courses that students in teacher preparation programs can take instead of the CBEST. Classes in critical thinking, literature, philosophy, reading, rhetoric or textual analysis can be taken to prove the teacher has basic reading skills.

Classes in composition, English and rhetoric can prove basic writing skills, and courses in algebra, geometry, mathematics, quantitative reasoning or statistics can be taken to prove basic math skills.
Teacher candidates also have been required to pass tests that are part of the California Subject Examinations for Teachers to earn a credential. Elementary school teachers must pass three tests — in science and math; reading, language, literature, history and social science; and physical education, human development and visual and performing arts — to earn a multiple-subject credential. Middle and high school teachers earn single-subject credentials in areas such as art, biology or English by passing at least one subject exam.

If the proposal is approved, teacher candidates will have the option of taking coursework at a university in the content area of the credential they are pursuing to prove subject-matter competence instead of taking some or all of the CSET tests required for their credential.

“It’s promising to see the governor and Legislature come together in support of new options for aspiring teachers to demonstrate knowledge and skills through coursework,” said Mary Vixie Sandy, executive director of the Commission on Teacher Credentialing. “These new flexibilities will strike the right balance by upholding rigorous standards and reducing unnecessary barriers to the teaching profession.”

The proposal, which has gone unchallenged by legislators during the budget process, still needs to be approved by the full Legislature as part of the budget package by June 15. Legislators must negotiate a final state budget with the governor and pass it by June 30.

California’s teacher candidates have been required to take up to six tests to earn a credential, depending on what they plan to teach. The tests have been a major stumbling block for many, with nearly half of California’s potential teachers struggling to pass the standardized tests required to earn a credential, according to data from the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing.

In the past two years, the commission has convened workgroups and held numerous meetings to study how to best reform the testing process. The Covid-19 pandemic ramped up these efforts as testing centers closed, making it difficult to take the required tests.

In spring 2020 Newsom and the Commission on Teacher Credentialing began easing some rules for the required tests. Last June the governor gave teachers more time to complete all the requirements for a credential and more time to submit information missing from applications. The new budget proposes suspending test requirements another year if a credential candidate is unable to complete an assessment because of testing center closures or capacity limits.

The proposed changes to teacher testing are largely the same as those proposed last year in Assembly Bill 1982, which addressed the CBEST, and Assembly Bill 2485, which addressed the CSET. Both failed to pass before the end of the legislative session last year. The biggest difference between the budget proposal and last year’s bills is that the bills, meant to help teachers complete their credentials during the coronavirus pandemic, were set to end after three years. The new proposal has no sunset date.
Note: In order to assist with the mental health needs of students as they return to in-person instruction the Governor and the Legislature are proposing to provide billions of dollars for this purpose.

**Schools Face Mental Health Crisis Among Students as Pandemic Trauma Remains**

By Laura Newberry  
*Los Angeles Times*  
May 31, 2021

Before the pandemic, Jessica Bibbs-Fox’s eighth-graders would parade into her classroom bursting with energy. “Settle down,” she’d playfully shout over the clamor of voices.

Now, Room 18 at Kelly Elementary is eerily quiet. Her 14 pupils are cordoned off by plexiglass shields. She pleads with them to participate during a math lesson — to say something, anything. The 20 students she teaches on Zoom are just as withdrawn. They turn in work sporadically, if at all. Every single student in her homeroom class has an F.

Bibbs-Fox, a Compton Unified School District teacher of 17 years, understands why this is happening. Many of her students have lost family members to COVID-19; their parents have lost jobs. They’ve stood in food lines. She can imagine the anxiety-tinged conversations at home over the last year about rent payments, sickness, police brutality and protests.

And she, too, is agonizing over what to do. She received one hour of mental health training during the last year, and relatively little overall during the span of her career.

“I’m not prepared to handle all the different varieties of trauma,” Bibbs-Fox said. “And yet I’m being held responsible for it. It’s a stress I can’t even describe.”

