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Robert G. Nelson, Ed.D.

BOARD COMMUNICATIONS – September 24, 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, Ed.D. Superintendent Calendar Highlights

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES – Santino Danisi, Chief Financial Officer

AS-1 Kim Kelstrom School Services Weekly Update Report
AS-2 Kim Kelstrom Weekly Attendance Report
AS-3 Tammy Townsend 2021/22 Local Control and Accountability Plan
Final Approval

OPERATIONAL SERVICES – Karin Temple, Chief Operations Officer

OS-1 Karin Temple Disposition of Hedges Property
OS-2 Karin Temple Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning
Improvements

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP – Kim Mecum, Chief Academic Officer

SL-1 Jeremy Ward A-G Completion Improvement Grant
SL-2 Edward Gomes Update on Senate Bill 328

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: September 24, 2021

Phone Number: 457-3884

Regarding: Superintendent Calendar Highlights

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

- Attended the California Avenue Neighborhood West Fresno Community Meeting
- Held press conference regarding vaccine and testing clinics at Fresno Unified Schools
- Met with Executive Cabinet
- Attended Dailey Board Meeting
- Participated in Equity-Centered Pipeline Initiative Launch Meeting with the Wallace Foundation
- Met with Labor Partners
- Attended the Fresno County Superintendent's Advisory Committee Meeting
- Attended the CTE Advisory Meeting
- Attended the Cradle to Career Leadership Meeting
- Participated in call regarding Fresno Chaffee Zoo Purpose Planning

Approved by Superintendent
Robert G. Nelson Ed.D.



Date: 09/24/21

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: September 24, 2021

Phone Number: 457-3907

Regarding: School Services Weekly Update Report for September 17, 2021

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 September 17, 2021 is attached and includes the following articles:

- Reforming the Recall Process – September 15, 2021
- Newsom Celebrates Recall Victory and Schools' Safety Record, But Warns: 'We Must Remain Vigilant' – September 15, 2021
- Two East Bay School Districts Consider COVID-19 Vaccine Requirement for Students – September 16, 2021

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: 09/24/21



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DATE: September 17, 2021

TO: Robert G. Nelson
Superintendent

AT: Fresno Unified School District

FROM: Your SSC Governmental Relations Team

RE: ***SSC's Sacramento Weekly Update***

Governor Newsom Soundly Beats Recall

The biggest news this week was that Governor Gavin Newsom easily defeated the recall effort and will finish out the rest of his first term.

While it will take several weeks to count all of the ballots, the current margin from the Secretary of State's Office shows a resounding 64% to 36% voting against the recall. Even if that margin narrows as the rest of the votes are counted, it won't be enough to oust the sitting Governor.

According to the Department of Finance, the recall election cost taxpayers approximately \$276 million. The price tag for the special election combined with recall process, including the low bar to trigger a recall and the lack of a runoff election for the top-two vote getters should a governor be recalled, has prompted the chairs of the Assembly and Senate Committees on Elections to announce that they will be holding a series of joint hearings to discuss improvements to California's recall laws (you can find more information about the recall reform efforts in the *Fiscal Report* article below, entitled "*Reforming the Recall Process*").

With the election behind him, Governor Newsom can now focus on the hundreds of bills that are currently on his desk awaiting action. Last Friday, the Legislature concluded its work for the first year of the 2021–22 Legislative Session, which we detailed in last week's update. The Governor has until Sunday, October 10, 2021, to sign or veto measures.

As the Governor begins to take action on bills, we will not only be monitoring what he signs or vetoes, but also the accompanying signing or veto messages that comes along with those actions. Governor Newsom's veto and signing messages are important to follow as they help inform his legislative priorities and policy principles, giving lawmakers and stakeholders a clearer roadmap as to how to get his approval on legislation in future years.

At this point in time, no action has been taken yet on the education bills approved by the Legislature last week. We will continue to monitor his actions and keep you posted of the education bills he signs and vetoes in subsequent updates.

Leilani Aguinaldo

Reforming the Recall Process

By Kyle Hyland
School Services of California Inc.'s *Fiscal Report*
September 15, 2021

Less than an hour after the polls closed at 8:00 p.m. last night, nearly all of the major networks projected that Governor Gavin Newsom had easily defeated the recall effort and will finish out the rest of his term as California's chief executive.

