



Board Minutes
Meeting of the Board of Directors
University High School Meeting
Thursday, November 7, 2024

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OPEN SESSION 5:00PM
Room 108

MEMBERS PRESENT: Brent Woodward (Vice Chair), Dominic Dizon (Secretary), Nichole Walsh, and Lori Hamada

MEMBERS ABSENT: Xuanning Fu (Chair), Rajee Amarasinghe (Treasurer), Saul Jimenez-Sandoval

1. Call to Order/Recognize Visitors

The meeting was called to order at 5:07pm by Brent Woodward, Vice Chair

2. Approval of the Agenda

The agenda was unanimously **APPROVED** as submitted.
Hamada - motion / Dizon - second

3. Public Comment

Public comment on any item of interest to the public that is within the Board's jurisdiction will be heard. At this time, anyone present may speak for up to three minutes. Those who wish to speak may **voluntarily** sign in on the Sign-In sheet.

There was no public comment.

4. Executive Reports

- a. Student Representative (Zheng):** ASB President Kyle Zheng reported on the past student activities (MOTA, FUSD Board meeting, concerts, and Oktoberfest) and highlighted upcoming events: progress reports, World Kindness Day, and the end of the boys/girls basketball season. He also talked about the early college app period being finished, finals are a month away, and that students are looking forward to having a week off at Thanksgiving.
- b. Superintendent/Principal (Hickman):** Superintendent Hickman reported that the current student enrollment is 495: 9th - 134, 10th - 117, 11th - 122, 12th - 122. She reviewed activities from October: Charter renewal with FUSD (UHS charter is renewed through June 30, 2030), MOTA, UHS Golf Tournament fundraiser, and fall concerts (flyer with the concert dates were included in the board packet).

Superintendent Hickman talked about the completed construction projects (outdoor structure with new fan, exterior lighting replaced) as well as upcoming projects (storage for music, drama, and underneath the stairwell). UHS also plans to start a Folklorico group with the help of Dr. Victor Torres, the director of the Fresno State Folklorico group.

Lastly, Superintendent Hickman shared recognition for:

- Fresno Arts Council Educator Award: Dr. Cornelison, Musicianship Teacher & Instrumental Music Director; Oct. 24 @ The Grand

- Fresno County Teacher of the Year Top 3 Finalist: Dr. Larry Jarocki, AP Language Teacher; Thursday, Nov. 21 @ Saroyan
- CA League of Educators Top 10 Finalist: Ms. Kathryn Dowis, Biology Teacher; Monday, Dec. 16 @ Ft. Washington CC
- CCSA 12 Outstanding Hispanic Leaders in CA: Jeffie Esparza Hickman

- c. Budget (Bryson):** CFO Bryson shared the current budget for the month completed October, 2024 and the 5-year budget. She shared that the state economy has done better than expected so that has helped to keep the UHS budget in a healthy position. The state COLA is considered to be 1.07%, and UHS projects to have a surplus of \$469,789 in unrestricted funds to close out the 2024-2025 school year.

5. Consent Agenda

All consent agenda items are considered routine by the Board of Governors and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of items unless a Board member or citizen so requests, in which event, the item(s) will be considered following approval of the Consent Agenda.

- a. Approval of the October 3, 2024 Meeting Minutes
- b. Approval of Total Payments Report

The consent agenda was unanimously APPROVED as submitted.
Dizon / motion - Walsh / second

6. Discussion Items (Including Potential Action Items)

- a. First Interim Report & MYP (Voting item):** CFO Bryson presented the First Interim Report and explained that this report is similar to the monthly budget reports that the board reviews, but it is in a different format. She also explained that one of the things that FUSD and FCSS will look at is our cashflow to make sure that we have enough money to cover expenses if there were any deferrals from the state; UHS has a very large projected ending balance of \$4,494,774.82. CFO Bryson also presented the Multi-Year Projection (MYP) worksheets that project our revenues and expenses for three years out.

The First Interim Report & MYP Reports were unanimously APPROVED as submitted.
Hamada / motion - Dizon / second

- b. Belize trip for May, 2026 (Voting item):** Superintendent Hickman presented the information for a scuba diving trip to Belize during the spring intersession elective of May, 2026. This trip is being presented at an early date so that there is plenty of time to recruit students to attend and for them to fundraise to pay for the cost of the trip, which is approximately \$3700-\$4000. This price includes everything: airfare, hotel, all meals, dives, ferry and transfer fees, instructor fees, and additional activities at the resort. Biology Teacher Ms. Kathryn Dowis also presented that this trip would be to study marine biology in a living environment due to the reefs and ocean life in Belize. Superintendent Hickman added that this trip is the beginning of a partnership between UHS and the University of Belize. Superintendent Hickman, Ms. Dowis, Garen Simonyan (owner of the Blackbird Caye Resort, and Dr. Vincent Palacio, the President of the University of Belize met via zoom last week to begin the discussion regarding the partnership, including the possibility of UHS students that go on this trip will earn extended education credits from the University of Belize. Furthermore, due to this conversation, Dr. Palacio asked for connections to Fresno State in order to create a partnership with them as well as UHS. Superintendent Hickman reached out to Dr. Saul Jimenez-Sandoval, who then connected her to Eddie West, director of International Affairs at Fresno State. Mr. West met with Ms. Hickman and she explained the connection and potential partnership. Ms. Hickman then connected the groups via email. Additionally, the Blackbird Caye Resort has requested that Ms. Hickman and Ms. Dowis visit the resort to inspect the location, meet with the dive instructors, and with Dr. Palacio. The accommodations and meals will be completely complementary to them. They would have to pay for the flight to and from Belize. Board member Hamada requested a review of the trip by Ms. Hickman and Ms. Dowis (Dec. 27, 2024-Jan. 4, 2025) to be presented at the February 2025 board meeting.

