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California State Senate

SENATOR
ANNA M. CABALLERO
FOURTEENTH SENATE DISTRICT



CHAIR
GOVERNANCE & FINANCE

MEMBER
BANKING & FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

BUDGET & FISCAL REVIEW
BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEE #4 ON
STATE ADMINISTRATION &
GENERAL GOVERNMENT

ENERGY, UTILITIES
AND COMMUNICATIONS

HOUSING

JUDICIARY

JOINT COMMITTEE ON
FAIRS ALLOCATION AND
CLASSIFICATION

September 21, 2023

Bob Nelson
Superintendent, Fresno Unified School District
2309 Tulare Street,
Fresno CA, 93721

Genoveva Islas
President, Fresno Unified School Board of Trustees
2309 Tulare Street,
Fresno CA, 93721

Manuel Bonilla
FTA President
5334 N Fresno St.
Fresno CA, 93710

RE: Resolution in Contract Negotiations with Fresno Unified and Fresno Teachers Association

Dear Mr. Nelson, Board President Islas and Mr. Bonilla,

I would like to express interest in the ongoing negotiations between the Fresno Unified School District and the Fresno Teachers Association. I understand there is the potential of a strike of the teachers and other educators at Fresno Unified. Public education staff play a vital role in supporting the learning environment of our 74,000 students, and classroom teachers are at the core to help deliver the best academic opportunities and outcomes possible. Educators are closer to a district-wide strike than they have been in nearly 45 years. I respect the negotiation process between Fresno Unified and the Fresno Teachers Association (FTA), however I am worried for our community if students' needs are not met.

It is important, more than ever post-COVID that students receive the services they need to excel. I understand several proposals addressing vital needs for students have been submitted. Finding solutions to control class sizes should be a priority because it will benefit the student's individual learning. Providing reading specialists, tutoring, and mental health services at school sites would aid in

their academic growth. Students who are continually worried about their food, clothing and housing insecurities would also benefit from the proposed actions to focus on their academic growth. The proposal to provide solutions for unhoused students is key as well as providing access to food pantries, clothing, and hygiene supplies. I am concerned that in the Fresno Unified June 1, 2023, Package Proposal, there is no response to many of the critically important issues FTA wants to address for students and adults.

With a budget of over \$2 billion dollars, a 77% increase in ongoing revenue since the 2018-19 school year, and an ending balance increase of 272% over the same timeframe, I hope that Fresno Unified School district leadership will spend the upcoming weeks to seriously consider FTAs thoughtful Last, Best and Final plan proposal that seeks to address many of the unmet needs of our students, and that both parties will work to co-design the implementation of FTAs plans in our district.

I understand the importance of delivering the best education possible for the families in our community. Our Educators play a critical role in helping to deliver the high-quality learning environment our students receive and I am grateful for the work they do and the work you do.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to following this effort as it unfolds and hope Fresno Unified will demonstrate its willingness to negotiate. I trust you will give this matter the utmost priority and will await progress reports from Fresno Unified and FTA. If there are any questions or concerns, feel free to contact my Fresno district office at 559-264-3070.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anna M. Caballero" followed by a horizontal flourish.

Anna M. Caballero

Senator, 14th District