Major technology initiatives to improve student access and support classroom learning are under way in Fresno Unified School District, including an overhaul of the district’s network, a digital portfolio project, and laptops in the classroom, allowing FUSD students to use the newest technology.

Through partnerships with AT&T, Microsoft, and Cisco, the district is establishing itself as an innovative, educational leader in delivering cutting-edge technology to FUSD students. On Oct. 16, Fresno Unified School District announced that Jefferson Elementary School was the first to go live on the new fiber network. The $13.5 million project to connect all FUSD schools to a fiber network is the result of a partnership with AT&T and Cisco and is the largest fiber network north of Los Angeles. The federal E-rate program offsets $10 million of the project cost. The E-rate program ensures that all eligible schools and libraries have affordable access to modern telecommunications and information services. The network allows for high-speed connections for students to access information quickly and teachers can download videos and do virtual field trips in real-time.

A partnership with Microsoft and HPM has allowed Fresno Unified to pilot a digital portfolio and laptop program. FUSD students are the first in the nation to use this cutting-edge technology. On Nov. 8, FUSD announced this unprecedented program at Bullard High School. This school year, four classrooms at 12 schools will voluntarily participate in the $650,000 pilot program that gives students access to small-footprint laptops at a ratio of one laptop for every two students in the class.

To support the district’s work to prepare students for success in college and career beyond high school, the digital portfolio program allows students to capture and memorialize their best work that best represents their skills and achievements. This student-driven portfolio will serve students well as they present themselves to future employers and colleges.

In addition, Fresno Unified is launching the first of its kind middle school technology competition, which is the largest middle school technology competition in the Central Valley that uses technology to engage students in learning. The competition includes categories such as programming, digital video, robotics, and animation. By participating in this competition, students will learn new skills, develop their leadership capabilities, and prepare them for high-skill, high-wage careers, as well as success in college.

In the Spotlight: Outstanding FUSD educators honored

Outstanding Fresno Unified School District educators were honored recently for their leadership and commitment to students. The California League of High Schools honored three FUSD high school teachers at the Region VII Educator of the Year event. Sharon Hart from Roosevelt High School, Donna Metzler from Sunnyside High School, and Theo White from Fresno High School were three of ten honorees at the event.

Hart, a veteran math teacher, is described by colleagues as a “pioneer” and instructional leader whose dedication to students has resulted in improved student performance. Hart was a finalist for the business in education award for Fresno County and is listed in the “Who’s Who Among American Teachers.”

Affectionately named “Wildcat Math Teacher Extraordinaire” by Sunnyside Principal Sheryl Weaver, Metzler is Sunnyside’s lead math teacher whose leadership and innovation in grades eight through twelve is evident.

Regarded as a role model for both students and teachers, White is a high school math teacher and administrator whose leadership and advocacy for English language learners has led to district-wide initiatives.

Fresno Unified School District - Serving the Community since 1889


Building Futures

A Publication of the Fresno Unified School District

Cutting-edge technology bolstering student success

In the Spotlight: Outstanding FUSD educators honored

Outstanding Fresno Unified School District educators were honored recently for their leadership and commitment to students.
District Guided by Core Beliefs and Commitments

In our district, we are guided by our Board of Education’s Core Beliefs and Commitments. One of these core beliefs is that every child can learn at grade level. We are also committed to high quality instruction, to strong leadership that is courageous, to providing a safe and secure learning environment, and to building a culture that will produce breakthrough results. As a result, every one of our teachers, administrators and support staff, whether at school site or in central office, is focused on this task each day because our work is to prepare career ready graduates.

Superintendent’s Message

In order to prepare career ready graduates, we are implementing a system that ensures all students at each grade level, no matter what school they attend in our district, will learn the same state content standards while honoring teacher expertise to determine how to teach the standards to each student based on the student’s specific needs. This work is hard and requires changing the way that we provide support to schools, provide professional learning opportunities for staff and provide support to students. We believe that this research-based approach will help us achieve breakthrough results for each of our students.

Student Achievement Improves for Second Year in a Row

I am proud to report to our community that this summer we learned that due to the hard work and dedication of our teachers, administrators and school staff, student achievement in Fresno Unified has improved for the second year in a row. Our goal now, is to build upon this progress and ensure that all FUSD students are successful.

Families and Community Play Critical Role in Student Success

Families and the community play a critical role in our students’ success – it takes all of us working together to help our students succeed. Please join us in what I believe to be the most important work in our city. I am privileged to serve the students and families of Fresno Unified School District and look forward to our continued collaboration and great progress.

FUSD Core Beliefs

Student Learning
- Every student can and must learn at grade level and beyond.

