

Fresno Unified Board Bylaw (BB) 9320

Meetings And Notices

Meetings of the Governing Board are conducted for the purpose of accomplishing district business.

A Board meeting exists whenever a majority of Board members gather at the same time and location including teleconference location, as permitted by Government Code 54953, to hear, discuss, deliberate, or take action upon any item within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Board or district. (Government Code 54952.2)

In accordance with state open meeting laws (Brown Act) the Board shall hold its meetings in public and shall conduct closed sessions during such meetings only as authorized by law. To encourage community involvement in the schools, Board meetings shall provide opportunities for questions and comments by members of the public. All meetings shall be conducted in accordance with law and Board-adopted bylaws, policies, and administrative regulations.

(cf. 9321 - Closed Session Purposes and Agendas)

(cf. 9321.1 - Closed Session Actions and Reports)

(cf. 9322 - Agenda/Meeting Materials)

(cf. 9323 - Meeting Conduct)

A majority of the Board shall not, outside of an authorized meeting, use a series of communications of any kind, directly or through personal intermediaries, including social media and other electronic communications, to discuss, deliberate, or take action on any item that is within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Board. (Government Code 54952.2)

However, an employee or district official may engage in separate conversations or communications with Board members in order to answer questions or provide information regarding an item within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Board, as long as the employee or district official does not communicate the comments or position of any Board member to other Board members. (Government Code 54952.2)

Location of Meetings

Meetings shall not be held in a facility that prohibits the admittance to any person on the basis of ancestry or any characteristic listed in Government Code 11135. In addition, meetings shall not be held in a facility which is inaccessible to individuals with disabilities or where members of the public must make a payment or purchase in order to be admitted. (Government Code 54961)

(cf. 0410 - Nondiscrimination in District Programs and Activities)

Meetings shall be held within district boundaries, except to do any of the following (Government Code 54954)

1. Comply with state or federal law or court order or attend a judicial or administrative proceeding to which the district is a party
2. Inspect real or personal property which cannot conveniently be brought into the district, provided that the topic of the meeting is limited to items directly related to the property
3. Participate in meetings or discussions of multiagency significance, provided these meetings are held within one of the other agencies' boundaries, with all participating agencies giving the notice required by law
4. Meet in the closest meeting facility if the district has no meeting facility within its boundaries or if its principal office is located outside the district

5. Meet with elected or appointed state or federal officials when a local meeting would be impractical, solely to discuss legislative or regulatory issues affecting the district over which the state or federal officials have jurisdiction
6. Meet in or near a facility owned by the district but located outside the district, provided the meeting agenda is limited to items directly related to that facility
7. Visit the office of the district's legal counsel for a closed session on pending litigation, when doing so would reduce legal fees or costs
8. Attend conferences on non-adversarial collective bargaining techniques
9. Interview residents of another district regarding the Board's potential employment of an applicant for Superintendent of the district
10. Interview a potential employee from another district

Meetings exempted from the boundary requirements, as specified in items # 1-10 above, shall still be subject to the notice and open meeting requirements for regular and special meetings when a quorum of the Board attends the meeting.

In order to help ensure the participation of individuals with disabilities at Board meetings, the Superintendent or designee shall provide appropriate disability-related accommodations or modifications upon request in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Any doubt about a request for accommodation shall be resolved in favor of accessibility. (Government Code 54953, 54953.2, 54954.1, 54954.2)

Notice of the procedure for receiving and resolving requests for accommodation described above shall be given in each instance in which notice of the time of a meeting is otherwise given or the agenda for the meeting is otherwise posted. (Government Code 54953)

Meeting notices and agendas shall specify that individuals who require special accommodation, including but not limited to an American sign language interpreter, accessible seating or documentation in accessible formats, should contact the Superintendent or designee at least two days before the meeting date.

Regular Meetings

The Board shall adopt a schedule specifying the date, time and place of its regular meetings. (Education Code 35140)

The Board shall hold two regular meetings on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month, unless posted otherwise. Regular meetings shall be held at 5:30 p.m. at the Education Center unless posted otherwise.

