Superintendent Letter Following Supreme Court’s Decision on Affirmative Action

Superintendent Nelson released the below letter to staff and families this afternoon in response to the Supreme Court’s ruling on affirmative action.

“Fresno Unified Family,

The Supreme Court’s recent ruling on affirmative action is both greatly disheartening, and a significant step backward in our efforts to increase diversity, equity and inclusion within our educational system.

Let me be clear, without affirmative action, the vast majority of our over 70,000 students, have lost a proven pathway of hope: namely a race-conscious and equitable college admission process. The reality is that systemic biases, predominately based upon race, remain deeply rooted in our country and have contributed to decades of historic inequities, such as collegiate access and attainment.

But we refuse to let this decision deter our current efforts to build a local college-going culture in the Valley. Just this past semester, we doubled down on our college-readiness efforts to make sure each and every one of our students has access to the knowledge, tools and skills needed to become eligible for college through Bulldog Bound, a guaranteed admissions program offered for every single Fresno Unified 9th grader in partnership with Fresno State. Furthermore, programs like our expansive Dual Enrollment and Career Technical Education (CTE) pathways, which offer a wide array of post-secondary career opportunities; and our HBCU Step Up Pathway program which offers transformative learning opportunities for our African American students, now carry a stronger significance.
We will work tirelessly to ensure our students achieve their greatest potential. Now, more than ever, we must be laser-focused on living out our mission to nurture and cultivate the interests, intellect, and leadership of our students by providing an excellent, equitable education in a culturally proficient environment.

Sincerely,

Superintendent Nelson”

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