

Legislative Process

It is the policy of the Board of Education to take a proactive approach to the legislative process, developing responses to legislation affecting education after it has been introduced and initiating legislation when deemed necessary to more effectively achieve the vision, mission and goals of the district.

The Board may take positions, as appropriate, on national, state and local issues that affect the students or employees of the district and issues of general interest to the education community. Neither Board nor staff members shall express a district position on any legislation unless previously approved by the Board.

Annually, the Board will adopt a Legislative Platform relative to the major issues facing education. This Platform will serve as a guide for the district in taking action on specific legislation or policy issues during the ensuing legislative year.

To further facilitate a coherent approach to influencing legislation, a standing Legislative Committee will be formed to assist in the development of the Legislative Platform, to review individual pieces of legislation within the context of the platform, to respond to and initiate legislation, and to articulate the district's position to our Legislative Advocates. The Committee will meet monthly. Members of the Committee will include the following:

1. Members, Board of Education
2. Superintendent
3. Deputy Superintendent
4. Chief Financial Officer
5. Director, State and Federal Programs (Committee Chair)

Before taking initial action on specific legislation or policy issues, the Superintendent shall obtain Board approval for such action. In emergency situations in which the district's timely response to legislation is essential, the Superintendent shall consult with the Board President, initiate action, then bring the item to the Board at its next regularly scheduled meeting.

Purpose and Scope

It is the purpose of this regulation to establish guidelines for the district to respond to and initiate legislation affecting the students or employees of the district.

Legislative Charge

The Cabinet is charged with the responsibility of assisting the Superintendent in responding to and initiating legislation related to education. The Cabinet will address and initiate legislation in a

timely manner. The district's Legislative Liaison will assume a lead role in preparing legislative materials for the Cabinet, the district's Legislative Committee and the Board.

Legislative Platform

1. Process for developing Legislative Platform

Each year, as part of the district's planning process, the Superintendent, with the assistance of the Cabinet, shall develop and recommend to the Board a Legislative Platform regarding major issues in education. The platform will address issues which are likely to come before the Legislature or which need legislative action. The Legislative Platform may be modified during the year as necessary.

In addition to staff expertise, the Cabinet and Legislative Committee may use existing and recognized resources such as the district's Legislative Advocate and/or statewide organizations in developing this recommendation. The Board will be presented with the recommended Legislative Platform for this action.

2. Purpose of Legislative Platform

The purpose of the Board-approved Legislative Platform shall be to guide the Superintendent, Cabinet and the Legislative Committee in determining their responses to, and initiation of, legislation.

The Legislative Platform will also be distributed by the Legislative Advocate to each legislator whose district includes any part of the school district, and chairpersons of the Senate and Assembly education policy committees, fiscal and budget committees and subcommittees, the Governor, the Superintendent of Public Instruction and appropriate statewide associations. The platform will also be distributed to corresponding federal legislators and committees.

Responding to Legislation

1. Initial Screening of Current Legislation

Legislation will be initially screened by the Legislative Advocate. The district will use the Legislative Platform to establish a position on legislation which may affect the students or employees of the district. The Legislative Advocate will prepare a bi-monthly legislative summary report that includes such information as the bill number, author, current status in the legislative process, sponsor, and possible program and/or fiscal impact to the district, and recommended position.

2. Distribution of Legislative Information

The Legislative Liaison will review the Legislative Advocate's summary report and distribute the appropriate materials to the Legislative Committee and interested Cabinet members.

3. Review of Current Legislation

The Cabinet members shall review the summary report and either recommend approval or make changes to the recommended position. The Legislative Liaison shall report recommendations and request approval from the Legislative Committee and apprise the Legislative Advocate.

The Legislative Platform adopted by the Board will serve as the major reference for the Legislative Committee's actions. However, emerging issues not addressed in the Legislative Platform will also be considered if they appear to have a potential impact on the district's interests and operation. That information will, in turn, be communicated to the Board, Legislative Liaison, and the Legislative Advocate.

4. Determination of District's Course of Action

On items covered by the Legislative Platform, the Superintendent will take action consistent with this Platform. Where emerging issues have a significant impact on the district, the Superintendent will seek direction from the Legislative Committee prior to taking action.

5. Legislative Committee Report to Board

The Legislative Committee shall report to the Board on a regular basis regarding actions taken by the district on appropriate legislation.

Initiating Legislation

1. Proposal for Initiating Legislation

When, in the opinion of any employee of the district, there is a need for new or amended legislation, a brief written statement of the problems shall be prepared and submitted via the appropriate Division Assistant Superintendent to the Legislative Liaison. The statement shall include the following:

- a. A description of the proposed change.
- b. A statement explaining why a legislative change is requested.

Regulation FRESNO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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