



**MINUTES – BOARD OF EDUCATION SPECIAL MEETING
Fresno Unified School District
FEBRUARY 12, 2008**

**Fresno, California
February 12, 2008**

Office of the Board of Education, Fresno Unified School District, Education Center, 2309 Tulare Street, Fresno, California, 93721.

Special Meeting

At a special meeting of the Board of Education of Fresno Unified School District, held on February 12, 2008, there were present Members Asadoorian, Davis, Johnson, Mills, Nunez, Ryan, and President Vang. Also present was Superintendent Hanson.

President Vang convened the meeting at 3:00 p.m. in the Board Room for the purpose of the Board Workshop on Budget Development for 2008/09 Fiscal Year. Fresno Unified School District is in the early stages of budget development for the 2008/09 fiscal year.

Superintendent Hanson discussed what will be reviewed in the workshop and outlined for the board what the current thinking is on the budget, along with the general information from the State and talked about the potential impact it will have on the District. He feels that the Board has taken a wise approach to budgeting that centers around three areas: good programs for all students, competitive salaries and benefit packages for all employees and adequate reserves for economic uncertainties. He also commented that the District still, at this time, has opened contracts, with the classified union.

There will be a significant budget hit but it has been greatly minimized by the great staff work done to ensure that Fresno Unified will continue to move forward. They will continue to recruit and train in professional development. They will not be issuing blanket lay off notices. It is important that they take action on an approved budget for 2008/09, as quickly as possible, so they can save money and ease the pain down stream.

CFO Quinto provided a strategic overview of the budget plan for 2008/09 and the challenges the District faces from State, Federal and local areas.

The California State budget deficit is estimated at \$14.5 billion and included in the areas of cuts is Education and the Suspension of Proposition 98. She clarified and explained the Restricted and Unrestricted funds in the General Fund Revenue. Prop 98 and the Revenue Limit support the unrestricted funds. The Governors proposal of the suspension of Prop 98 will cost the schools \$4.4 billion which will be 2.4% less than what they received last year.

Board Workshop on Budget Development for 2008/09 Fiscal Year – continued

The Governor has to submit to the Legislature a mid-year budget reduction for 2007/08 by February 23rd in order for it to take effect immediately. This means for school districts a proposed cut of \$360 million and a .5% reduction in Revenue Limit funds, which for Fresno Unified equates to a \$1.9 million loss.

Superintendent Hanson stated that CFO Quinto will be keeping the Board informed on the actions taken in Sacramento and at the same time the District will be determining how much money they will have to keep funding the priority programs that are good for our kids.

CFO Quinto explained that the Governors projected COLA and deficit reduction factors approximate to 6.6%, and will cost Fresno Unifields' Unrestricted General Fund, a \$27.5 million decrease from the 2008/09 budget. In categorical programs for the District, Fresno is looking at a 6.5% cut equating to a loss of \$7 million and in State categorical programs the District is looking at a 7% cut equating to \$1.2million loss. In Federal funding sources, the District will see increases in Title I and decreases in all other programs, the new allocations for 2008/09 is estimated to be higher by \$2 million. Also proposed is the elimination of some programs such as SAIT and Title IV and the possibility of Technology funds at the Federal level.

Fresno Unified continues to decline in enrollment, our revenues are based on the ADA reports sent to the state and for this year they are looking at a declining enrollment of approximately 2,500 students. Under Benefit rates; the Health Fund Contribution remains the same; Workers' Compensation has reduced from 2.5% to 1.75% and; that all employees receive a 2.5% salary increase. They will be recommending to the Board a phasing in of budget reductions over the next two years to allow the District more flexibility to address whatever the end result will be from the States' Legislative negotiations. Realizing the importance of a Reserve, they propose using only a portion of the reserve so as not to impact services to schools. They are also proposing centralized departments to prepare budgets that are 8% less for 2008/09 and submit plans for a 7% reduction for 2009/10. They do not propose any cuts of unrestricted support at school sites, whether it is in offices, cafeterias or classrooms.

Superintendent Hanson stated that he wants to reinforce that there will be no reduction in unrestricted allocations of funds to the school sites.

CFO Quinto stated that for the 2008/09 year they will be able to keep the 2% reserve but if they continue to experience the 7% reduction factor year after year, other actions will have to be taken to maintain that 2% reserve position.

Superintendent Hanson announced they have no cuts in Arts and Music and they have funds to augment the school Libraries. They will also, in the coming months, be able to augment the instructional supply budget by \$600,000. He feels comfortable to say that they will be announcing approximately 100 early offers for new teachers.

