BOARD COMMUNICATIONS – DECEMBER 09, 2022

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

BUSINESS AND FINANCIAL SERVICES – Patrick Jensen, Interim Chief Officer
BFS-1 Kim Kelstrom School Services Weekly Update Reports for
December 01, 2022
BFS-2 Steven Shubin Benefits Online Open Enrollment

COMMUNICATIONS – Nikki Henry, Chief Officer
C-1 Maiyer Vang Parent Advisory Committee

ENGAGEMENT & EXTERNAL PARTNERSHIPS – Wendy McCulley, Chief Officer
E&EP-1 Wendy McCulley State of Education Summary

INSTRUCTIONAL DIVISION – Dr. Natasha Baker, Chief Officer
ID-1 Bryan Wells Arts Education Update

OPERATIONAL SERVICES – Paul Idsvoog, Chief Officer
OS-1 Amanda Harvey District Wellness Program
From the Office of the Superintendent  
To the Members of the Board of Education  
Prepared by: Robert G. Nelson, Superintendent  
Cabinet Approval:

Regarding: Superintendent Calendar Highlights

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

- Held interviews for Chief of Equity and Access
- Attended the Foundation for Fresno Unified Schools Board Meeting and Holiday Gathering
- Met with ACSA Executive Team
- Met with Executive Cabinet
- Participated in Battelle for Kids Urban District Cohort Virtual Coaching Session with district staff
- Attended the Fresno Unified Coat Drive Celebration
- Attended the Fresno County Superintendent’s Advisory Committee Meeting
- Met with California State University Fresno and Fresno Unified staff to discuss potential Dual Enrollment opportunities
- Attended Legislative Committee Meeting
- Attended Community Schools Steering Committee Meeting
- Attended Cradle to Career Partnership Table Meeting

Approved by Superintendent  
Robert G. Nelson Ed.D.  Date: 12/09/2022
The purpose of this board communication is to provide the Board a copy of School Services of California’s (SSC) Weekly Updates. 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 01, 2022 is attached and includes the following articles:

- Inflation Decelerates While Downsides Continue – November 23, 2022
- Gavin Newsom Told President Joe Biden That He Won’t Run for President in 2024, Report Says – November 26, 2022
- California High Schools Need a Mission Overhaul – November 28, 2022

If you have any questions pertaining to the information in this communication, or require additional information, please contact Kim Kelstrom at 457-3907.
DATE: December 1, 2022

TO: Robert G. Nelson
Superintendent

AT: Fresno Unified School District

FROM: Your SSC Governmental Relations Team

RE: SSC’s Sacramento Weekly Update

Legislature to Gavel In the 2023-24 Legislative Session on Monday

While there are still a handful of Assembly and Senate race results uncalled, both houses will officially convene the 2023-24 Legislative Session this upcoming Monday, December 5, 2022.

Monday’s floor session will primarily be organizational, designed to swear in the 80 Assembly members and 20 Senators who were elected this past November. However, several lawmakers will likely use this opportunity to introduce legislation that represents their highest priorities for the upcoming year.

On December 5, the Legislature will also gavel in the special session to consider a windfall profits tax on oil companies. However, both Assembly and Senate leadership have said that while the special session will convene on December 5, no hearings or floor sessions will be conducted on the issue until January. This means that the Legislature will run the special session concurrently with the regular session. The Governor released his Proclamation on the special session on Wednesday afternoon. The Proclamation specifies the Legislature to consider and act upon legislation necessary to:

- Deter price gouging by oil companies by imposing a financial penalty on excessive margins, with any penalties collected to be returned to Californians

- Empower the Energy Commission and the Department of Tax and Fee Administration to more closely review and evaluate costs, profits, and pricing in the refining, distribution, and retail segments of the market for gasoline in California

- Provide for greater regulatory oversight of the refining, distribution, and retail segments of the market to prevent avoidable supply shortages and excessive price increases

- Make conforming changes to existing law consistent with the bullet points above
Going into the new session, Senate and Assembly Democrats retain their solid supermajorities in their respective houses. In the Senate, Democrats will control at least 31 of the 40 seats (one election was still too close to call as of this writing), which is the same advantage they enjoyed at the end of last session. On the Assembly side, Democrats will control at least 61 of the 80 seats, but could possible gain 1 or 2 more depending on the results of two elections that are still too close to call.

With a supermajority in both houses, Democrats conceivably would be able to pass any legislation requiring a higher two-thirds vote threshold, such as tax increases, constitutional amendments, or urgency measures, without having to reach across the aisle for Republican votes. However, the varied (and sometimes conflicting) interests among members of the Democratic caucuses could make rallying the necessary votes difficult for any supermajority-vote measures, especially for any measures that increase taxes. This situation will likely play out during the special session where moderate Democrats from purple districts may show reluctance to increase taxes.