As the first responders of the school environment, K-12 educators such as Bibbs-Fox feel that they are ill-equipped and need more tools and training to navigate their students’ often crushing mental health challenges such as anxiety and depression brought on or exacerbated by the pandemic.

The overwhelming stresses of the last 14 months have magnified a long-simmering crisis of mental health struggles among students. Hospitals across the U.S. reported an alarming increase in attempted and completed suicides among youth. The rate of children ages 11 through 17 who were screened in 2020 for anxiety and depression was 9% higher than in 2019, according to a Mental Health America report.

Relatively few teachers have been adequately trained to spot the signs of trauma and respond to it appropriately, mental health advocates say. Currently, there is no mandated mental health training for K-12 teachers, according to the California Department of Education.

At many schools in Southern California, teachers say it can take weeks for a student to connect with a counselor or social worker. The state’s average student-to-counselor ratio for the 2019-20 school year was 601 to 1, according to the American School Counselor Assn. — more than twice the recommended ratio.

Traumatic stress in children can be triggered by an overwhelming or frightening experience that threatens a child’s ability to cope with day-to-day life, psychologists say. It can also be caused by a series of events over a longer period of time, known as complex trauma.
During the pandemic, food and financial insecurity, exposure to death and illness, prolonged isolation and fear of contracting the virus have triggered traumatic stress. Youth of color from hard-hit communities are particularly vulnerable. Common symptoms of such stress among children include irritability or emotional outbursts, acting hopeless or withdrawn, and difficulty paying attention or retaining new information, therapists say.

While reopened schools provide optimism that the worst of the pandemic is over, returning students must readjust to a social environment and a structured schedule, on top of the pressure to make up for learning losses. And teachers will need to navigate the varied ways students will respond to that stress — whether they are prepared to or not.

“You can say ‘That’s not my job,’ but when the trauma is sitting in front of an educator in history class, in circle time, and they don’t feel like you have the skills to address it — it’s completely debilitating,” said Robin Gurwitch, a psychologist and psychiatry professor at Duke University who studies how to support children in the aftermath of disasters.

Educators in California are required to undergo annual training on how to recognize and report child abuse, and through this basic knowledge of childhood trauma is given.

Otherwise, it is up to California school districts or individual schools to decide what kind of mental health training they will provide to teachers. And there are limited professional development hours amid an onslaught of competing interests, namely updated curriculum standards and now the physical safety of students.

Teachers shouldn’t be expected to take on the role of counselor, advocates say. But ideally, they should be able to identify signs of trauma and respond in a way that creates a safe and nurturing environment for their students. This includes modeling emotional regulation in times of stress; giving children an opportunity to express feelings of anxiety and fear; and establishing empathic bonds with students by truly listening to them.

“Even just saying something like, ‘I understand you’re having a really hard time. I know that this is not how you usually are,’ can make a big difference,” said Marleen Wong, a social work professor at USC and an expert on school crisis response.

And yet even advocates for such training within academia say that their hands are tied. Credentialing programs already have jam-packed curriculums that prioritize teaching practices sensitive to equity and diversity, said Tomás Galguera, professor of education at Mills College. It’s a lot to fit into a single year.

“For people like me who have to prepare such teachers, we have to choose — what is most immediately necessary for these folks who are going to go on to teach?” Galguera said.

**Students’ outbursts, sadness**

Kindergarten and first-grade teacher Jesenia Chavez over the last year has watched hardship engulf her students, many of whom are immigrants who entered the country without visas. They’ve become increasingly sad and withdrawn as their families face evictions, deportation hearings and the death of loved ones to COVID-19.
The seven students she began teaching in person last month at UCLA Community School in Koreatown are thirsty for connection and need a lot of one-on-one care. One girl darts outside to the playground any chance she gets. A boy came to class for two days and then didn’t return. The new routine overwhelmed him.

