

# Pro-Child Policy Agenda 2025



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Fresno County  
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## The Office of the Fresno County Superintendent of Schools (FCSS)

looks forward to working with State, Federal, and Community Partners to adopt thoughtful legislation that complements the FCSS' commitment to ensuring success for every student, especially those who need us most. FCSS believes legislative decisions should honor a "whole child" framework inclusive of successful outcomes for children ages 0-22; a continued focus on local control, where educators, parents, and community members are fully engaged in setting priorities for educational programs and services, as well as maintaining the health and safety of students and staff.



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## Priority Areas for 2025

1. Integrated Data Infrastructure Across the Student Continuum
2. Culturally Relevant Instructional Supports in Mathematics and English Language Arts, Specifically for English Learners
3. Access to Quality Early Care and Education Programming
4. Student Support, Mental and Behavioral Health Services, and School Safety
5. Full and Ongoing Funding of Special Education
6. Access to Career Technical Education (CTE)
7. Incorporation of Arts as a Vital Part of Every Child's Education
8. Professional Development and Support for Educational Professionals
9. Ensuring Fiscal Resilience



# Countywide Vision for Student Success

The Office of the Fresno County Superintendent of Schools (FCSS) strives to ensure that all children have the necessary supports to reach their full potential. We recognize that FCSS needs to advocate for a policy agenda that removes barriers for youth, so they grow up healthy and ready for college, career, and civic life. We seek systems that are equitable, well-funded and high-quality, so that children can grow, learn, and thrive across their full student experience.

Recognizing the critical nexus between health and education, FCSS advocates for access to health insurance and health care for all youth ages 0-22; developmental and preventative screenings; home visitation programs; trauma prevention and supportive healing; oral and visual health care; stable and affordable homes, and food security. Encompassed within the extended education system, we advocate for quality infant and toddler care; preschool and transitional kindergarten (TK) ; early learning workforce development and compensation; early intervention and special education; high quality Mathematics and English Language Arts instruction and English Learner supports; STEM education that leads to improved achievement; extended learning opportunities; pathways to higher education and career technical education (CTE).







## Fresno County Landscape

**286,000** children (aged 0–18 years)

**24.8%** of total population lives below poverty level

**43.4%** speak a language other than English at home

**89.1%** of students (based on a 4-year cohort) graduated high school and earned a high school diploma

**72.8%** of county residents 25 and older have completed high school or equivalent

**19.4%** of the population of the same age group have earned a bachelor's degree



Sources: U.S. Census, American Community Survey; California Department of Education



# Legislative Priorities

## 1 Integrated Data Infrastructure Across the Student Continuum

FCSS is in strong support of funding for the development and maintenance of an integrated data infrastructure across the student continuum, including data integration capacity for cross sector county partners. FCSS supports funding and legislation that streamlines data collection, management, and analysis throughout the entire educational journey.



**By fostering collaboration between educational institutions and community organizations, it seeks to create a seamless flow of information from early childhood education to higher education and beyond.**

This integrated approach facilitates evidence-based decision-making, promotes personalized learning experiences, and enhances overall educational outcomes.

# Legislative Priorities

## 2 Culturally Relevant Instructional Supports in Mathematics and English Language Arts, Specifically for English Learners

FCSS advocates for legislation that increases funding to culturally relevant instructional supports in Mathematics and English Language Arts, specifically for English Learners, which represents a crucial step towards fostering educational equity.



By allocating additional resources and specialized support, these policies address the unique challenges faced by English Learners, ensuring they receive targeted assistance to excel in all subjects. Recognizing the trends from data dashboards across the county, FCSS is committed to supporting school improvement in English Language Arts and Mathematics, especially for multilingual learners.

With the new Mathematics Framework recently adopted by the State of California, FCSS advocates for increased resources to districts in efforts to train educators on these new tools and strategies to better support student learning.

**34%**

**Dual  
Immersion  
Classrooms**

Knowing that 34% of Fresno County school districts offer dual immersion classrooms, FCSS is also committed to mitigating barriers for teachers seeking credentials, certification, and training for multilingual teaching classroom assignments.