High Quality Instruction
- Teachers must demonstrate the ability and desire to educate each child at a high level.

Leadership
- Leaders must perform courageously and ethically to accomplish the district’s goals.

Safety
- A safe learning and working environment is crucial to student learning.

Culture
- Fresno Unified is a place where:
  - Diversity is valued
  - Educational excellence and equity are expected
  - Individual responsibility and participation by all is required
  - Collaborative adult relationships are essential
  - Parents, students and the community at large are vital partners.

* Adopted April 25, 2007

FUSD Commitments

Student Learning
- We will provide all students access to high quality options and a variety of activities.
- We will implement, continue or expand practices proven to raise student achievement, and eliminate practices that do not.

High Quality Instruction
- We expect all students to achieve their personal best; differences in achievement among socio-economic and ethnic groups are not acceptable.
- We expect effective teacher performance toward desired results.

Leadership
- We will require the timely delivery of high quality services to every student.
- We will sustain and monitor a financial plan that ensures the sustainability of the district.
- We will provide clear expectations and regularly support professional growth.

Safety
- We will provide a safe, caring, and orderly learning and working environment.

Culture
- We will establish collaborative relationships with staff, parents, students, and the community.
- We strongly encourage and welcome the voluntary contributions of our families.
- We expect and depend upon individual responsibility.

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Fresno area Rotary clubs put 6,000 dictionaries into the hands of FUSD third graders.

Every third grade student in Fresno Unified School District received a dictionary through donations by the Business Area Rotary Clubs. The dictionaries, donated by the Rotary Club of Fresno, were distributed to third grade students at North Pointe Church and Figarden Elementary School.

On Oct. 3, Fresno Rotary Club President Don Eskes presented dictionaries to the third grade students at Figarden Elementary School. "The program is supported exclusively by NorthPointe Church with the assistance of volunteer tutors and a grant last year by Citibank to fund the snacks provided to each student," Eskes said. "We want to make a positive difference," said Debbie White, program director of Homework Central. "We know that families have a lot of demands on their time in our fast-paced life, and we are happy to do our part in helping our students.

On any given Monday or Wednesday after school in a colorful room at NorthPointe Church, you will find third grade students hard at work on their homework with adult volunteers peering over their shoulders.

Since reading at grade level by the third grade is a big determinant to future academic success, the Fresno area Rotary Clubs' Dictionary Project supports the work of the Fresno Unified School District. The clubs have donated 6,000 dictionaries, ensuring that every third grade student in FUSD receives one.

School Accountability Report Cards (SARCs) available on web site

Each year Fresno Unified School District publishes School Accountability Report Cards (SARCs) which provide parents and the community with information about each school in a variety of areas including achievement, staffing, facilities and fiscal. Please visit www.rea.fresno.k12.ca.us to view your school's SARCs.

The internet is a jungle, a jungle of kids and advertising, and you need all the help you can get finding reliable information. Here is your tried and true resource to make the most out of elementary school education. Whether you're in schools or staying at home, here are the top resources to get you started. SARC is the key to help us make the best choices for elementary school instructional materials. The key is www.sarc.org where you can find all the facts you need.

The Cullinan Education Center

Kaiser Permanente's Cullinan Education Center offers elementary school students a variety of programs designed to help them achieve academic success. The center is located at 6330 N. Blackstone Ave., Fresno, CA 93710. For more information, contact the center at (559) 237-3900.

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Fresno Metropolitan Museum of Art & Science

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**Scandinavian Middle School students ‘weave a positive school culture for all students’**

Judy Andrade understands what campus culture is about – the Scandinavian Middle School 8th grader became a WEB leader to make a huge change at Scandinavian Middle School.

“Students do so deeply want to belong,” said Judy Andrade, the school’s WEB coordinator. “They want a positive and supportive way and a great school. That is what Scandinavian is like; everyone is helpful and kind.”

Andrade became a WEB leader to make a huge change at Scandinavian Middle School.

On August 12, the WEB leaders spent a day welcoming 7th graders to Scandinavian Middle School, guiding them through the process of the transition. They want to provide a welcoming environment for students. WEB leaders have a phone number to contact the new 7th graders.

“We want to make sure they feel comfortable and find their way around the school,” said Nicole Moreno.

The WEB leaders are planning activities throughout the school year to promote a positive school culture where everyone can learn and feel welcome. Scandinavian Middle School has campus culture teams that are developing and implementing programs and methods to connect students to school. As a teacher, you need to know your students in order to improve student achievement.

“Ah, we all know that students must be engaged to learn,” said Teresa district campus culture coordinator. “We are mindful that how students connect to school is an ingredient to success for all students.”