Monday’s agenda will include the election of Senate and Assembly leadership positions where Senate President pro Tempore Toni Atkins (D-San Diego) and Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon (D-Lakewood) are expected to be swiftly reelected to their leadership posts. However, Rendon will only serve as the Assembly leader until the end of the fiscal year, after which Assemblymember Robert Rivas (D-Salinas) will take over as Speaker. This midyear transition plan was the result of a compromise reached by the Assembly Democratic Caucus in a meeting held last month.

The Legislature will then approve a couple of housekeeping resolutions and then adjourn for the month and not return to Sacramento until Wednesday, January 4, 2023.

Leilani Aguinaldo
Inflation Decelerates While Downsides Continue

By Anjanette Pelletier and Patti F. Herrera, EdD
School Services of California Inc.’s Fiscal Report
November 23, 2022

According to the latest Department of Finance (DOF) bulletin, the annual headline and core inflation rate in the United States continued to slow with slight declines in the general price levels, particularly in transportation costs, which include gasoline. Deceleration of inflation, or deflation, occurs when prices broadly fall in an economy, and October marks the fourth month of slowing of inflation. Deflation is influenced by supply of goods being higher than demand and can be impacted by the buying power of money. The deceleration of inflationary pressures has been the goal of the Federal Reserve (Fed), which has been raising the federal funds rate to cool the economy. Higher borrowing rates typically lead to decreased spending and can incentivize people to save, which reduces the amount of money in circulation, and should lead to lower inflation. U.S. headline inflation, which had reached a peak of 9.1% in July of 2022, decreased to 7.7%, while core inflation, which excludes costs of food and energy, declined to 6.3%. As campaigns for the elections were hitting their fever pitch, transportation inflation declined to 11.2%. The chart below, from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, shows California’s inflation rate keeping pace with overall U.S. rates for the period of 1980 through October of 2022.

Among the downsides of increasing interest rates is the potential impact on unemployment, which is seeing small increases in the U.S. and in California, with rates of 3.7% and 4.0%, respectively, according to the DOF. California continues to make small gains in some sectors, including education, health, and professional
services. However, the October data does not include the large number of technology layoffs that have occurred in November, which will influence upcoming unemployment numbers and the California economy. The slight increases in unemployment across the nation may influence the Fed to continue raising the federal funds rate, as the decelerations currently underway are not sufficient to meet the Fed’s goal for a low and steady inflation of 2.0%.

With respect to the state’s General Fund condition, following on the heels of below estimated receipts in September (see “September Revenue Collections Down” in the October 2022 Fiscal Report), California’s cash receipts for the month of October were well above the forecast for a variety of reasons. Personal income tax (PIT) refunds were lower than anticipated, which is likely related to a recent law allowing qualified taxpayers to claim pass-through entity (PTE) tax credits, resulting from corporation tax payments, as part of their PIT filings. This resulted in substantial PIT revenue differences for October over the 2022 Budget Act forecast. The DOF projects that much of the large gain may be due to a timing issue, as the PTE credits can be used in future tax years.

October’s “Big Three” revenue performance improves the state’s General Fund condition, which, according to the DOF bulletin, is a change from the first three months of the fiscal year. This may prove temporary, however, as the DOF notes that the PTE credit may reduce PIT revenues—the state’s single largest source of revenue—in the months to come.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>California 2022-23 “Big Three” Taxes (Year-to-Date)</th>
<th>In millions</th>
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<tr>
<td>Corporation Tax</td>
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Note: While there was some speculation that Governor Newsom was vying for a 2024 White House run, he apparently has told President Biden he will not run in 2024.

Gavin Newsom Told President Joe Biden That He Won’t Run for President in 2024, Report Says

By Maya Miller
*The Sacramento Bee*
November 26, 2022

Gov. Gavin Newsom won’t run for president in 2024, even if President Joe Biden decides not to seek a second term, Politico reported Saturday.

The governor told Biden and White House officials in an election night phone call, according to columnist Jonathan Martin.
“I’m all in; put me in coach,” Martin overheard Newsom saying as he spoke to Biden. “We have your back.” Newsom told Martin that he delivered the same message to administration officials during a visit to Washington this summer.

“I’ve told everyone in the White House, from the chief of staff to the first lady,” he said during an interview at governor’s mansion on election night.

The governor’s spokespeople did not immediately return calls or emails from The Sacramento Bee seeking confirmation.

Newsom’s declaration caps months of speculation about his political plans.

