



Fresno Unified School Board May Change Longstanding Role Under Revised Bylaw

By **Anya Ellis**

Published 16 hours ago on

April 29, 2025

The Fresno Unified School Board's bylaws could change Wednesday, altering the board's role and governance.

Bylaw "BB 9000 Role of the Board" has undergone recommended revisions from a board subcommittee, consisting of Board President Valerie Davis and trustees Veva Islas and Claudia Cazares.

Davis and Cazares did not respond to a request for comment in time for this story's publication.

The changes reflect the board's push towards Student Outcomes Focused Governance (SOFG), surrounding four major goals and guardrails.

The board will vote on approval of the revised bylaw during Wednesday night's meeting.

A bylaw change typically undergoes two readings before a vote. However, Superintendent Misty Her is recommending the board waive the second reading according to the [board agenda](#).

The expedited timeline alongside potential changes to the board's role has created concern for the Fresno Teachers Association.

Shifting Roles Under Student Outcomes Focused Governance

Trustees have narrowed their focus, adopting four central goals and guardrails to guide all district decisions.

The goals center on early literacy, literacy intervention, college and career readiness, and life skills.

Now, the board is integrating those goals into the bylaws.

“Holding them (the superintendent) accountable to meeting the goals of the board, while adhering to the guardrails,” a recommended revision reads.

As the board members narrow their focus, responsibilities are shifted and recommendations to erase duties are presented.

“Under the SOFG model, the board will no longer focus on the full range of issues that directly affect student success. Instead, they will only oversee the specific goals they formally adopt,” [a social media post](#) from the FTA said.

The proposed bylaw suggests language surrounding monitoring program effectiveness, approving curriculum, overseeing bargaining decisions, and ensuring safe, adequate school facilities are removed.

These roles fall within “superintendent work” under SOFG, separate from “board work.”

This can make board work rigid, causing them to struggle with addressing issues outside of the goals and guardrails, FTA President Manuel Bonilla said.

“It gives more power to administration and the superintendent around things called ‘operational items’ and it gives a lack of accountability to the board in regard to addressing those items in a public forum,” Bonilla said.

The board developed SOFG alongside the [Council of the Great City Schools](#), a coalition of big-city school districts that provides consulting assistance.

A team of “governance coaches” from the organization provides training and support to the board, according to the district website. This is under a two-year, \$100,000 contract.

Fresno Teachers Association Voices Concern

Transparency and lack of collaboration with the community has become a central worry for the FTA.

There is a possibility of future board members passing over items, labeling them superintendent work, and effectively excluding them from an open conversation, Bonilla says.

“It feels like the board is giving away a lot of that democratic process to this particular model,” he said. “That (decisions) should be an accountability discussion to everyone, so that’s where it becomes an issue.”

The revised bylaws include a section addressing community feedback: “A process that regularly involves obtaining community input on their values, while involving, families, students, staff and other community members.”

It is unsure how this will be done, but Bonilla believes listening sessions will be conducted. The board led community listening session prior to creating the adopted goals and guardrails.

“That’s great. We’re not saying, ‘don’t do that work’ (listening sessions),” Bonilla said. “It should also happen in the space that the elected official was elected to do it.”