CFO Quinto stated that their budget goal process will be to prepare Career-Ready Graduates, to continue to evaluate current programs for effectiveness, the Board budget hearing will begin in late May early June in order to get the budget adopted before the end of June as required, and in 2 weeks, the Board will be updated for the Fiscal Services Management Oversight Workshop.

Board Workshop on Budget Development for 2008/09 Fiscal Year – continued

Member Mills questioned if all these actions are based on the Governors proposals that are not yet acted upon the Legislature?

CFO Quinto stated that was correct.

Member Mills questioned if on the CSR reduction, has there been any discussion on the elimination of that program from the State?

CFO Quinto stated that there have been no talks of elimination of the CSR program just a 6.5% reduction.

Member Mills stated that the Budget needs to be projected for 3 budget years and questioned what type of adjustment will be needed in order to have a positive certification for that year?

CFO Quinto stated that information is not available, but can be provided, but it would be significantly much more that what they are proposing at this time.

Member Mills stated that at an Education Roundtable, Assemblyman Arambula stated that there were discussions on more freedom on the use of categorical funds and questioned if the District has had any further conversations on this from the State?

Superintendent Hanson stated that there has been some discussion on flexibility but there are some categoricals they will not touch and others that they are more open. This will be an ongoing conversation to remedy.

CFO Quinto stated that there also has been some discussion on increasing some flexibility on the Mega Item Transfer, which helps the contributions that the unrestricted fund makes to some major programs.

Member Ryan stated that in 2007/08 they had a 4% reserve, by 2009/10 they may be dipping into the 2% required and questioned what will happened in the 2008/09 school year?

CFO Quinto stated that not knowing what will happen but estimating in the 2008/09 year they would be using some of the reserve to leave the District in approximately a 2.5% range.

Member Ryan stated that she wanted to confirm that they will be increasing the funds by \$500,000 for Libraries and questioned if Title I schools will be receiving more money for supplies?

Superintendent Hanson stated that Libraries and instructional supplies will be distributed later this spring.

Member Davis appreciated the proposal and questioned if there is anything they can do with the declining enrollment?

Board Workshop on Budget Development for 2008/09 Fiscal Year – continued

Superintendent Hanson stated that they're having discussions on how they can get more money into the system, the staff is re-reading the enrollment and attendance reports to see if they've maximized the recommendations made there. They want to be very strategic on what they want to do because in a big organization like Fresno Unified, it's never a straight line on the cuts they want to make or revenue they want to generate.

Member Asadoorian stated that she would like to see more aggressive recruitment to attract students into the magnet schools. She thanked the staff for their hard work on their recommendations and would like more information on the reductions of the State Compensatory Education Program.

CFO Quinto stated that unfortunately the categorical and discretionary funds sent to the school sites will be reduced by 6.5%. They will continue to look at the aligning of those funds.

President Vang appreciated the work the Superintendent and his staff has done to assure that the teachers have the necessary resources for their classrooms.

A copy of the PowerPoint is available in the Board Office upon request.

Additional comments were made by Members Nunez, Mills, Davis, Asadoorian, Ryan, and President Vang.

President Vang RECESSED for a BREAK at 4:15 p.m. and RECONVENED at 5:30 p.m. to continue the Second workshop on the Facilities Master Plan.

This workshop included a presentation by staff and Jacobs Carter Burgess on the Facilities Master Plan. The topics covered during the presentation portion of the agenda are:

1. Brief update on Facilities Master Plan progress
2. Developing District Standards
3. Educational Program and Visioning
4. Suitability Reviews
5. Upcoming Community Meetings

Superintendent Hanson stated that all the Districts facilities are being examined from top to bottom to develop a Facilities Master Plan; the Ad Hoc Advisory committee has one sub-committee working on the West Fresno Middle School and another sub-committee working on athletic facilities throughout the District. The consulting team will speak about the development of the Master Plan for the District. This will be one of four sessions, each session addressing different items. Once standards are set for the Facilities Master Plan, renovation projects, new buildings and anything done in the District will be accomplished to the specified standards.

CFO Quinto stated that the direction they are going today is to have Board input on the key design criteria and align the boards' input with that of the instructional side of the District.

Facilities Master Plan – continued

Executive Director LeBlanc introduced consultants from Jacobs Carter Burgess, Tim Haley and Ed Humble. She also reviewed the agenda for the workshop and the Road Map to Excellence. Under the steps to a successful Facilities Master Plan the consultants will be reviewing the Educational Program Vision and the Educational Program/Facility Standards.