Scandinavian Middle School WEB leaders understand what school culture is all about. According to WEB leader Emilio Tenque, “It is important so students can learn and not drop out.”

WEB leaders are being measured and evaluated in collaboration with the school community partners. The annual school-wide assessment survey is used to evaluate the WEB program.

The WEB program allows our students to not only see and help their peers, but to feel better about themselves.

**FUSD homeless students benefit from Granville’s ‘Home of Hope’**

Fresno Unified School District homeless students being served by the district’s Project ACCESS will benefit from Granville homes’ practically new Green Valley homes. Ready to move into the new, the Granville homes’ gated neighborhood at Copper River Ranch, students and their families will have a chance to succeed in school by receiving ongoing support.

With the purchase of a $100 opportunity ticket, entrants have a chance to win six new Green Valley homes. Ready to move into the new, the Granville homes’ gated neighborhood at Copper River Ranch, students and their families will have a chance to succeed in school by receiving ongoing support.

Project ACCESS helps provide the basic needs of students who are considered homeless due to living in non-permanent housing. The program currently serves more than 2,000 students, providing assistance with clothing, housing, food, and transportation.

“We remove the obstacles in getting students enrolled, so they can attend and succeed academically,” said Lorna Jacoby, the school’s WEB coordinator. “We remove the obstacles in getting students enrolled, so they can attend and succeed academically.”

The federally funded Project ACCESS provides services not normally available in a school district. The districtwide achievement of the students in the program is tracked and supported through the collaboration of school and Project ACCESS staff.

**SUCCESS**

Fort Miller Middle School’s Brandes is described as a “life changer,” inspiring his students to think differently and appreciate educational opportunities. Students for success! The program provides expert guidance for student achievement.

“By meeting the students’ basic needs, they are given an equal chance to succeed in school,” said Judy Andrade, the school’s WEB coordinator. “We want to make sure they feel comfortable and find their way around the school.”

The WEB program is allowing for students to not only see and help their peers, but to feel better about themselves.

**Continued from Pg.1**

regarded as an exemplary social science teacher, creating a safe place for students to participate and share their opinions. Fort Miller Middle School’s Brandes is described as a “life changer,” inspiring his students to think differently and appreciate educational opportunities. Students for success! The program provides expert guidance for student achievement.

Third grade students from Turner Elementary were excited to receive their own dictionaries thanks to the generous donation by the Airport Rotary Club. Rotarian, Jeff Dippel, personally delivered the dictionaries. Students were thrilled to receive them and quickly wrote thank you notes to the Airport Rotary Club.
Lowell Elementary brings Thanksgiving to local neighborhood

The 4th Annual Lowell Neighborhood Resource Center (NRC) Community Thanksgiving Dinner was held in November. This dinner has become an annual event for the Lowell community and is sponsored by the Lowell Elementary School NRC, with no cost to participants. Each year, in support of the event, Maryville Church has donated roasted turkeys for food, including turkey, potatoes, and rolls. All of the food is prepared by the NRC and volunteers. This year more than 700 community members participated in this community engagement. Community participants included grandparents, parents, students, neighborhood children, and community members. Many participants commented that this would be the only Thanksgiving meal they would have, and often families would be the only meal for the day. Student volunteers from the Lowell Elementary School Heroes Program assisted in serving the participants and with clean up.

Ground Broken for Williams dedicated and passionate educator who believed every child could succeed given the right support. President Luisa Medina described how educators lay the solid foundation on which children build their futures. The new Dakota will make a profound difference to the families that live in the neighborhood, and the school is being constructed with funds from Measure K, $199 million in 2005. The crowd at the groundbreaking included much of the congregation from The Home Baptist Church that once stood on the site. Medina fondly recalled being a student of Ms. Williams. She described her impact: “She challenged students living in poverty to believe in themselves. The best way to provide opportunity,” he said. “The best way to provide every student an excellent education.”

For more information, contact: Michelle O. Borelli Marketing & Sales Consultant Building Futures (559) 264-5250 michelle@concoursecomm.com

Harlem Globetrotters visit McCardle Elementary

McCardle students had a very special guest at their recent student assembly. Harlem Globetrotter, “Buckets” Blakes presented the team’s “C.H.E.E.R” program to McCardle students. The interactive program focuses on the following character traits: Cooperation, Healthy Diet & Study Habit, Respect and Responsibility. The program was designed with assistance from the U.S. Department of Education, the President’s Council on Physical Fitness and Sports, and the Globetrotters themselves. During the school visits, “Buckets” Blakes demonstrated the teams’ signature skill, rimming, while making a motivational presentation to the students. In addition, students were challenged to make and keep a commitment to improve physical activity and take the President’s Challenge to lead a more active lifestyle.

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