At least 72 hours prior to a regular meeting, the agenda shall be posted at one or more locations freely accessible to members of the public, and on the district's Internet web site. (Government Code 54954.2)

(cf. 1113 - District and School Web Sites)

A notice of each regular meeting shall be mailed to any person who has filed with the Board a written request for such notice. The notice shall be mailed the week preceding, but not less than 72 hours prior to the meeting. Requests are valid for one year from the date filed unless renewed. Renewal requests must be filed within 90 days after January 1 of each year.

Whenever agenda materials relating to an open session of a regular meeting are distributed to the Board less than 72 hours before the meeting, the Superintendent or designee shall make the materials available for public inspection at a public office or location designated for that purpose or on the district web site, consistent with Government Code 54957.5, at the time the materials are distributed to all or a majority of the Board. (Government Code 54957.5)

If a fire flood, earthquake or other emergency renders the regular meeting place unsafe, meetings shall be held for the duration of the emergency at a place designated by the president or designee, who shall so inform, by the most rapid available means of communication, all news media who have requested notice of special meetings. (Government Code 54954)

Special Meetings

Special meetings of the Board may be called at any time by the presiding officer or a majority of the Board members. However, a special meeting shall not be called regarding the salary, salary schedule, or other compensation of the Superintendent, deputy superintendent, associate superintendent, assistant superintendent, or other management employee as described in Government Code 3511.1. (Government Code 54956).

(cf. 2121 - Superintendent's Contract)

Written notice of special meetings shall be delivered personally or by any other means to all Board members, the Superintendent, and the local media who have requested such notice in writing. The notice shall also be posted on the district's web site. The notice shall be received at least 24 hours before the time of the meeting. The notice shall also be posted at least 24 hours before the meeting in a location freely accessible to the public. The notice shall specify the time and place of the meeting and the business to be transacted or discussed; no other business shall be considered at these meetings. (Education Code 35144, Government Code 54956)

Any Board member may waive the 24-hour written notice requirement prior to the time of the meeting by filing a written waiver of notice with the clerk or secretary of the Board or by being present at the meeting at the time it convenes. (Education Code 35144; Government Code 54956)

Every notice of a special meeting shall provide an opportunity for members of the public to directly address the Board concerning any item that has been described in the meeting notice, before or during the item's consideration. (Government Code 54954.3)

Public notice shall be given at least 72 hours' before any retreats, study sessions or training sessions held by the Board. All such meetings shall be held within district boundaries and action items shall not be included.

Emergency Meetings

In the case of an emergency situation for which prompt action is necessary due to the disruption or threatened disruption of public facilities, the Board may hold an emergency meeting without complying with the 24-hour notice and/or 24-hour posting requirement for special meetings pursuant to Government Code 54956. The Board shall comply with all other requirements for special meetings during an emergency meeting. (Government code 54956.5)

An emergency situation means either of the following: (Government Code 54956.5)

1. An emergency, which shall be defined as a work stoppage, crippling activity or other activity that severely impairs public health, and/or safety, as determined by a majority of the members of the

Board.

(cf. 4141.6/4241.6 - Concerted Action/Work Stoppage)

2. A dire emergency, which shall be defined as a crippling disaster, mass destruction, terrorist activity, or threatened terrorist act that poses peril so immediate and significant that requiring the Board to provide one-hour notice before holding an emergency meeting under this section may endanger the public health and/or safety as determined by a majority of the member of the Board.

(cf. 3516 – Emergencies and Disaster Preparedness Plan)

Except in the case of a dire emergency, the Board President or designee shall give notice of the emergency meeting by telephone at least one hour before the meeting to the local media that have requested notices of special meetings. All telephone numbers provided by the media in the most recent request for notification shall be exhausted. If telephone services are not functioning, the notice requirement of one hour is waived and, as soon after the meeting as possible, the Board shall notify those local media representatives of the meeting and shall describe the purpose of the meeting and any action taken by the Board. (Government Code 54956.5)

In the case of a dire emergency, the Board President or designee shall give such notice at or near the time notification is given to the other members of the Board about the meeting. (Government Code 54956.5)