# Legislative Priorities

## 3 Access to Quality Early Care and Education Programming

To ensure that every child is equipped with the foundational skills necessary to be successful upon school entry, FCSS promotes policies that increase access to high-quality early care and education (ECE). FCSS strongly supports the expansion of programming to increase the percentage of children aged 0–5 years served in ECE – at present, only 43% of Fresno County’s children have access to ECE programs; building capacity of ECE professionals (including teachers) through professional development and technical assistance on areas associated with school readiness, including childhood development, instructional strategies to support dual language learners (DLLs), effective implementation of Universal PreKindergarten (UPK), and early math and science; and adding ECE indicators on the California School Dashboard, including school readiness.

**Only 43% of Fresno County's children aged 0–5 years have access to ECE programs**



# Legislative Priorities

## 4 Student Support, Mental and Behavioral Health Services, and School Safety



**It is estimated that upwards of 20% of K-12 students are diagnosed with chronic health conditions.**

Students need physical and mental health assistance during the school day to keep them healthy and ready to access their learning activities. FCSS supports increasing funding for credentialed school nurses and mental health therapists to contracted school districts to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the students we serve.

FCSS also advocates for sustained funding to offer innovative services such as our Mobile Health Centers and All 4 Youth Centers that bring health services to the areas of greatest need in Fresno County.



# Legislative Priorities

## 5 Full and Ongoing Funding of Special Education

To ensure the needs of children with disabilities are met, a significant percentage of school district funds are being contributed to special education programs to help bridge the lack of state and federal resources.

**Thus, FCSS supports consistent and comprehensive funding for Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to help foster an inclusive learning environment that facilitates the success and development of every student.**



This sustained financial commitment enables schools to implement specialized programs, hire qualified personnel, and invest in necessary resources to promote the academic and social well-being of students receiving special education services.

# Legislative Priorities

## 6 Access to Career Technical Education (CTE)



FCSS advocates for increased funding to allow for the implementation of ambitious and successful Career Technical Education (CTE) programs that are directly linked to job creation and California's regional economic future. FCSS supports actions to provide ongoing increased support to career technical education programs.

These actions include the development of a regional approach to CTE accountability, data, and programs that could be championed by County Offices of Education. FCSS also advocates for universal access to CTE classes to promote equity across the state.



# Legislative Priorities

## 7 Incorporation of Arts as a Vital Part of Every Child's Education

To support the academic achievement and social emotional well-being of every child, FCSS advocates for access to sequential, standards-based, culturally and linguistically responsive arts education for all students across Fresno County.

The data underscore the transformative impact of arts education on student outcomes, noting that students with an arts education are five times less likely to drop out of school, more than twice as likely to graduate college, four times more likely to earn a bachelor's degree, and 30% more inclined to pursue a professional career.

Recognizing the incorporation of all five arts disciplines (Dance, Media Arts, Music, Theatre, and Visual Art) as a vital part of every child's education, FCSS is committed to supporting LEAs in identifying barriers to arts education, utilizing state and federal funding to expand arts learning opportunities, and working to close the opportunity gaps that fuel achievement gaps for our students.





# Legislative Priorities

## 8 Professional Development and Support for Educational Professionals

FCSS advocates for increased funding to support teacher preparation programs and educational administration training and initiatives that promote culturally relevant systems and instructional practices. Teacher preparation programs provide future teachers with practical experiences in real classroom settings and provide experiences for new teachers in districts that are experiencing high needs.



**By investing in teacher preparation programs, Fresno County can ensure that new teachers receive comprehensive mentoring and guidance, while increasing diversity among the staff to ensure that it aligns with the make-up of the student population.**

# Legislative Priorities

## 9 Ensuring Fiscal Resilience

To achieve fiscal resilience amongst school districts and the County Office of Education, FCSS strongly supports increasing Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) base funding beyond the COLA augmentation which will sustain programs that are critical to student success and well-being; and allocating State General Fund resources to mitigate the increased costs of PERS and STRS on public school County Office of Educations to prevent any future reductions to services.



**To ensure that all students have access to quality school facilities that support student engagement and learning, FCSS advocates for adequate funding for school facility construction, and renovation through a State School Facility Bond**

State School Facility Bonds provide the funding certainty school districts and county offices of education need to address aging facilities, state climate priorities, updated building codes, and to create new learning environments that support 21st century learners. Additionally, the State School Facility program funded by these bonds serves as the backstop to ensure that students attending small and low wealth schools have the same access to quality school facilities as those that attend affluent districts.



**SUPERINTENDENT**

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