Online, half of her pupils keep their cameras off. Participation on Zoom is nearly nonexistent; she will give instructions once, twice, five times, to no avail. “Can you all show me your work?” Chavez will ask. If she’s lucky, a single student will hold up a worksheet.

When she calls on individual students, asking them why they aren’t doing work, they log off. So she tries to be as entertaining as possible, interspersing math and reading lessons with interactive games in a desperate attempt to inspire her 6-year-olds.

Chavez is afraid that they will completely disengage if she pushes them too hard, or that she will further harm their fragile psyches. She recognizes that the ever-growing waitlist for students to connect with her school’s social worker makes it all the more vital for her to know how to respond to students’ emotional outbursts or disengagement.

“You can’t teach if you have six kids screaming in the corner,” Chavez said. She anticipates this could be a likely scenario in the fall.

Chavez’s employer, L.A. Unified School District, launched an hourlong module on trauma-informed school communities in 2020. The district has also offered access to 20 hours of online trainings on crises and mental health behaviors, which are encouraged but not required.

“The training is available, but they’re like, do it on your off time,” Chavez said. “They aren’t creating the space and time for us to do it.”

**Funding boost brings hope**

The pandemic has propelled a push in recent years for teachers to become better trained in trauma-informed practices.

State Sen. Anthony Portantino (D-La Cañada Flintridge) introduced a bill in December that would require at least half of each school’s staff to participate in an evidence-based mental health training program. And teachers unions are increasingly recognizing the importance of such training.

A flood of financial resources is pouring in to help. Gov. Gavin Newsom announced this month that schools will receive a massive influx of funding — $4 billion for youth mental health support, $3.3 billion for teacher and school employee training, and $3 billion for “community schools,” where education is integrated with healthcare and mental health services.

And social-emotional learning has taken on greater prominence in teacher credentialing curriculum. When deftly incorporated into the school day, teachers empower students to build supportive relationships and show them how to identify and manage their emotions. But it is distinct from being able to recognize and respond to the signs of trauma.

“Let’s say you create the culture for someone to share. They share. What do you do now?” Bibbs-Fox said. “These kids got real issues, real problems.”
Some districts are confronting this issue head-on. Lawndale Elementary School District in the South Bay, for example, established a professional development series during the 2019-2020 school year that teaches educators how to recognize the effect of trauma and respond in an informed manner.

The series was prompted by a surge in discipline referrals, said Maria Ruelas, lead social worker for the district. She saw that teachers were sending students to the office for behavioral issues that they could have handled themselves.

“When a student’s acting out, we’ve taught our teachers to ask, ‘What happened to you?’ instead of ‘What’s wrong with you?’” said Ruelas, who gave a talk on the initiative at the American Council for School Social Work’s 2020 conference. She was floored by how many administrators wanted to provide similar trainings.

In the end, she told them, it comes down to making the time for it.
From the Office of the Superintendent
To the Members of the Board of Education
Prepared by: Karin Temple, Chief Operating Officer
Cabinet Approval: 

Regarding: Summer Swim Program

The purpose of this communication is to provide the Board updated information regarding joint planning with the City of Fresno PARCS Department to open high school pools for community use during the summer, for swim lessons and recreational swimming. As in past years, the district will provide pool maintenance and custodial support, with the City providing staffing (swim instructors, lifeguards, pool supervisors).

Due to expansion of the district’s summer school program (which uses pools for physical education) and increased use of pools for school aquatic activities, no-fee community recreational swimming will be scheduled on weekend afternoons, noon-5:00pm. The first pools to be opened for recreational swimming will be Edison and Roosevelt, followed by McLane, Fresno and Hoover as staffing allows. Currently June 26 is targeted as the opening date for recreational swimming, with the program operating through August 8. The number and timing of pools open to the community will depend on availability of pool staff. The City is aggressively recruiting/hiring lifeguards and providing opportunities for lifeguard certification classes.