With 100% of the precincts partially reporting, the Secretary of State's Office shows the current margin is 63.9% voting "no" and 36.1% voting "yes" on the recall. While it will take a couple of weeks to count all of the ballots, the nearly 10 million ballots already tallied show that Newsom will easily retain his office and likely feels strongly about his prospects to be reelected to a second term next November after such a decisive victory.

Since the recall election was certified by the Secretary of State, there have been conversations in the Legislature and around the state about reforming the recall process, particularly the low bar it takes to trigger an election (12% of those who voted in the last gubernatorial election). This morning, Assemblymember Marc Berman (D-Menlo Park) and Senator Steve Glazer (D-Contra Costa), the chairs of the Assembly and Senate Committees on Elections, released a [joint statement](#) saying that they will hold a series of bipartisan joint hearings in the coming months to discuss potential improvements to California's recall laws. The intent of these hearings is to produce a proposal that will be taken up in the Legislature in 2022. Any changes approved by the Democratically-controlled Legislature next year would also have to go before voters on either the 2022 primary or General Election ballot, as any change to the state's Constitution needs to be approved by a majority of voters.

Recent polling shows that changes to the recall process are supported by a strong majority of likely voters in California. The Public Policy Institute of California's (PPIC) [July 2021 Survey](#) found that 60% of likely voters support changing the recall laws so that an elected official can only be recalled due to illegal or unethical activity. Currently, an elected official can be subject to a recall election for any or no reason. A strong majority (55%) of likely voters also support raising the valid signature threshold to trigger a gubernatorial recall from 12% to 25%. Less than one-third (32%) of likely voters think that the recall process is fine in its current form, but an overwhelming majority (86%) of voters support the state having a mechanism for constituents to recall elected officials.

This means that we will likely see the Legislature attempt to put changes that are palatable to voters, like the revisions that polled well in the PPIC survey, on the 2022 primary or General Election ballot. This is something that we will be monitoring as any changes to California's recall laws will have implications for the entire state, including local educational agencies.

Note: A day after defeating the recall, Governor Newsom touted the state's safety record and doubled down on his push for vaccines, masks, and testing.

Newsom Celebrates Recall Victory and Schools' Safety Record, But Warns: 'We Must Remain Vigilant'

Visiting middle school in Oakland Unified, Newsom says he feels humbled and energized

By Carolyn Jones
EdSource
September 15, 2021

A day after he resoundingly defeated a Republican-led recall effort, Gov. Gavin Newsom touted California schools' safety record and doubled down on his push for vaccines, masks, testing and other measures to curb the spread of Covid.

"California has one of the lowest case rates in America. Why? Because we led with science," Newsom said while visiting an Oakland middle school campus Wednesday afternoon. "I'm grateful for the school districts that didn't just embrace the mask mandate, but the spirit of the mandate. ... But I'm not naive. This isn't over. We have to maintain our vigilance."

Newsom, who defeated the recall effort by nearly 30 percentage points, spent about an hour at the middle school campus of Melrose Leadership Academy, a K-eight dual-immersion school in Oakland Unified. He visited a student leadership class, talked to students about elections and gave out ice pops on the playground.

Calling California classrooms some of the safest places for students to be, Newsom pointed to the relatively low school infection rates and the willingness of students and staff to comply with Covid safety guidelines. Only nine schools in California have been forced to close due to Covid outbreaks since campuses reopened last month, he said, compared with about 2,000 nationwide. Oakland Unified had 11 positive cases when schools first opened but zero since then, he noted — evidence that Covid safety measures are working.

Newsom said he felt energized by his time with the students and humbled by the election results.

"Do I feel vindicated? I see this as a gift. It's a privilege to represent the fifth-largest economy in the world, one of the most diverse democracies," he said. "I feel enlivened, but also a deep sense of responsibility, because people are counting on us to keep them safe and healthy."

He also noted that the pandemic allowed him and the Legislature to quickly push through an education agenda that may have taken years otherwise. He pointed to the state's \$125 billion allotment for K-12 schools, the largest in state history; funding for after-school programs for all students; free meals for all students; an extended school year; and college savings accounts with state-provided seed money for all children in California.

But challenges lie ahead, he said, such as combating vaccine misinformation, protecting families facing eviction and spurring an economic recovery amid the continuing pandemic.

"While California has seen a decline in hospitalizations, I'm mindful that we saw a decline, as well, this time last year before a winter surge," he said. "We have a lot more work to do."