He drew huge national attention for his outspoken criticism of Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis and Republican policies on gun rights and abortion, conveyed with bill boards, newspaper ads and twitter videos. Newsom also called out Biden and the Democratic party for what he viewed as a failure to aggressively counter Republican messaging.

He even intimated that Biden, who turned 80 this week, was no longer up to the job, calling him a man “hard wired for a different world.”

Newsom spoke to Biden following an appearance at an election night watch party celebrating the resounding passage of Proposition 1, which embedded abortion rights in the California Constitution. He refused to answer questions from the Sacramento press corps and instead offered a brief statement praising California voters for moving their state forward on issues like abortion and free speech.

“We have governors that won their reelection tonight in other states that are banning books that are banning speech, that are banning abortion. And here we are in California moving in a completely different direction,” Newsom said. “That’s a deep point of pride.”

Note: This opinion piece describes the push from some education advocates to reconsider the mission of high schools to turn to individually tailored curricula.

California High Schools Need a Mission Overhaul

By Dan Walters

CalMatters
November 28, 2022

Most of the political debate in California over public education centers on money — particularly the annual exercise of determining how many billions of dollars the state will send to local school systems.

Occasionally, the debate shifts to actual education issues — such as whether universal pre-kindergarten programs could have a positive effect on the shamelessly low scores of the state’s elementary students on national academic achievement tests.
California’s public high schools only rarely draw political attention, despite the simple but important fact that they represent the end game of K-12 education. How well students do in high school is a major factor in whether they become successful adults, in both economic and personal terms.

Moreover, while instructional uniformity makes sense in elementary and perhaps even middle schools, as students go through what amounts to basic training, it makes little sense in high school, whose students have wide varieties of interests, aptitudes and ambitions.

Ideally, high school students should have access to individually tailored curricula that adapt to their varied attributes and thus best prepare them for the equally varied paths they are likely to pursue upon graduation — if, of course, they do graduate.

However, such individualized education is difficult and often expensive to provide, so local schools tend to adopt more or less uniform curricula, often pegged to the assumption that every graduate will go off to college.

The one-size-fits-all approach leaves many students foundering — especially those who by choice or aptitude don’t plan to pursue college degrees, but rather enter the workforce.

One result is that California faces chronic shortages of workers vital to a functioning society and economy, such as construction workers, plumbers, medical care providers, technicians to maintain our ever-more-complex household machines and mechanics who can fathom the digital spaghetti beneath the hoods of our cars.

For decades, California high schools, and even middle schools, offered wide varieties of classes in what was called “vocational education,” but they eroded as education officials adopted the fiction that every kid should go to college.

Lately, there’s been a semi-renaissance in what’s now called “career technical education” or CTE, but its availability is spotty. Some local systems embrace it with impressive results. Each year the state fair includes an exhibit of the truly astonishing projects that CTE students produce. However, other school districts continue the college-for-all fantasy, which inevitably encourages some students to drop out of high school.

Overhauling California’s high schools to make them more supportive of students’ individuality should be urgent business, but reform runs into a wall of institutional inertia.

The Thomas B. Fordham Institute, an Ohio-based organization that promotes educational reform, is sponsoring an interesting project to encourage high school reform, what it calls a “wonkathon” that invites educators and members of the public to propose ways in which the barriers to high school change can be overcome.

Fordham cites American high schools “widespread student disengagement, their lackluster outcomes in terms of post-secondary success, and their poor track record of preparing students to participate effectively in our democracy.”

Fordham is somewhat controversial because it espouses conservative education causes, such as charter schools and the “common core” curriculum that California and a number of other states have adopted.
That said, anything that brings more attention to improving how high schools treat their students is welcome. California needs young people who leave high school encouraged and prepared to make the most of their ambitions and innate talents, whether it’s a blue collar trade or a degree in rocket science.

A state that brags about its diversity shouldn’t strap its teenagers into educational straitjackets.
From the Office of the Superintendent  
To the Members of the Board of Education  
Prepared by: Steven Shubin, Executive Officer  
Cabinet Approval:  

Regarding: Benefits Online Open Enrollment

The purpose of this board communication is to provide the Board with an update on Open Enrollment. As previously reported on August 12, 2022, the Payroll & Benefits Department implemented a simpler and more sustainable online enrollment system. Open enrollment started on October 01, 2022 and ended on November 30, 2022.

With this being the first year of online Open Enrollment, communication of the new process was key. The team implemented an extensive communication campaign which included letters to employees as well as email reminders. The Benefits Department also had laptops available for those who needed help navigating the online form.