The Belize trip for the spring intersession elective in May 2026, along with the cost of the airfare for Ms. Hickman and Ms. Dowis for the review of the facility was unanimously **APPROVED** as submitted.

Dizon / motion - Hamada / second

- c. **MOU with Fresno Unified for 2025-2030 (Voting item):** This item was not available because UHS has not received it back from FUSD after the first revision.
- d. **Intersession Schedule Adjustment (Discussion item):** Superintendent Hickman presented the total annual Instructional Minutes for UHS (74,286), which is well over the state requirement of 64,800 minutes. Superintendent Hickman said that she planned to adjust the time schedule for the two intersessions, by lessening the class period time by one hour a day. The scheduled time would now be 8:30am-2:30pm. This hour would be considered prep time for teachers since they do not have a prep during the intersessions. This time adjustment would also align UHS with the requirement of SB 328 to begin school at 8:30am or later for high school students. This was a discussion item only, as Superintendent Hickman plans to make this change under her purview.
- e. **Test Scores: Data Disaggregation (Discussion item):** Superintendent Hickman revisited this item from the October board meeting. Board members had asked for a deep dive of the data disaggregation. Superintendent Hickman presented the scores and data for all of the students (names redacted) that scored a 2 (nearly met) or a 1 (did not meet) on the math section of state testing. Data included gender, race/ethnicity, course pattern and teachers, language acquisition status, and incoming freshmen diagnostic score. Discussion included no patterns except with the possibility of low incoming diagnostic scores could indicate that students will not perform well on state testing. Dr. Walsh suggested that UHS should use this data to assign incoming freshmen with low diagnostic scores a tutor or other extra help during freshman year to help close that testing gap. This was a discussion item only.
- f. **Payment of Fresno State classes (Discussion/Voting item):** Superintendent Hickman presented the dilemma that UHS is having trouble scheduling classes with Fresno State, particularly in the MCLL department and for Ethnic Studies classes for the 2025-26 school year. Superintendent Hickman met with Dr. Fu, UHS Board President and Fresno State Provost, and he suggested that UHS temporarily pay for the cost of the classes for these two departments. The cost of one class per semester is \$7465. Superintendent Hickman created a MOU with the MCLL department that states this is a temporary agreement and that UHS will pay the \$7465 cost per class for 2 Spanish classes for the spring 2025 semester, and 2 Spanish classes each semester for the 2025-26 school year. Superintendent Hickman will be reaching out to the Ethnic Studies department to offer the same temporary agreement for 2 classes each semester for the 2025-26 school year. Total cost: \$89,580 for the one and a half year temporary agreement.

The temporary MOU to pay for the cost of the above listed classes at Fresno State was unanimously **APPROVED** as submitted.

Hamada / motion - Walsh / second

- g. **Raise Discussion for 2024-25 (Discussion/voting item):** Since UHS was a start up school in the year 2000, there was no longevity at UHS only. Longevity currently is given to teachers after year 14, but not the 2.5% step increase. Superintendent Hickman presented information of how much it would cost to adjust the UHS Certificated Salary Schedule so that there is a 2.5% increase after year 14, for the year spans of 15-19, 20-25, 25-29, and 30+. The cost to increase each step level by 2.5% is \$60,647.41. The additional cost to add the longevity amounts to the steps levels is \$20,037.19. The total amount to add the 2.5% and the longevity amounts to the step levels is \$80,684.66.

The 2.5% increase to the step levels and to change the longevity to be at UHS only was unanimously **APPROVED** as submitted.

Hamada / motion - Walsh / second

The second part of the raise discussion was to decide on a raise for all UHS staff, which would be retroactive to the beginning of the current school year. CFO Bryson verified that a 1% increase is about \$40,853, which includes the benefits cost. After discussion and review of the amount of excess in unrestricted amounts, the Board decided to increase staff wages by 4.5%.

The increase of all staff wages by 4.5% was unanimously **APPROVED** as submitted.
Dizon / motion - Walsh / second

h. Other: There were no other agenda items to present.

7. Future Meetings: Dec 5, No Jan. meeting

8. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 6:35pm by Brent Woodward, Vice Chair