Tim Haley briefly defined what a Standard is and what was involved in developing the Educational Vision for the District and reviewed the objectives in guiding the Facility Standards and he showed a short video on ‘How Quickly the Future Changes’. From the visioning workshop he brought forward the Key Facility design criteria document, and with the Educational Vision document he reviewed in detail, the District-wide School Facilities Standards.

Member Nunez questioned why solar panels were not utilized in the new schools?

Executive Director LeBlanc stated that the plans were already submitted to the state but that option is being considered.

Member Mills questioned the possibility of security cameras?

Executive Director LeBlanc stated that they will include that suggestion.

Tim Haley stated that in support of the educational achievement programs of the District, he reviewed the need in each of the following areas, System Pathways and, Technology and Communication. He also reviewed Student Engagement and how all facilities should promote and demonstrate the value of the student, with comfortable and inviting space.

Member Nunez recommended getting input from CSBA conference vendors on what they have to offer on building structures, materials, lighting and everything that goes with it; they may have something to offer that they don’t know about.

Tim Haley reviewed the dedicated, specialized and flexible spaces.

Member Nunez recommended that the Athletic Facilities be suitable for the physically challenged and maybe an area for faculty to workout.

Member Davis recommended access of facilities for the physically challenged and questioned if anything is being looked for the C-Trains at the schools?

Staff stated that they are looking at the proper storage areas for the schools.

Member Ryan recommended they pay particular attention to the rest room areas and their locations.

Tim Haley reviewed the Library Media Center.

Member Asadoorian requested clarification on the trends to building?

Staff stated that the trend now is to have the flexibility to do whatever activity is needed.

Facilities Master Plan – continued

Tim Haley reviewed the Parent and Community Involvement to encourage community use of facilities.

Member Nunez recommended the design of a Parent Engagement Center for new constructions.

Tim Haley reviewed spaces in all schools should be flexible allowing for changes in grade configuration, program changes, technology changes and future adjustments in District demographics.

Superintendent Hanson commented with respect to Facilities that the Board needs to look at flexibility in two ways; one, the needs of people when they are together and two, how our students get information that they need to learn.

Tim Haley reviewed storage, where facilities should provide secure storage for all academic and athletic programs; administrative, where schools should have centralized services that provide adequate office, meeting, collaborative and confidential spaces; and other spaces where special use rooms and restrooms for special needs, for extended day programs, and after school programs should be provided.

Executive Director LeBlanc reviewed School Sizes and provided recommendations in Elementary, Middle and High Schools.

Member Mills questioned if the state has any recommendations on school size?

Executive Director LeBlanc stated that she is not certain on state regulations but there are national trends and they will provide the board with that information.

Member Mills stated that there is a need for the indoor activity space because of a lot of bad air days in Fresno and she understands that the state has student-ratio to open space requirements and hopes that they are being looked at also.

Member Nunez recommended the configuration should be optimum sizes for K-8, middle schools that are 6, 7, and 8.

Superintendent Hanson stated with regards to elementary schools that it's very difficult to run a district efficiently and effectively when you have schools that are so small. The West Fresno Middle School should put them within the 700-1000 student range. In the High Schools they don't want to look below the 2,000 student range because special programs will be hampered.

Tim Haley reviewed recommended guidelines for judging whether a change on existing facilities will improve the School.

Ed Humble discussed the Suitability Reviews and how it relates to Facilities Master Plan and the District.

Facilities Master Plan – continued

Member Davis commented that Sunnyside High School has 3 swimming pools and she has not seen those pools used for swimming lessons and have they looked at indoor play areas for bad air days.

Ed Humble stated that they will look at the possibility of an indoor play area for the bad air days.

Member Ryan requested identifying a funding source for maintenance of these types of facilities and a plan for condition of use with community input.

Member Nunez commented on the Running Horse development and the District giving up land for it. He feels that they should contact the County Office of Education and request the restoration of the boundary that was in existence at that time. It would give the District more land around Sunset Elementary School and give a more justification of a Middle School in West Fresno.

Additional comments were made by Members Nunez, Mills, Davis, Asadoorian, Ryan, and President Vang.

Unscheduled Oral Communication

No comments from the public.

Meeting adjourned at 7:03 p.m.

With no further business to come before the Board of Education at this time, President Vang declared the meeting adjourned at 7:03 p.m.



MICHAEL E. HANSON, SECRETARY to the
Board of Education