For swim lessons (fee-based), Roosevelt is the priority based on past enrollments. Lessons will be offered on four consecutive Saturdays starting July 10, 10:00am-noon. Other pools identified for swim lessons are Fresno and Hoover, pending staffing availability.

In addition to district pools, the City’s pools will be open for lessons and recreational swimming. Both programs will be promoted to the community using multiple means of communication in multiple languages.

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

Approved by Superintendent
Robert G. Nelson Ed.D. Date: 06/11/21
Regarding: Recommendation to Reject Bid 21-43 on June 16, 2021 Board Meeting Agenda

The purpose of this communication is to provide the Board information regarding item A-30 on the June 16, 2021 Board meeting agenda, recommending rejection of a bid for a planned HVAC project. The recommendation is due to the district receiving only one bid significantly in excess of the engineer’s estimated cost for the project, likely a result of the impacted spring/summer bidding/construction period. For the best use of district resources, staff recommends re-bidding the project in the future, in a more competitive bidding environment. Upgrading school kitchen HVAC systems remains a priority.

If you have questions or need further information, please contact Karin Temple at 457-3134.
Fresno Unified School District
Board Communication

From the Office of the Superintendent
To the Members of the Board of Education
Prepared by: Amanda Harvey, Nutrition Services Director
Cabinet Approval:

Regarding: Nutrition Services Farm to Summer Celebration Week

The purpose of this communication is to provide the Board information regarding the Nutrition Services Department’s participation in California’s Farm to Summer (F2Summer) Celebration Week, June 21-25, 2021. The week is dedicated to celebrating local foods and providing opportunities for agricultural-based education activities. This is a voluntary recognition program through the U.S. Department of Agriculture, implemented by the Nutrition Services Division of the California Department of Education.

The district will participate in F2Summer through menu offerings at all summer school and serving sites. Local menu items include broccoli, celery, cucumber, oranges, plums, raisins, watermelon, and milk. Nutrition education opportunities are available through our continued participation with Cal Fresh Healthy Living, University of California, and Dairy Council of California.

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

Approved by Superintendent
Robert G. Nelson Ed.D.  Date: 06/11/21
Regarding: Agreement with City of Fresno Police Department

The purpose of this communication is to provide the Board information regarding negotiations with the City of Fresno for reduction of payments for Student Resource Officers (high schools) and Student Neighborhood Resource Officers (middle schools), to recognize reduced services during the period of school closure due to the pandemic. The City has authorized a credit of $459,400 to the district, which will be applied by reducing the amount due for the remainder of the 2020/21 agreement in combination with a credit reflected on the recommended 2021/22 agreement.

If you have questions or need further information, please contact Karin Temple at 457-3134.
Fresno Unified School District
Board Communication

BC Number OS-5

From the Office of the Superintendent  Date: June 11, 2021
To the Members of the Board of Education
Prepared by: Karin Temple, Chief Operating Officer  Phone Number: 457-3134
Cabinet Approval:  

Regarding: City of Fresno FAX (Fresno Area Express) Transit System

The purpose of this communication is to provide the Board information regarding preliminary discussion with City of Fresno Transportation Department staff related to the City’s fare-free FAX services. Since March 1, 2021, no fare has been collected from FAX riders, and evaluation of the potential duration of the program is underway. The City is reaching out to local agencies that benefit from the transit system to identify prospective partners to help support a continued fare-free program.

In the past, Fresno Unified has expended approximately $350,000 annually on FAX daily tokens and monthly passes for students using FAX buses for transportation to/from school. The FAX system is beneficial for students who may not live within proximity to a district bus stop, who go to a school not served by district transportation, or for whom the FAX schedule/route is more convenient. If the City elects to continue the fare-free bus program, there may be consideration of a recommendation for the district to provide the City with a level of support similar to previous expenditures. Discussions are exploratory only and no commitments have been made. The Board will be updated as more information becomes available.

