



BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING
2309 TULARE STREET
BOARD ROOM, 2nd FLOOR
FRESNO, CA 93721
board.fresnounified.org

MINUTES – BOARD OF EDUCATION WORKSHOP

Fresno, California
November 15, 2023

Fresno Unified School District, 2309 Tulare Street, Fresno, CA 93722.

At a Workshop of the Board of Education of Fresno Unified School District, held on November 15, 2023, there were present Board Members Cazares, Davis, Jonasson Rosas, Levine, Thomas, Wittrup, Student Member Pitcher, and Board President Islas. Superintendent Robert G. Nelson, Ed.D. was also present.

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

For the record, Trustee Thomas arrived at 5:56 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Gina Moya led the Flag Salute.

BOARD WORKSHOP AGENDA ITEM

PRESENT and DISCUSS Academic Return on Investment, Literacy Data, and Quarterly Academic Updates

Staff presented an overview of the Academic Return on Investment process including outcomes-based contracting, which emphasized the importance of shifting to a systemic mindset that prioritizes outcomes with a clear problem of practice. In addition, data included baseline literacy outcomes and other first quarter metrics from a regional perspective. The presentation also included discussions about how diversity, equity, and inclusion, community trust, and parent and community engagement inform our success.

Deputy Superintendent Misty Her thanked everyone for being present and provided staff introductions. Deputy Superintendent Her provided context for the evening's presentation as an overview of the district's journey with Academic Return on Investment, a review of outcomes-based contracting, and Quarter 1 Academic Data update.

During the presentation Board members had questions as follows:

Member Jonasson Rosas requested clarity as to what point in the process will solution comparisons take place. Expressed interest in comparisons of vendors as well as approaches.

Clerk Wittrup asked if there are targets for each data point. Commented there should be targets for work orders too and it would be helpful to begin setting those targets.

Board President Islas asked if Board members would like to go in order around the table to voice their comments but before doing so asked if there were any public comments.

OPPORTUNITY for Public Comment on Agenda Item

For the record, the Board received zero requests to address the Board on this item.

Board members had an opportunity to provide comments or ask questions. A summary is as follows:

Member Cazares: Expressed appreciation for this work and commented it should begin with PreK but stressed the district cannot leave middle school and high school students behind. Commented on not seeing how the district is investing in literacy or math for middle and high school students and shared there needs to be something to loop around to high schools and middle schools. Commented on being tired of graduating students that cannot read.

Asked if the slide pertaining to chronic absenteeism included tardies. Requested information regarding quarterly reports, what reports will be used for, who is mentoring, and who is monitoring. Requested clarity regarding an excel workbook being created for each region which will allow principals of each region to view data of other schools within the same region. Commended staff who have dedicated their time to this work.

Clerk Wittrup: Requested to include special education referral data (by school and by region) in the regional workbooks.

Member Davis: Requested confirmation the workbook will include definitions, examples, a guide, and asked if the framework is exclusively for principals. Requested clarity as to supports in place for ninth graders. Wants to hear families are receiving letters when students are not passing a class. Shared she remembered being told that when vacancy rates for paraprofessionals were high it was decided Human Resources personnel would go to sites to fill the positions, asked for confirmation. Requested Human Resources to target vacant positions for recruitment.

Board President Islas: Commented the earliest the district can develop relationships with families is important. Suggested reaching out to birth hospitals. Commented that when reviewing suspension and expulsion data the district continues to see trends around low attendance, low grades, and behavioral issues. Asked how do we identify students earlier who we know are on a trajectory of

dropping out? Expressed being thankful for social emotional investments and added the district needs to find a new way of activating. The first three steps of the framework are on target, identifying the cause in terms of the experience of that particular student and then identifying what the family needs to help them be successful. If the district becomes successful in the first three steps it will clearly guide investments and future interventions. Right now, there is a disconnect as we have a developed LCAP but because pre-work has not been completed to be sure the goals set are the right goals. Hope to get to earlier intervention and activate the investments we have too deliberately improve outcomes.

Commented it would be helpful to see this information by ethnicity as a way to look at interventions with a different lens. Commented some of the ethnic serving organizations in the community are not prepared in education and one concern with the contracting model is the absence of capacity building, so vendors can be better partners for the district. Find the right mix of good organization, well respected in the community, how do we help cultivate partners we need to serve. Requested a glossary of assessments.

Requested staff to be sensitive about using student photos in presentations, for student safety.

Clerk Wittrup: Echoed comments of colleagues regarding paraprofessionals. Commented that the regional notebooks are a great tool. Commented the regional notebooks will begin as one thing and evolve as the district becomes better with data. Thrilled this work is being done and expect it to be a growing tool that will continue to get better. Commented the data does show the district has a lot of work to do, and we knew that coming in. Commented on an area that stood out--the special education paraprofessional situation, and expressed hope the district will come up with a solution to hire qualified people and to pay them well. Urged the district to see this and move quickly.

Commented on the idea of reaching out to parents in the hospital is a great idea as often times in the hospital is where a parent learns of the special needs their child may have.

Member Jonasson Rosas: Commented on work orders and past conversation pertaining to being able to see the progress of a work order in the system.

Asked what where the results from the deep dive on initiatives, and if designated schools were one of the initiatives. Requested to see actionable conclusions the team has taken away and are implementing.

Commented the district has invested significantly in dual immersion and suggested early learning be separated out as their data is going to look different. Commented on the need for the district to think creatively on flexible paraprofessional recruiting.

Commented on absenteeism and engaging parents is key, internally a low hanging fruit is how things are scheduled, we are so far behind and robbing students of time in the classroom. If programs were scheduled before or after school, we would be extending the time but allowing students to not miss the regular school day. Requested staff to educate parents regarding scheduling appointments outside of school hours.

Member Cazares asked if more maintenance workers needed to be hired to resolve issues pertaining to work orders.

Member Levine: Loved idea of district being present in the birthing hospitals. Reiterated comment of being intentional of not creating a system of inequities in CBO. Echoed request to see the district's learnings from deep dives of previous learning. Commented the eight-step framework on slide 12 makes sense, there are clear goals for contracts in the beginning; and asked how it will be decided to stop or modify an agreement, who makes the decision to redirect overlapping contract/work, what kind of internal guarantees will be in place to ensure the findings are followed.

Student Member Pitcher: Referenced page 55 and asked how the district can educate parents to educate their ninth-grade children on the importance of attendance.

Member Jonasson Rosas asked if there are metrics to show 5 Star works.

Member Thomas: Commented the district needs to connect with parents in such a way that parents are excited about attendance.

Asked what safeguards are in place to ensure staff are not overworked and upset about coming to work. Asked if the district is hiring the right people to get the job done.

Commented on the three tiers of work orders and asked if three different work orders could be created in order to properly compile work orders.

Member Jonasson Rosas asked if the district could do something similar to FresGo.

OPPORTUNITY FOR UNSCHEDULED ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

For the record, the Board received zero requests to address the Board during Unscheduled Oral Communications.

D. ADJOURNMENT

Board President Islas ADJOURNED the workshop at 7:05 p.m.