Note: Both the Oakland and West Contra Costa Unified School Districts' school boards plan to vote next week on whether to require mandatory COVID-19 vaccinations for all staff and eligible students 12 and older.

Two East Bay School Districts Consider COVID-19 Vaccine Requirement for Students

By Cierra Johnson and Ginger Conejero Saab
NBC Bay Area
September 16, 2021

Two school districts in the East Bay are taking a hard look at new COVID-19 vaccine requirements for students.

Leaders with the West Contra Costa Unified and Oakland Unified school districts are discussing the possibility of enforcing a vaccine mandate for all eligible students.

The Oakland Unified School District said they will vote on requiring the vaccine for all eligible students in a meeting next week.

If the resolution is approved, Oakland Unified School District would be the first school district in Northern California to pass such measure.

Earlier on Thursday, officials said that West Contra Costa school board members were planning to hold a special meeting next week that would mandate students 12 and older be fully vaccinated by Oct. 31. Those who don't make the deadline would have to switch to remote learning.

But as of Thursday night, a spokesperson with the West Contra Costa Unified School District told NBC Bay Area that while they are still exploring the possibility of a student vaccine mandate, they have not set a date to vote on it. It's a departure from the earlier statements.

Meanwhile, school board members in Oakland will vote on vaccine requirements for students 12 and older on Wednesday, according to the San Francisco Chronicle.

Oakland District 1 Director Sam Davis said there's still a lot that needs to be discussed but said the goal of the mandate is student safety.

"We really believe that what will make students safest is if all students age 12 and up are vaccinated," Davis said.

Davis sat with students from all over Oakland's high schools and learned there are a lot of concerns that need to be addressed.

"In terms of implementation, timeline, what exemptions there will be, those are big questions that I want to hear from my colleagues," Davis said. "This is just a proposal at this point."

Over 50% of children between 12 and 18 years old in Oakland are fully vaccinated, while over 70% have had one dose.

Natalie Gallegos Chavez, a junior at Oakland High School, fears those who refuse to get vaccinated could be forced back into distance learning.

“Our distance learning school is very packed and it’s not structured all the way correctly,” she said.

Others worry some students don’t have equal access to the tools needed to succeed in distance learning.

Meanwhile, health leaders in Marin County are preparing to vaccinate kids age 5-11, with the Food and Drug Administration anticipating approval of a Pfizer vaccine for those younger children next month. Marin County’s goal is to give the first dose to at least 75% of children in the county, according to a spokesperson.

“In order to do that, we are working very closely with the Marin County Office of Education to identify opportunities to have these school-based clinics as well as some one-day larger clinics to make it easy for families to access the vaccine,” said Laine Hendricks of Marin Public Health.

The health department will work with local pediatricians on a vaccination plan, and the vaccine would be optional, Hendricks added.

With more schools and communities shifting their vaccination efforts to children, the Los Angeles Unified School District made national news by setting a deadline of Oct. 31 for all eligible students to be vaccinated. The district saw some major outbreaks since school opened, with more than 5,000 students in the district testing positive.

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: Kim Kelstrom, Executive Officer
Cabinet Approval:



Date: September 24, 2021

Phone Number: 457-3907

Regarding: Weekly Attendance Report

The purpose of this communication is to provide the Board information regarding updated attendance accounting requirements for 2021/22, attendance procedures for students out on quarantine, and weekly attendance rates.

Assembly Bill (AB) 130 was signed into law on July 09, 2021. This bill makes changes to Independent Study and adds Education Code Section 46393 which requires LEAs to offer independent study as an educational option and to include a plan for offering independent study to pupils affected by school closures. Students that are provided more than 15-days of independent study are to be offered live interaction, synchronous instruction, tiered reengagement, and a plan for transitioning back to their home school.

Students identified for quarantine by the school nurse are given the option of short-term independent study and are provided simultaneous instruction or receive a short-term independent study packet. A new attendance code was implemented that is used to track students on quarantine based on the quarantine date range determined by the school nurse. This attendance code allows sites to track students learning remotely. Students on quarantine or attending virtually are being provided short-term independent study packets. Once a student submits their assignments, the teacher will value the work, and based on the submission, attendance will be accounted for, which will lead to an increased present attendance rate.