The district is excited to announce, over 4,000 employees went through the process of reviewing their benefit options online. Over 900 employees made changes to their benefits for the 2023 calendar year. The average over the past three years has been about 500. This equates to 47% of benefited employees that reviewed their coverage. This initiative has been a resounding success, and the future goal is for all District employees to review their benefits coverage as well as other important information regarding the Health and Welfare plans the district offers.

The Benefits team is currently working on the next online initiative which is Special Enrollment. This pertains to employees eligible to make changes outside of open enrollment, such as having a new child or getting married.

If you have any questions pertaining to the information in this communication or require additional information, please contact Steven Shubin at 457-6227.
From the Office of the Superintendent  
To the Members of the Board of Education  
Prepared by: Maiyer Vang, Interim Executive Director  
Cabinet Approval:  

Regarding: Parent Advisory Committee  

This communication aims to provide the Board with information regarding the Parent Advisory Committee (PAC). The PAC representatives advise district administration regarding the development of the Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) and the budgets that support the plan. 

The second PAC meeting took place on Thursday, November 20, 2022, at Parent University. The meeting had a total of 62 in attendance with 29 in person and 33 on Microsoft Teams. The meeting agenda consisted of the updated bylaws, minutes, election of new officers, the Parent Involvement Policy and Elementary Science Textbook Adoption. Below is a list of the 2022-23 Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) officers per the results from the election. 

**2022/23 Elected PAC Officers:** 
- Christopher De La Cerda, Duncan Polytech – Chairperson 
- Maria Gonzalez, Ewing – Vice-Chairperson 
- Raquel Pineda, Rowell - Secretary 

There are three scheduled upcoming PAC hybrid meetings left for the 2022/23 academic year. Our next meeting will be held on Thursday, January 26, 2023. The board is welcome to attend and join us virtually or in person with the logistics below. 

**Upcoming PAC Meeting dates:** 
- Thursday, January 26, 2023 
- Thursday, March 23, 2023 
- Thursday, May 25, 2023 

**To Join:** 
- In-person at Parent University, 850 N. Blackstone Avenue, Fresno, CA 93701 
- Virtual on Teams: [https://tinyurl.com/ykeau3jn](https://tinyurl.com/ykeau3jn) 
- Phone Conference #: 559-512-2623 | Phone ID #: 855 788 493# 

This link, [https://www.flickr.com/photos/fresnounified/albums/72177720303800589](https://www.flickr.com/photos/fresnounified/albums/72177720303800589), will take you to photographs captured during the in-person meeting on November 20, 2022. If you have questions or need more information, please contact Maiyer Vang at 559-250-1322. 

Approved by Superintendent  
Robert G. Nelson Ed.D.  
Date: 12/09/2022
Regarding: State of Education Summary

The purpose of this communication is to provide the Board information about the State of Education Gala and official launch of the Foundation for Fresno Unified Schools held on October 06, 2022, at the Fresno Chaffee Zoo.

The event garnered $241,550 in sponsorship pledges and $6,150 in ticket sales for a total anticipated cash income of $247,700. In addition, $15,169 received from in-kind donations brought the grand total for the event to $262,869.

The fundraising process initiated considerable new donor relationships which should have a lasting impact on foundation funding for many years to come. There were 53 sponsors for the event, with 23 (43%) of them being new donors to the district.

Regarding attendance and supporting participation, 386 tickets were sold and volunteers from Duncan, Edison, Fresno, King, McLane, Roosevelt, Sunnyside included approximately:
- 33 student performers (King African American Dance Troupe, Roosevelt HS PA Singers, and Edison High School String Trio)
- 10 CTE student volunteers for registration
- 6 adult chaperone volunteers

The top six donors will be sent student artwork completed by Sunnyside High School and coordinated by Marc Patterson of Curriculum, Instruction, and Professional Learning’s Art Department: Amazon, Scholastic, Citizens Business Bank, CSU Fresno, EECU, and Swun Math.

The Foundation, gala event, and Scott donation generated significant, local and international, media attention based on leading industry measures. Media research firm, Meltwater, calculated the Foundation’s media “reach/volume” in the millions, including exposures in Europe, India, South Africa, and Australia. The advertising value equivalent, the amount the coverage would have cost if paid for, exceeded $2,500,000. The media exposure was ranked as 100% positive publicity on Meltwater’s “tonality” scale.

If you have any questions or need further information, please contact Wendy McCulley at 457-3749.

