

## Nothing criminal in Fresno Unified's lease-leaseback deals

The Bee's reporting about Fresno Unified School District's lease-leaseback controversy skirts a key component of the issue, leading to misconceptions that something criminal is involved.

That component is apparent in Dan Walters' column online on July 9, the same day The Bee reported the Fresno County District Attorney's Office's interest, and a day after The Bee published Fresno Unified Board Member Brooke Ashjian's claim the FBI is "investigating" the leaseback practice at the center of the controversy.

Mr. Walters' reporting makes it clear this practice is not a Michael Hanson/FUSD invention, but is used statewide. The article mentions "numerous other lawsuits filed by taxpayer groups and contractors barred from bidding on school construction projects by leaseback deals," referencing the appellate court decision that suggests FUSD misused the process.

Mr. Walters earlier reported the decision may cause "school districts and their corporate partners to undo deals worth hundreds of millions of dollars."

As a former principal in FUSD, I can confirm Supt. Hanson's assertions about district facilities in 2005. We now have new and remodeled schools throughout the district; they are a direct result of his actions as superintendent. This situation may have been mishandled, but criminality is a huge jump. The Bee should be more comprehensive with its reporting.

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