The minutes of the meeting, a list of persons the Board president or designee notified or attempted to notify, a copy of the roll call vote, and any actions taken at the meeting shall be posted for at least 10 days in a public place as soon after the meeting as possible. (Government Code 54956.5)

Adjourned/Continued Meetings

The Board may adjourn/continue any regular or special meeting to a later time and location that shall be specified in the order of adjournment. Less than a quorum of the Board may adjourn such a meeting. If no Board members are present, the secretary or the clerk may declare the meeting adjourned to a later time and shall give notice in the same manner required for special meetings. (Government Code 54955)

A copy of the order or notice of adjournment shall be conspicuously posted on or near the door of the place where the meeting was held within 24 hours after the time of adjournment. (Government Code 54955)

Study Sessions, Retreats, Public Forums, and Discussion Meetings

The Board may occasionally convene a study session or public forum to study an issue in more detail or to receive information from staff or feedback from members of the public.

The Board may also convene a retreat or discussion meeting to discuss Board roles and relationships.

(cf. 2000 – Concepts and Roles in Administration)

(cf. 9000 – Role of the Board)

(cf. 9005 – Governance Standards)

(cf. 9400 – Board Self-Evaluation)

Public notice shall be given in accordance with law when a quorum of the Board is attending a study session, retreat, public forum, or discussion meeting. All such meetings shall comply with the Brown Act and shall be held in open session and within district boundaries. Action items shall not be included on the agenda for these meetings.

Teleconferencing

A teleconference is a meeting of the Board in which Board members are in different locations, connected by electronic means through audio and/or video. (Government Code 54953)

All teleconferenced meetings shall be conducted in a manner that protects the statutory and constitutional rights of the parties or the public appearing before the Board. (Government Code 54953)

The Board may use teleconferences for all purposes in connection with any meeting within the Board's subject matter jurisdiction. All votes taken during a teleconference meeting shall be by roll call. (Government Code 54953)

During the teleconference, at least a quorum of the members of the Board shall participate from locations within district boundaries. (Government code 54953)

Unless a Board member participates by teleconference pursuant to the provisions described in the sections "Teleconferencing During a Personal Emergency," "Teleconferencing For 'Just Cause'" or "Teleconferencing During a Proclaimed State of Emergency" below, agendas shall be posted at all teleconference locations and shall list all teleconference locations whenever they are posted elsewhere. (Government Code 54953)

All teleconference locations shall be accessible to the public and the public shall have the right to address the Board directly at each teleconference location. Additional teleconference locations may be provided to the public. (Government Code 54953)

Teleconferencing During a Personal Emergency

Until January 1, 2026, with approval from the majority of the Board, a Board member may be permitted to participate in a meeting remotely when a physical or family medical emergency prevents the Board member from attending in person. The Board member requesting to appear remotely shall notify the Board of the emergency situation as soon as possible, and provide a concise general description of the circumstances relating to the Board member's need to appear remotely. The Board member shall not be required to disclose any disability, medical diagnosis, or personal medical information exempt under existing law. (Government Code 54953)

A Board member may not appear remotely under emergency circumstances for more than 20 percent of the Board's regular meetings or for more than three consecutive months. If the Board meets less than 10 times in a calendar year, a Board member may not appear remotely under emergency circumstances for more than two meetings. (Government Code 54953)

When a Board member is approved to participate remotely due to emergency circumstances, the Board member is not required to participate from a location which is accessible to the public and the location does not need to be identified on the agenda. (Government Code 54953)

If permitted to participate remotely, the Board member shall utilize both audio and visual technology and publicly disclose, before any action is taken, whether any other individuals 18 years or older are present in the remote location with the Board member, and the general nature of the member's relationship with such individuals. (Government Code 54953)

The district shall also provide public access to the meeting via a two-way audiovisual platform or a two-way audio service and a live webcast, with public comment being allowed via the remote platform as well as in person and the public shall be able to offer comments in real time. The agenda

shall include information describing how members of the public can access the platform. (Government Code 54953)