Weekly Attendance Data

The data below provides weekly attendance information for the periods of September 07, 2021 through September 17, 2021 and the prior year period of September 21, 2020 through September 25, 2020 for comparison. The data below does not include eLearn Academy students as there are different requirements for capturing attendance for students on independent study contracts and requires compliance with the master agreement to claim attendance.

	Week 6 9/13/21-9/17/21	Week 5 9/07/21-9/10/21	Week 6 - Prior Year 09/21/20-09/25/20
Present Attendance	85.5%	82.6%	93.3%
Students on Quarantine	4.8%	6.6%	0.0%
Excused Absences	4.6%	5.9%	2.9%
Unexcused Absences	5.1%	4.9%	3.8%

On Friday, September 17, 2021, there were 4,663 students with an excused absence due to quarantine issues. School sites continue to connect with families for tracing and to check on the students' wellbeing. Current enrollment for TK-12 in week 6 was approximately 69,777 students (which includes 4,448 students enrolled at eLearn Academy) compared to 69,766 students last year, a slight increase of approximately 11 students.

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

Approved by Superintendent
Robert G. Nelson Ed.D.



Date: 09/24/21

Fresno Unified School District
Board Communication

BC Number AS-3

From the Office of the Superintendent
To the Members of the Board of Education

Prepared by: Tammy Townsend, Executive Officer

Cabinet Approval:



Date: September 24, 2021

Phone Number: 457-3661

Regarding: 2021/22 Local Control and Accountability Plan Final Approval

The purpose of this communication is to provide the Board an update on the review process and approval of the Fresno Unified School District Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP).

The Fresno County Superintendent of Schools (FCSS) has completed their review, resulting in approval of the Fresno Unified School District LCAP. The process includes reviews by FCSS staff in both Educational Services and Financial Services. Both FCSS teams have confirmed their approval of the LCAP, which resulted in no substantive changes to the document. Throughout the review process, district staff worked to provide additional clarification or make minor technical adjustments to address the feedback received. The review was completed within the timeline required for FCSS approval.

The district continues to exceed legal requirements by including 100% of General Fund resources in the plan. Additionally, the review approval affirms the district's demonstration of increasing or improving services for unduplicated students. Meeting this requirement demonstrates the Board's continued commitment to improving educational outcomes for students living in disadvantaged circumstances.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Tammy Townsend, 457-3661.

Approved by Superintendent

Robert G. Nelson Ed.D.



Date: 09/24/21

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 *KSTemple*

Date: September 24, 2021

Phone Number: 457-3134

Regarding: Disposition of Hedges Property

The purpose of this communication is to provide the Board information regarding the district-owned vacant property at 2526/2450 E. Hedges Avenue (near Fresno and Olive). The .62 acres parcel previously housed a building most recently occupied by Technology Services. The building was vacated in 2019 and demolished in 2020 due to the potentially hazardous conditions it created.

The Hedges property is not suitable for a district facility due to its size, and it is planned to be offered for sale. Staff is working with a Board-approved real estate professional to market the property and has consulted legal counsel to ensure all statutory requirements are met. The property is zoned commercial and estimated to have a value between \$100,000 and \$200,000.

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

Approved by Superintendent
Robert G. Nelson Ed.D. *Robert G. Nelson*

Date: 09/24/21

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 *KSTemple*

Date: September 24, 2021

Phone Number: 457-3134

Regarding: Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning Improvements

The purpose of this communication is to provide the Board information regarding ongoing and planned improvements to heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems in district schools. On September 15, 2021, the Board discussed potential use of funding from the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act and Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER III) Fund, which provide funding to help address COVID-19 impacts. During the stakeholder input process on potential use of the funds, several groups indicated HVAC upgrades are a priority. Below are actions underway and planned to improve classroom ventilation and air conditioning/heating:

- At 17 schools (identified based on existing design), chiller water buffer tanks are being installed to increase the capacity of the water system, allowing HVAC fans to operate at higher speeds to increase air exchange and filtration.
- At 30 schools (identified based on existing design), work has been completed or is underway to increase the level of air filtration to MERV-13 (minimum efficiency reporting value). MERV-13 filters are recommended as the level of air purification needed to filter viruses. Only certain system designs can accommodate MERV-13 filtration due to motor and ducting capabilities.
- District-wide, contractors are evaluating all HVAC systems to develop scopes of work and cost estimates for upgrades to MERV-13 filtration. When this information is available, a recommended plan will be presented to the Board. The \$12 million identified for this work in the 2021/22 budget will fund upgrades at approximately 16 schools, and a district-wide long-term project is likely to be in the \$100 million range. Projects are currently underway at four schools (Aynsworth, Calwa, Ewing, and Turner) where the HVAC evaluations are complete, and scopes of work have been developed. As the projects move forward on a large scale and with the September 2024 deadline for expending funds, challenges are anticipated to include capacity of design firms, equipment manufacturing timelines, and availability of qualified contractors.