Approved by Superintendent
Robert G. Nelson Ed.D. Date: 12/09/2022
From the Office of the Superintendent
To the Members of the Board of Education
Prepared by: Bryan Wells, Assistant Superintendent,
Department of Student Engagement and Heather Kuyper-McKeithen, Manager III,
Arts Education Department
Cabinet Approval:

Regarding: Arts Education Update

The purpose of this communication is to provide the Board with updates regarding the Music Education concerns:

- Music teachers have concerns about access to instruments. The Department of Student Engagement’s Arts Education Office will purchase enough instruments for each elementary school site using Arts Block Grant, Proposition 28 monies, or funds that may be identified through the Office of State and Federal Programs. Estimated cost are $81,000 to cover needs.
- Music teachers have valid and documented concerns about classroom teachers not sending students to music class during the allotted block of time, because the music portion of the day is in conflict with the academic supports.
- The district does not have enough music teachers (there are 44.3 FTE’s filled and 8.3 FTE’s vacant), as a result, school sites must share a vast majority of these teachers at the elementary levels, and only one person at the district office evaluates them.
- With hundreds of students, multiple principals, and elementary teachers across multiple school sites sharing a small number of music teachers, student access to music in lower-performing schools is negatively impacted because students in said schools require more instructional time to close those achievement gaps. School site schedules are very difficult to coordinate with so few music teachers. For students to have access to both required core instruction, instructional minutes, and music during the regular school day at lower performing schools in Fresno Unified that need intervention blocks, more music teachers are needed in the school district.
- To rectify these challenges, the Student Engagement office will be developing a budget ask that includes increasing the number of music and arts teachers, as well as management staff to support those music and arts educators.
- The Instructional Division may be requesting additional instructional time and incentives for higher-performing teachers to teach at the lowest-performing schools. We may introduce 'simultaneous music instruction' which would allow for band, choir, and strings to be taught at one specific time during the day which would alleviate the burden classroom teachers face when a block of students are missing from their instruction.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Bryan Wells at 457-3805.

Approved by Superintendent

Robert G. Nelson Ed.D.  

Date: 12/09/2022
The purpose of this communication is to provide the Board an update on the District Wellness Program. Program objectives are development, implementation and management of policies, programming, and professional development to achieve the district’s wellness goals. Initiatives will focus on improving food security and nutrition, increasing physical activity, providing increased social-emotional supports, and connecting students. Specific activities are described below.

- Oversees the District Wellness Steering Committee (DWSC) which is responsible for the oversight of school-level implementation of the Local School Wellness Policy (LSWP) and coordination of the triennial assessment.
- Actively recruit and maintain a District School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) comprised of a diverse group of parents to establish goals for and oversee school health and safety policies and programs.
  - SHAC 2022/2023 Goal: Develop a Student Wellness Framework to support the implementation of the LSWP and other health and safety policies and programs. Three in person SHAC meetings have been held during school year 2022/23.
- Identify and recruiting a cohort of school to pilot school site wellness committees.
- Completed and renewed the Tobacco-Free Certification for the District. Through 2025, Fresno Unified is now eligible to apply for funding from the CDE Tobacco-Use Prevention Education (TUPE) Program and receive direct or in-kind funding and support from the Fresno County Office of Education Safe and Healthy Kids Tobacco Prevention Program. All middle and high schools will be receiving anti-tobacco signage in English, Spanish, and Hmong.
- Work with internal and external partners to establish goals, evaluations, and strategies to enhance and increase healthy food access for Fresno Unified students.
  - Supported the Nutrition Service Department with implementation of the Lucky Tray Day at 70 elementary schools to increase breakfast participation.
  - Quarterly meetings are held with the Central California Community Foodbank (CCFB) to increase food access to students and families. The CCFB distributed 238,736 pounds of food between seven school sites during the 2021/2022 school year.
  - Received an Action for Healthy Kid’s NourishEd Grant. The goal of this grant is to build the capacity of the district, school sites and families to work together to prepare kids to be healthy in body and mind by supporting the district in creating a systematic and streamlined approach to nutrition education and promotion. This grant has been submitted to appear on the December 14, 2022, board of education meeting for ratification.
- Partnership with Fresno County Superintendent of Schools (FCSS) Health Youth Corps which engages and empowers high school students to own their health and become better informed
about social determinants that impact health and wellness. Eight teams across the district are participating during the 2022/23 school year.

- Represents Fresno Unified at the following community of practices groups: California Local School Wellness Policy Collaborative, Nutrition & Obesity Policy Research Evaluation Network, the National District Wellness Coalition, and the Schools for Healthy and Thriving Students, A Wellness Policy Consortium supported by Valley Children’s Healthcare, the Center for Wellness and Nutrition, and No Kid Hungry which allows the district to maintain the most current information related to K-12 and community wellness initiatives along with being an active partner in decision making policies within Fresno County.

If you have questions or need further information, please contact Amanda Harvey at 457-6278.