If a disruption prevents broadcasting the meeting to members of the public using the call-in option or internet-based service option, or a disruption that is within the Board's control prevents members of the public from offering public comments using the call-in option or internet-based service option, the Board shall not take action on agenda items until public access to the meeting is restored. (Government Code 54953)

Teleconferencing for “Just Cause”

A Board member may be permitted to appear remotely, pursuant to the provisions below, for just cause for no more than two meetings per calendar year. A Board member appearing for just cause shall notify the Board at the earliest possible opportunity of the need to participate in the meeting remotely, including at the start of a regular meeting. (Government Code 54953)

Just Cause may exist for any of the following: (Government Code 54953)

1. A childcare or caregiving need of a child, parent, grandparent, grandchild, sibling, spouse, or domestic partner that requires a Board member to participate remotely
2. A contagious illness prevents a Board member from attending in person
3. A Board member has a need related to a physical or mental disability not otherwise reasonably accommodated
4. A Board member is traveling while on official business of the Board or another state or local agency

When a Board member participates remotely for just cause, the Board member is not required to participate from a location which is accessible to the public and the location does not need to be identified on the agenda. (Government Code 54953)

If the Board member participates remotely, the Board member shall utilize both audio and visual technology and publicly disclose, before any action is taken, whether any other individuals 18 years or older are present in the remote location with the Board member, and the general nature of the member's relationship with such individuals. (Government Code 54953)

The district shall also provide public access to the meeting via a two-way audiovisual platform or a two-way audio service and a live webcast, with public comment being allowed via the remote platform as well as in person and the public shall be able to offer comments in real time. The agenda shall include information describing how members of the public can access the platform. (Government Code 54953)

If a disruption prevents broadcasting the meeting to members of the public using the call-in option or internet-based service option, or a disruption that is within the Board's control prevents members of the public from offering public comments using the call-in option or internet-based service option, the Board shall not take action on agenda items until public access to the meeting is restored. (Government Code 54953)

Teleconferencing During a Proclaimed State of Emergency

Until January 1, 2024, the Board may conduct Board meetings by teleconference without posting agendas at all teleconference locations, identifying teleconference locations in meeting notices and agendas, allowing public access to each teleconference location, providing an opportunity for members of the public to address the Board directly at each teleconference location, and ensuring that at least a quorum of the Board participate from locations within district boundaries, during a proclaimed state of emergency

pursuant to Government Code 8625-8629 in any of the following circumstances: (Government Code 54953)

1. State or local officials have imposed or recommended measures to promote social distancing
2. For the purpose of determining, by majority vote, whether as the result of the emergency meeting in person would present imminent risks to the health or safety of attendees
3. When it has been determined, by majority vote as described in Item #2 above, that as a result of the emergency meeting in person would present imminent risks to the health or safety of attendees

To conduct a teleconference meeting for these purposes the following requirements shall be satisfied: (Government Code 54953)

1. The notice and agenda shall be given and posted as otherwise required by the Brown Act
2. The notice and agenda of the meeting shall specify the means by which members of the public may access the meeting and offer public comments, including via a call-in or internet-based service option

Members of the public may be required to register to log in to a meeting when making public comments through an internet web site or other online platform that is operated by a third-party and not under the control of the Board.

3. Members of the public shall be allowed to access the meeting, and the agenda shall provide an opportunity for members of the public to address the Board directly pursuant to Government Code 54954.3
4. Members of the public shall not be required to submit public comments in advance of a Board meeting and shall be provided an opportunity to address the Board and offer comments in real time
5. Public comment periods shall not be closed until the timed public comment period, if such is offered by the Board, has elapsed or, if not timed, until a reasonable amount of time per agenda item has been allowed
6. If during a Board meeting a disruption occurs which prevents the district from broadcasting the meeting to members of the public using the call-in option or internet-based service option, or in the event of a disruption within the district's control that prevents members of the public from offering public comments, the Board shall take no further action on any agenda item until public access via the call-in or internet-based service option to the meeting is restored

