



BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING
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MINUTES – BOARD OF EDUCATION BOARD WORKSHOP

Fresno, California

January 18, 2023

Fresno Unified School District, Nutrition Center, 4480 N Brawley Avenue, Fresno, CA 93722.

At a Board Workshop of the Board of Education of Fresno Unified School District, held on January 18, 2023, there were present Board Members Cazares, Davis, Levine, Thomas, Wittrup and Board President Islas. Superintendent Dr. Nelson was also present.

For the record, Board Member Jonasson Rosas participated from the following teleconference location: 4135 E. Huntington Boulevard, Fresno, California 93702 which was open to the public.

Board President Islas CONVENED the Board Workshop at 5:03 p.m.

For the record, Board Member Thomas arrived at 5:30 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Ambra O'Connor led the Flag Salute.

BOARD WORKSHOP AGENDA ITEM

PRESENT and DISCUSS Overview of Nutrition Services

Staff will present an overview of Nutrition Services which will include a supply chain update, Federal Meal Requirements, and current and upcoming initiatives focused on the continuous improvement of school meals for students.

For the record, Board Members had comments/questions pertaining to the presentation. A summary is as follows:

President Islas: Requested clarity as to if recruitment has begun for the Regional Executive Chef positions.

Member Cazares: Suggested better messaging when there are changes to the school menu such as Peachjar or text messaging to help families plan. Requested clarity as to the two new entrée options and asked for an example of a hot and a cold option. Requested clarity as to where the Executive Chefs will be housed.

Requested clarity as to what an increased opportunity to scratch cooking will look like. Requested clarity as to if the kitchens at the high schools will have more scratch cooking taking place.

Member Davis: Requested clarity as to the responsibilities of the farm to table coordinator. Requested clarity as to if all food is prepared at the Nutrition Center. Commented the Alternative Education sites would like to have the same menu options as the high schools. Requested clarity as to the timeline for the Regional Executive Chef positions.

Clerk Wittrup: Requested clarity as to what is done with unused prepackaged food. Requested clarity if salad bars will return to middle and high schools.

Member Thomas: Requested clarity as to if the salad bars will be brought back and if so, when. Requested clarity as to what two sites have the two entrees. Requested clarity as to when the next student focused food survey will take place? Commented middle and high schools should be the starting point. Requested a survey to take place by end of year. Requested clarity on date of Lucky Tray Day. Requested clarity as to when Board members will be able to sample the new entrees. Commented students have provided feedback that food lines at schools are too long and requested clarity as to how to maximize space within cafeteria.

Member Levine: Requested clarity as to how the nine Regional Executive Chefs and one District-wide Executive Chef position(s) will be used. Requested confirmation the main items coming next year will be the three entrees at school sites, the farm to table coordinator, and the nine Regional Executive Chef positions. Requested clarity as to what is envisioned for the next wave of additions. Suggested before the District Executive Chef position is filled there may be a need to watch for inequities with nine different regional chefs.

Student Member Aquino: Thanked the Board for their work and support of students. Shared food survey results received from students' district wide. Requested clarity as to how the district will ensure the new food options will not end up in waste bins. Requested clarity as to if the chefs will better the quality of food and promote more consumption.

Member Jonasson Rosas: Expressed appreciation for where the department is heading, and the understanding of the challenges faced by dietary guidelines. Commented on green waste, and the opportunity to consider composting at school sites. Requested clarity on how food waste in the main kitchen is handled. Commented it might be better to hire the district wide executive chef before the regional executive chefs. Suggested more condiments be provided to help enhance flavor of food. Requested clarity on sharing tables. Commented it would be great to explore different protein options. Commented breakfasts are very carb heavy and suggested staff look for different carb sources.

Student Member Laus: Thanked Nutrition Services for providing students with nutritious meals. Requested clarity on the term of the regional executive chefs' position and once the term expires, how the district will maintain nutrition and efficiency to ensure it fits needs of each region. Commented sustainability is important and thanked staff for addressing.

