



BOARD MINUTES
Meeting of the Board of Directors
University High School Meeting
September 4, 2025
Room 108

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5:00 PM Open Session

MEMBERS PRESENT: Xuanning Fu (Chair), Dominic Dizon (Secretary), Nichole Walsh, and Lori Hamada

MEMBERS ABSENT: Rajee Amarasinghe, Saul Jimenez-Sandoval, Brent Woodward

1. Call to Order/Recognize Visitors

a. Introduce New Staff

The meeting was called to order at 5:07pm by Dr. Xuanning Fu, Chair. Ms. Hickman, Superintendent/Principal introduced new staff member, Abrianna Gomez, Musicianship I teacher and Percussion Conductor.

2. Approval of the Agenda

The agenda was unanimously **APPROVED** as submitted.
Walsh - motion, Hamada - 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.

4. Executive Reports

a. **Student Report** - ASB President Leo Jimesanagnos and his four cabinet members introduced themselves and their roles: Vice President Matthew Jones, Secretary Paula Nadores, Treasurer Isaac Patel, and Publicity Chair Nel Monisit. Leo's report included a video of activities that have occurred since the start of school, including Icebreakers, the sophomore field trip to the zoo, and Club Rush. He concluded saying that all of the classes are feeling connected and positive about the school year. The freshmen are integrating well and Phoenix Bowl excitement is in the air.

b. **Superintendent/Principal (Hickman):** Superintendent Hickman invited UHS Counselors Rocio Fernandez (9-10th grades) and Geni Bird (11-12th grades) to present the [Counseling vertical articulation chart](#) to the Board. The counselors went over their roles and responsibilities, including the themes, classroom presentations, meetings and events for each grade level. They also shared the [UHS School Profile](#) that they send to private schools.

Superintendent Hickman shared the enrollment numbers: 9th/137, 10th/131, 11th/117, 12th/ 117 = 502; the largest number of students UHS has ever had, even though some students withdrew since the last board meeting. She also shared upcoming events, including the FUSD Charter Office visit to UHS (Sept. 18), Freshmen Field Trip to Scout Island (Sept. 25), Spirit Week, and Magic of the Arts (Oct. 24). She also talked about two community

partnerships: the Sophomore field trip to the Zoo (pictures included) and the upcoming Fresno County Women's Conference where UHS will have a booth.

Superintendent Hickman also shared facility updates: the Drama storage pods have been delivered and installed; they just need to be painted. She has received quotes for new security cameras and system. And Fresno State has indicated that UHS is part of the campus refresh for new switches (4-6) and access points (28). This cost will fall on UHS.

Lastly, Superintendent Hickman shared numerous recognition points and awards that UHS has received in the last month: *U.S. News & World Report* came out with its 2025 rankings, and UHS is ranked as #1 in the Fresno area (#1 last year), #7 in CA high schools (#12), #16 in charter high schools nationally (#27), and #63 in national rankings (#110). Local news source, *GV Wire*, also wrote an article about the rankings and Superintendent Hickman provided a quote for the article. UHS has an advertorial in CV LUX, a local magazine; Superintendent Hickman provided a copy of the magazine to all the board members. UHS is also nominated in the "Hidden Gem" category for the CV LUX annual Luxury Awards; Superintendent Hickman encouraged board members to vote and will provide the voting link via email. Lastly, Superintendent Hickman shared that she has been nominated as one of the Marjorie Mason Center's Top 10 Professional Women for 2025.

- c. **Budget Review (Bryson):** CFO Bryson presented the current budget for the month and the 5-year budget. She explained that UHS is in very good shape financially due to the growing unrestricted balance. She stated that she and Superintendent Hickman work together to use categorical funding sources whenever possible, which has led to a healthy unrestricted balance. It was also noted that the Vanguard account has reached over \$2 million. Dr. Dizon asked when the best time to talk about raises for the staff would be; CFO Bryson said that they should discuss it at the next meeting.

6. 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. Approve the Minutes from the August 7, 2025 Meeting
- b. Total Payments Report

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

7. Discussion Items (Including Potential Action Items)

Superintendent Hickman asked to present item d. as the first discussion item so that Dr. Larry Jarocki could leave after the discussion due to a speech and debate meeting.

- d. **48 Book discussion:** Dr. Larry Jarocki, English Department Chair, shared the list of 48 books that the English department uses to teach the curriculum. He shared that the department created Core Criteria in which to guide the selection of books. The main point of him being at this meeting was to discuss the idea of adjusting our 48 Book program to be the 40 Book program. Our English teachers are not able to teach all 12 books a year; they end up giving the students 1-2 of the books without being able to teach them or go through the books. Discussion included the strategies that are used with the books, including discussion, Socratic seminars, group discussions, essays, and exams, among others. Cutting two books per grade level would allow for greater depth in place of breadth. This adjustment would also save about \$10,000 per year.

- a. **Williams Act/Board Resolution for Sufficient Instructional Materials (voting item/Hickman):** Superintendent Hickman shared that this resolution

is an annual resolution that the Board must make to ensure sufficient books and materials are available for students.

The Board Resolution for Sufficient Instructional Materials was unanimously **APPROVED** as submitted.

Hamada - motion, Walsh - second

- b. **Employee Handbook (voting item/Hickman):** Superintendent Hickman explained that she had made several updates on the Employee Handbook. She went through all of the updates with the Board. There was a question about the section on Organ Donation and Leave; Superintendent Hickman said that she would reach out to the school's attorneys for clarification, and bring this item back to the next board meeting.
- c. **Profile Data (discussion item/Hickman):** Superintendent Hickman shared the 2025-26 data profile. This chart has many pieces of information and data on it, including demographics by gender and grade level; test scores (CAASPP, A.P., PFT, SAT, and ACT), as well as 2025 graduating senior data (college acceptance rates for universities and community colleges, including each time of college: UC, CSU, Fresno State, private, and community), and attrition rate for the class of 2025.
- d. **48 Book discussion:** mentioned above
- e. **Other:** There were no additional items added to the agenda.

8. Closed Session

The Board went into closed session at 6:47pm and returned to open session at 7:56pm. The Board discussed one personnel issue and Superintendent Hickman's evaluation. There was nothing to report at this time.

9. Future Meetings: October 2; November 6; December 4

10. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:57pm by Dr. Xuanning Fu, Chair.