The district may, in its discretion, provide a physical location from which the public may attend or comment. (Government Code 54953)

The Board may continue to conduct meetings by teleconference, as specified above for teleconferencing during proclaimed states of emergency, by a majority vote finding within 30 days after teleconferencing for the first time, and every 30 days thereafter, that either: (Government Code 54953)

1. The state of emergency continues to directly impact the ability of the Board to meet safely in person
2. State or local officials continue to impose or recommend measures to promote social distancing

Other Gathering

Attendance by a majority of the Board members at any of the following events is not subject to Brown Act provided that a majority of the Board members do not discuss specific district business among themselves other than as part of the scheduled program: (Government Code 54952.2)

1. A conference or similar public gathering open to the public that involves a discussion of issues of general interest to the public or to school Board members.
2. An open, publicized meeting organized by a person or organization other than the district to

address a topic of local community concern.

3. An open and noticed meeting of another body of the district.
4. An open and noticed meeting of a legislative body of another local agency.
5. A purely social or ceremonial occasion.
6. An open and noticed meeting of a standing committee of the Board, provided that the Board members who are not members of the standing committee attend only as observers.

(cf. 9130 - Board Committees)

Individual contacts or conversations between a Board member and any other person are not subject to the Brown Act. (Government Code 54952.2)

Fresno Unified School District prohibits discrimination, harassment (including sexual harassment), intimidation, and bullying based on actual or perceived race, color, ethnicity, national origin, immigration status, ancestry, age (40 and above), religious creed, religion, political belief or affiliation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, genetic information, mental or physical disability, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, pregnancy or parental status, childbirth, breastfeeding/lactation status, medical condition, military and veteran status, or association with a person or a group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics or any other basis protected by law or regulation, in its educational program(s) or employment.

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

35140 Time and place of meetings
35143 Annual organizational meetings; date, and notice
35144 Special meeting
35145 Public meetings
35145.5 Agenda; public participation and regulations
35146 Closed sessions; student matters
35147 Open meeting law exceptions

GOVERNMENT CODE

3511.1 Local agency executives
11135 Prohibition of discrimination
54950-54963 The Ralph M. Brown Act
54953 Oral summary of recommended salary and benefits of superintendent
54954 Time and place of regular meetings
54954.2 Agenda posting requirements, board actions
54956 Special meetings
54956.5 Emergency meetings
7920.000-7930.170 California Public Records Act
8625-8629 California Emergency Services Act
UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 42
12101-12213 Americans with Disabilities Act
CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS, TITLE 28
35.160 Effective communications for individuals with disabilities
36.303 Nondiscrimination on the basis of disability; public accommodations; auxiliary aids and services

COURT DECISIONS

Garnier v. Poway Unified School District, No. 17-cv-2215-W (JLB), 2019 WL 4736208 (S.D. Cal. September 26, 2019)
Knight First Amendment Institute at Columbia University v. Trump, 928 F.3d 226 (2019)
Wolfe v. City of Fremont, (2006) 1444 Cal. App. 54433

ATTORNEY GENERAL OPINIONS

88 Ops. Cal. Atty. Gen. 218 (2005)
84 Ops. Cal. Atty. Gen. 181 (2001)
84 Ops. Cal. Atty. Gen. 30 (2001)
79 Ops. Cal. Atty. Gen. 69 (1996)
78 Ops. Cal. Atty. Gen. 327 (1995)

Management Resources:

CSBA PUBLICATIONS

The Brown Act: School Boards and Open Meeting Laws, rev. 2019
INSTITUTE FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS
The ABCs of Open Government Laws
LEAGUE OF CALIFORNIA CITIES PUBLICATIONS
Open and Public IV: A Guide to the Ralph M. Brown Act, 2nd Ed., 2016

WEB SITES

CSBA: <http://www.csba.org>
California Attorney General's Office: <http://www.caag.state.ca.us>

Bylaw FRESNO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

adopted September 26, 1991 Fresno, California
revised: December 12, 2001
revised: February 13, 2003
revised: January 14, 2004
revised: January 8, 2014
revised: April 26, 2023