President Islas: Thanked student members for their voice and Student Member Aquino for the survey he provided. Commended and thanked staff in Nutrition Services and recognized the incredible task of preparing school meals within dietary guidelines. Commented there are at times things that may seem like inefficiencies but are statutory requirements and conversations like today's workshop help to inform the community. Thanked Superintendent Dr. Nelson for advocating for change.

Commented on information from slide number eight regarding average caloric ranges which come from meal patterns established years ago and every four years there is an opportunity to inform the Farm Bill. Shared feedback received from student athletes stating the caloric restrictions hamper their fitness. Commented the percentage of dollars the district has is largely dictated by the Farm Bill. Commented the districts business should not be growing food to share but all food provided is being consumed by students, which means the district needs to have good quality food. Commented every dollar spent in this area should ensure the food is delicious, it is food students will eat, and meets the nutritional needs of students; hungry children do not learn.

Commented on supply chain issues and how this supports the importance of simplifying the path for small local farms to work with the district. Requested clarity as to how much the reimbursement from the state through the Food for All program is helping the district, and can funds be used to bring back salad bars or more scratch cooking at sites. Commented on the need for promotion of the Meal Viewer app which allows for feedback. Requested clarity as to when school wellness committees will be operating, and these committees seems to be the perfect fit for parents to provide feedback in this area.

OPPORTUNITY FOR UNSCHEDULED ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

For the record, the Board received three (3) requests to address the Board during Unscheduled Oral Communications. The individual's name along with a summary of topic is listed as follows:

1. Deiglis Delgado: Thanked the Board for hearing parents. Many of her concerns were addressed in the presentation but is still interested in establishing full kitchens at the sites. Commented the Meal Viewer app does not allow for the user to change the language. Expressed excitement on the executive chef positions and would like parents to have the opportunity to provide input to the chef.

2. Fabiola Felix: Thanked the Board for time to share concerns. Shared a lot of her concerns were addressed during the presentation. Commented on the length of time food is in a bag before serving. Requested schools to keep better track of milk refrigeration. Commented her children have told her at times their lunch is not always thoroughly warmed. Shared she feels it is very important for kitchens to return to the school sites. Requested if there could be other places throughout the school other than the cafeteria for students to fill their water bottles.
3. Aidee Penalzoza: Shared she has two children at Winchell. Shared her most important concern has to do with ensuring expired food does not reach the students. Commented she would like to see the move from plastic to cardboard to be environmentally friendly. Commented it is not always a matter of the food not being good but at times it is served frozen and does not look appetizing. Commented the only meal some students have is the meal at school. Commented parents are willing to work with the district. Commented parents would like to be provided an opportunity to talk with the chef on student meals. Asked what can be done now to help site kitchens.

Executive Officer Amanda Harvey, Chief Idsvoog, Superintendent Dr. Nelson where available to provide feedback.

For the record, board members had additional comments/questions. A summary is as follows:

Member Cazares: Requested the process to rotate food for expiration dates be reviewed Requested clarity as to if the roll out of moving from plastic to recycled trays has been implemented. Requested clarity as to if an RFP for the executive chef position is taking place or has a company already been contracted. Requested clarity as to if there is a legal or logistical reason for students to scan their identification cards.

Member Thomas: Requested clarity as to if an oversight committee can be established for student meals; requested the item to be placed on a future agenda. Proposed when new schools are built kitchens be included. Requested clarity as to the number of schools with pre-only kitchens. Requested if the district has looked at cook and serve vendors to use until site kitchens can be updated. Requested clarity as to if a condiments section could be added to salad bars.

Member Davis: Requested staff to look at outside barbeques when looking at kitchen grants.

President Islas: Requested staff to take a current baseline of food waste. Commented the oversight committee would fit within the wellness committee. Requested staff prepare a proposal on cost to get scratch kitchens back to sites.

Member Jonasson Rosas: Requested clarity as to when last the wellness committee met. Requested a board communication with meeting and vacancy information.

D. ADJOURNMENT

Board President Islas ADJOURNED the workshop at 7:07 p.m.