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

Approved by Superintendent
Robert G. Nelson Ed.D.  Date: 06/11/21
From the Office of the Superintendent
To the Members of the Board of Education
Prepared by: Jeremy Ward, Assistant Superintendent

Regarding: Summer Home Communication

The purpose of this communication is to provide the Board information regarding utilization of Educational Leadership Foundation services by the Extended Learning Department as one way of communicating with families of students in grades nine through twelve about the nature of in-person learning and credit recovery this summer.

Educational Leadership Foundation is reaching out to all 8,997 families leading up to the first day of summer instruction on June 14 to share that we will safely offer in-person instruction for all high school students in need of recovering credits for graduation or for A-G completion for California State University or University of California entrance requirements. Online credit recovery services are also offered to families that indicate that they would prefer a virtual format of instruction.

In addition, to the informational phone calls being made by Educational Leadership Foundation, school site counselors, administrators and summer academy teachers are also making individual phone calls to identified students and families to introduce themselves and offer more specific information about this summer’s program to help transition and support students and families.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Jeremy Ward at 248-7465.

Approved by Superintendent
Robert G. Nelson Ed.D.  Date: 06/11/21
Regarding: Summer 2021 Graduation

The purpose of this communication is to provide the Board information regarding the Summer 2021 graduation ceremony for high school seniors that complete diploma requirements during June or July 2021.

Summer Credit Recovery Academy at the comprehensive high schools begins on June 14, 2021 and concludes on July 26, 2021.

Graduation for high school seniors completing diploma requirements during summer is scheduled for July 27, 2021 at the Audra McDonald Theater on the Roosevelt High School campus; ceremonies begin at 9:00 am.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Jeremy Ward at 248-7465.
Regarding: Update on Student Academic Level Status and Aligning to Needs

The purpose of this communication is to provide the Board an update on how school sites are using assessments along with the process you use to determine learning loss and how we respond.

**Daily Measurements:**
Teachers utilize Curriculum built checking for understanding strategies that are incorporated in the adopted curriculum and are provided “in the moment” formative assessments that allows them to intervene in real time to address specific gaps in skills.

Rubrics and assignments/tasks are embedded in the curriculum and/or designed by the teacher. This allows the teacher to provide supports or intervene for the whole class, one on one, and small groups during instruction.

**Weekly-Monthly**
Common Formative Assessments are built within each curriculum for weekly and end of unit monitoring. This provides very specific information on what each individual student understands from the instructional objective and allows teachers to modify instruction, provide intervention and revise future curriculum to support all students.

School Site Fresno Unified School District Progress Grade Reports are communicated to students and parents/guardians to help them understand performance expectations and identifying the student's areas of strength and those areas needing improvement. This provides students with feedback on their learning, communicates to parents about their student’s academic achievement, informs teachers for instructional planning, and demonstrates whether students have mastered the skills needed for the next level of learning.

**Quarterly**
The iReady Diagnostic assessment helps teachers determine what students understand to build on the students’ strengths and address their specific needs. These are administered at the beginning, middle and end of year.

*The CDE states that “diagnostic assessments are intended to help teachers identify what students know and can do in different domains to support their students’ learning. These kinds of assessments help teachers determine what students understand to build on the students’ strengths and address their specific needs. Diagnostic and formative tools can guide curriculum planning and teaching in more specific ways than most summative assessments.”*

This provides the student, teacher, and parent with specific areas in which the student needs to improve in. The student is then assigned specific lessons by group or individual with exact areas needed to support learning gaps.
Quarterly Grades help students and parents/guardians understand performance expectations and identifying the student's areas of strength and those areas needing improvement. Students receive feedback on their learning, communicates to parents about their student’s academic achievement, informs teachers for instructional planning, and demonstrates whether students have mastered the skills needed for the next level of learning.