In addition to the work above, immediate actions to improve classroom ventilation include providing plug-in air purifier units to all schools and replacing air filters quarterly. The district also completes a variety of HVAC upgrade projects annually, as part of the bond-funded facility improvement program.

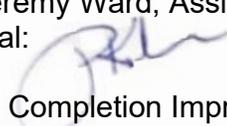
If you have questions or need further information, please contact Karin Temple at 457-3134.

Approved by Superintendent
Robert G. Nelson Ed.D. *Robert G. Nelson*

Date: 09/24/21

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: Jeremy Ward, Assistant Superintendent
Cabinet Approval: 

Date: September 24, 2021

Phone Number: 457-7465

Regarding: A-G Completion Improvement Grant

The purpose of this communication is to provide the Board information regarding the use of A-G Completion Improvement Grant funds to provide additional high school counselor positions. We would like to enhance effective monitoring and advisement of students towards completing A-G requirements for increased graduation rates and post-secondary matriculation.

As noted in a Board Communication provided on August 06, 2021, the A-G Completion Improvement Grant Program funds, Assembly Bill 130 (Section 13), are allocated by the Governor's General Fund to provide additional supports to Local Educational Agencies to help increase the number of California students who graduate high school meeting the A-G subject matter requirements for admission to the University of California and The California State University systems. For Fresno Unified, the estimated grant award is \$6.4 million in one-time funding which must be spent by June 30, 2026.

Resources will be utilized to hire additional high school counselors to improve counselor access to students to monitor, advise, and support each high school student's educational journey culminating in successful completion of A-G requirements, on-time graduation, and college and career readiness. Reducing counselor to student ratios increases the time a counselor has with each individual student and their families to provide the needed guidance for college matriculation.

The College & Career Readiness team reviewed all comprehensive counselor caseload ratios, A-G completion data and recommends allocating funds from the A-G Improvement Grant as follows:

- 1.0 FTE for all comprehensive high schools and 2.0 FTE for Duncan Polytechnical High School to expand counseling supports by bringing the student to counselor ratio across all high schools (comprehensive, specialty, alternative education) to approximately 300:1
- 1.0 FTE for a dual enrollment counselor dedicated to increasing communication and recruiting, monitoring, and supporting students and families with a focus on increased participation and matriculation to a four-year university

The College & Career Readiness team addressed the needs for counseling support at our Alternative Education sites in March 2021. The following recommendations were approved by the Board and added to support the following sites.

- 1.0 FTE for JE Young Counselor
- 1.0 FTE for Cambridge Counselor
- 1.0 FTE Head Counselor to oversee the team of all Alternative Education School Counselors

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Jeremy Ward at (559) 457-7465.

Approved by Superintendent
Robert G. Nelson Ed.D.



Date: 09/24/21

Fresno Unified School District
Board Communication

BC Number SL2

From the Office of the Superintendent
To the Members of the Board of Education
Prepared by: Edward Gomes, Instructional Superintendent
Cabinet Approval: 

Date: September 24, 2021

Phone Number: 457-3781

Regarding: Update on Senate Bill 328

The purpose of this communication is to provide the Board an update on Senate Bill (SB) 328 regarding middle schools to start their school day no earlier than 8:00 a.m., and high schools to start their school day no earlier than 8:30 a.m.

On October 13, 2019, Governor Newsom signed Senate Bill 328 following national research on the impact of sleep deprivation on adolescents and the benefits of a later school start time. This law will take effect on July 01, 2022, and Fresno Unified will make these changes starting August of 2022.

At this moment all Fresno Unified Middle Schools begin on or after 8:00 a.m. but not all high schools begin on or after 8:30 a.m.

We will begin communicating with students, parents, staff, and community during the 2021/22 school year to allow adequate time for all stakeholders to prepare for this change.

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: 09/24/21