State Interim Assessment Blocks are used by teachers to provide ongoing formative assessments based on specific state instructional standards for grades three through eight and eleven. Teachers utilize the information to modify and improve their curriculum, intervene with small groups, and provide tiered levels of intervention.

Yearly
The California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress is administered as part of California’s state testing program. It assesses student mastery of the Common Core State Standards. School sites utilize mastery of the knowledge and skills aligned to the Common Core State Standards and provide curriculum adjustments, beginning of the year groupings, and schoolwide tiered interventions.

RESPONDING TO ABOVE RESULTS: (Structures Used When Responding to Students Having Difficulty Learning)

- In Class intervention
  - One on one
  - Small group
  - Whole Class
- Out of class
  - One on One or Small Group Tutoring
  - Monday Targeted In Person Support
  - Tuesday through Friday Targeted Tutoring
  - Curriculum online tiered supports catered to specific student level (video, lesson path learning)
- Multiple Tiered Systems of Support is a systemic, continuous-improvement framework in which data-based problem solving and decision-making is practiced across all tiered levels.
  - Students both academically and social emotionally are targeted within specific tiered levels and provided differentiated supports based on their Red/Yellow or Green Tier.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Edward Gomes at 457-3781.

Approved by Superintendent
Robert G. Nelson Ed.D.  Date: 06/11/21
From the Office of the Superintendent  
To the Members of the Board of Education  
Prepared by: Ambra O’Connor, Prevention & Intervention Executive  
Cabinet Approval:  

Regarding: Left of Bang Filmmaking Mentoring Program  

The purpose of this communication is to provide the Board an update on a new innovative mentoring program, Left of Bang. This pilot project was initially implemented during school closure to provide targeted support for students interested in the filmmaking industry. The program is in partnership with Brian Hooks, a Hollywood actor, writer, and movie producer. Elevating new opportunities for inner-city youth. Mr. Hooks utilizes a mentoring approach to teach high school students the basics of filmmaking through his Filmmaking 101 class which is offered virtually every other Saturday.  

The program is currently offered to 20 Fresno Unified students. The students have been able to learn from Brian and other guests in the industry including actors Anthony Anderson, JB Smooth, Vivica Fox, Kel Mitchell and Tabitha Brown. Other guests have included make-up artist Araxi Lindsey and Disney executive Ralph Farquar.  

In addition to participating in the mentoring sessions, Fresno Unified students have been offered the opportunity to participate in creating and acting in a Netflix movie! Casting will take place in July for acting roles, production, and operations. Production is scheduled to begin in September 2021 with a planned release in 2022. The students are excited to travel to Los Angeles and have hands-on exposure to the many aspects of filmmaking. Over 4,000 students are provided with mentoring services annually through mentoring programs including Peer Mentoring, e-Mentoring, My Brother’s Keeper, Young Men of Character and Girl Power and other partnerships.  

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Ambra O’Connor at 457-3340.  

Approved by Superintendent  
Robert G. Nelson Ed.D.  
Date: 06/11/21
From the Office of the Superintendent
To the Members of the Board of Education
Prepared by: Raine Bumatay, Principal
Cabinet Approval:  

Regarding: The 2021 Citizenship and Integration Grant Program Application

The purpose of this communication is to provide the Board information regarding the proposed application to the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) for the 2021 Citizenship and Integration Grant Program. The grant application provides the opportunity to prepare lawful permanent residents for citizenship by offering both citizenship instruction and naturalization services. Fresno Adult School provides citizenship classes that are required for the program and partners with the San Joaquin College of Law to provide naturalization services.

USCIS recognizes that naturalization is the most important milestone in the civic integration of immigrants. Naturalization requirements, such as knowledge of English and United States history and government encourage civic learning and build a strong foundation upon which immigrants can fully integrate into society. Through preparing for naturalization, immigrants will gain the tools to become successful citizens and meet their responsibilities as United States citizens.

The goal of the Citizenship and Integration Grant Program is to expand the availability of high quality citizenship preparation services for lawful permanent residents across the nation and to provide opportunities for lawful permanent residents to gain the knowledge and skills necessary to integrate into the fabric of American society. Additional activities that support this goal include identifying, implementing, and sharing best practices in citizenship preparation; increasing the use of and access to technology in citizenship preparation programs; working with local libraries and museums that serve as vital resources for immigrant communities; and incorporating strategies to foster welcoming communities as part of the citizenship and civic integration process.

The grant award would provide $250,000 in funding for program implementation.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Raine Bumatay at 457-6024.
Regarding: Approval for Special Education Annual Budget and Service Plans and Descriptions with the Local Plan for Fiscal Year 2021/2022

The purpose of this communication is to provide the Board information regarding the processes and procedures involved in the approval of the Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) Local Plan. This local plan comprises of SELPA governance and administration, annual budget and service plans, attachments, and applicable certifications for fiscal year 2021/2022 and these documents will be submitted to the Board for approval at the June 16, 2021 meeting.

All SELPAs are required to submit annual budget and service plans to identify expected expenditures and include a description of services along with the location of the services. It is a statutory requirement to annually submit the plans to the California Department of Education by June 30, 2021 after holding a public hearing and after board approval.

- The budget plan is reflective of the budget being adopted by our Board for fiscal year 2021/2022
- The service plan indicates which services are provided at each of the sites across the SELPA based on October 07, 2020 data from the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS)

The public hearing will be held on June 14, 2021 via online videoconferencing. Notice of the public hearing will be posted on the Special Education website and published in the Fresno Bee at least 15 days in advance. The following activities will take place:

- A recorded school messenger notice to families of students with disabilities
- Proposed Governance and Administration along with annual budget and service plans for public review on the Department of Special Education website

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Sean Virnig at 457-3227.

Approved by Superintendent:
Robert G. Nelson Ed.D.  Date: 06/11/21
Regarding: Community Justice Conference Center Partnership

The purpose of this communication is to provide the Board an overview of the district partnership with the Community Justice Conference Center (CJC) and the services provided, as mentioned during the June 02, 2021 Board meeting.

The Department of Prevention and Intervention first began a partnership with CJC in 2018 through a multi-agency collaboration which included the Fresno Police Department, Fresno County District Attorney, Fresno County Juvenile Court, and the Fresno County Probation Department. An agreement was made to allow the officers to make referrals for community justice conferencing for students involved in specific cases of first-time misdemeanor crimes. At the time of the initial agreement, CJC was operational through Fresno Pacific University and they have since established their own independent organization. While this agreement is a multi-agency partnership, it has always been solely funded through the district.

Although referral volume has been lower than originally anticipated, an agreement in the amount of $50,000 to continue the partnership on a per case basis for the 2021/22 school year was agreed upon with CJC in April 2021. As mentioned during the June 02, 2021 Board meeting, CJC subsequently drafted and shared a separate proposal with members of the Board and district executive leadership which included an expansion of services at a proposed amount of $1.5 million.

Subsequent to the meeting, the Department of Prevention and Intervention was able to connect with CJC to learn more about the proposal and why it had not been shared during any of the discussions with the district as we were drafting the 2021/22 agreement. CJC leadership apologized for the miscommunication and explained that the proposal was not meant to be a request for funding from the district only but an overview of what would be required should their organization get contributions from agencies and community partners in the future. CJC further explained they would train community members to facilitate any potential future expansion.

The Community Justice Conference Center is a valued partner and their restorative justice conferencing services for criminal violations compliment the work of our restorative practices counselors focusing on student conflict and disciplinary issues. Services will continue as outlined and agreed upon in the 2021/22 contract. We will continue to work together to assess capacity and identify any potential need for expansion in the future.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Ambra O'Connor at 457-3340.